



Caribbean-American Political Action Committee

January 17, 2021

United States Senate

Dear Senator,

The Caribbean- Political Committee (C-PAC), the “political voice of the D.C. Metropolitan area’s vibrant and growing Caribbean Community,” is calling on the United States Senate to immediately pass both H.R 1, the *For The People Act*, and H.R. 4, the *John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act*. The right to vote and have that vote counted is fundamental to our democracy. We join those whose position is that nothing, including the filibuster, should stand in the way of the sacred and sworn duty of members of the United States Senate to protect the constitutional rights of ALL Americans to equal access to the ballot box.

The countries of the Caribbean, to which we trace our heritage, have long been unrelentingly committed to the democratic principles and values which they share with our adopted country. The United States of America stands as the model of “the democratic state” to which the people of the Caribbean, and indeed, freedom loving people all over the world, seek to emulate. The voter suppression laws (based on an absolute lie) which Republicans have passed in so many States of this great country should not be allowed to stand. If they are allowed to stand, the result will most certainly be the end of the democracy that so many in this country have fought and died for. And it will most certainly create instability in the entire region, possibly the world.

We should not forget our history, lest we repeat it. In 1901, Alabama passed a new constitution designed to deny the right to vote to its black citizens. In a legislative session during which the constitution was drafted, James Thomas Heflin, a delegate from Chambers County, and later a U.S. Senator, made it clear that it was his belief that under no circumstances should black people be allowed to vote, no matter their individual intelligence or wealth. Said he: *“I believe as truly as I believe I am standing here (in the legislative chambers of the Montgomery State Capital) that God almighty intended the negro to be the servant of the white man.”*

We submit to you, all one hundred U.S. Senators, Democrats, Republicans, and Independents that unless you agree with James Thomas Heflin and the 1901 drafters of the Alabama constitution, you must vote to pass both H.R 1 and H.R. 4. History will record your vote. Will your descendants be proud of your vote? Will you stand with your fellow citizens of color? Or will history count you with the likes of James Thomas Heflin and his ilk? The right to vote is in the constitution. The Senate filibuster, which has been set aside in the past and most certainly will be again, is not! Now is the time to ask yourselves, as President Kennedy suggested: *what can I do for my country?* In this instance, all of you know what that is. We hope that you do it!

Sincerely,

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President

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