

Defend our Democracy

Pass the For the People Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act

Confronting the climate crisis, addressing environmental justice, and moving to 100% clean, renewable energy **all depend on an accurate and equal representation from the people.**

Poll after poll shows broad support for climate action and clean energy, yet, **all too often the voices of the people are curtailed by voter suppression, big polluters flooding elections with dirty money, corruption, and gerrymandered districts.**

We also know that to address the climate crisis, we need everyone. The same communities impacted the most by the climate crisis and pollution are the same communities targeted by voter suppression.

That's why the Sierra Club supports common sense democracy reforms and safeguards that protect our right to vote. Right now, Congress is considering two critical pieces of legislation:

For the People Act

- Has bipartisan support, with 83% of voters supporting the For the People Act
- Helps reduce big money in politics
- Ends partisan gerrymandering
- Improves voter access and election integrity/security

John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act

- Will restore 1965 Voting Rights Act after it was significantly weakened by the Supreme Court.
- Will restore the preclearance requirement, requiring states to get pre-approval from the federal government before changing voting laws. This will allow the Department of Justice to sue states who attempt to implement anti-voter legislation.

But in order to pass the For the People Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, Congress must first eliminate the filibuster. Here's why:

- President Biden called the assault on free elections the most significant test of our democracy since the Civil War.
- Though some argue that the filibuster forces Senators to reach across the aisle and collaborate, the opposite is true.
- The filibuster has been primarily used to uphold white supremacy by blocking civil rights, voting rights, and anti-lynching reforms.
- Senate rules have been changed or exceptions have been made many times already. Between 1969 and 2014 there have been 161 exceptions to the filibuster rule and most recently, Republicans changed the filibuster rule to force through three Supreme Court Justices during President Trump's term.
- The choice is clear: Senators can protect the filibuster — an outdated and racist Senate rule that President Obama called a “Jim Crow relic”—or they can protect our democracy and the right to vote in the face of surging voter suppression and gerrymandering across the country. They won't be able to do both.

The Sierra Club's President Ramon Cruz said this about the For the People Act:

“The For the People Act protects and advances the most fundamental virtue of our democracy: that all eligible voters will have an equal chance to have their voices heard. This bedrock principle is written into the creed of our founding documents and is why the Sierra Club joins in calling for its immediate passage.”

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