



NEWS RELEASE

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NALEO Educational Fund Statement on the Introduction of the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2023

*"We urge Congress to work in a bipartisan manner and pass the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and make our democracy more responsive to all of our nation's voices."
— NALEO Educational Fund CEO Arturo Vargas*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund today released the following statement from Chief Executive Officer Arturo Vargas, following the introduction of the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2023 in the U.S. House of Representatives:

"Since the U.S. Supreme Court's 2013 *Shelby County v. Holder* decision to gut the heart of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, states and localities throughout the nation were able to pass unfair and restrictive voting laws and implement discriminatory election practices. This resulted in Latinos encountering new obstacles to electoral participation, which have seriously weakened our democracy.

"We thank Representative Terri Sewell (AL-7) and the co-sponsors of the bill for introducing H.R. 14, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2023. The bill would modernize the full protections of the historic Voting Rights Act of 1965 by establishing a strong and targeted process for federal review of voting changes in jurisdictions nationwide, focused on measures that have historically been used to discriminate against Latinos and other underrepresented groups. This bill's provisions are essential to preventing the further proliferation of voter suppression legislation — especially in parts of the country with increasing racial, ethnic, and language diversity, where there may not yet be a strongly documented history of discrimination.

"For several decades, NALEO Educational Fund has continuously advocated for the passage of state and federal voting rights legislation. The Voting Rights Act has historically enjoyed support across the political spectrum, and we are committed to working with lawmakers to restore the strength of this critical legislation. Our organization will continue to be at the forefront of efforts to advance policies that protect Latino voting rights to ensure Latinos are fully engaged as voters and can enjoy fair opportunities to choose their leaders.

"In the *Shelby* decision, the U.S. Supreme Court acknowledged that there is still discrimination in our nation's electoral process — and this bill would provide strong and robust safeguards to combat such discrimination. We urge Congress to work in a bipartisan manner and pass the

John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and make our democracy more responsive to all of our nation's voices."

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About NALEO Educational Fund

NALEO Educational Fund is the nation's leading non-partisan, non-profit organization that facilitates the full participation of Latinos in the American political process, from citizenship to public service.