

As Introduced

**133rd General Assembly
Regular Session
2019-2020**

H. R. No. 355

Representative Ingram

**Cosponsors: Representatives Kent, Smith, K., Leland, Miranda, Kelly, Galonski,
Crawley, Howse, Brent, Russo, Denson, Lepore-Hagan, O'Brien, Patterson, Blair**

A R E S O L U T I O N

To urge the Congress of the United States to enact 1
the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act. 2

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
OHIO:**

WHEREAS, Before enactment of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, 3
African Americans in the South faced tremendous obstacles to 4
voting, including poll taxes, literacy tests, and other 5
bureaucratic restrictions. Many also risked harassment, 6
intimidation, economic reprisals, and physical violence when 7
attempting to register or vote. As a result, very few African 8
Americans were registered voters, and African Americans had very 9
little, if any, political power, either locally or nationally; 10
and 11

WHEREAS, These numerous injustices existed despite the 12
fourteenth and fifteenth amendments to the Constitution of the 13
United States, which prohibit states from making and enforcing 14
laws that abridge the privileges of citizens of the United 15
States, and deny the right of citizens to vote on account of 16
race, color, or previous condition of servitude; and 17

WHEREAS, American civil rights activists worked diligently 18

despite intimidation, danger, and uncertainty, towards passage 19
of the Voting Rights Act, which was designed to enforce those 20
rights guaranteed by the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments to 21
the United States Constitution; and 22

WHEREAS, Congressional renewals of the Voting Rights Act 23
have been signed by Democrat and Republican Presidents; and 24

WHEREAS, The United States Supreme Court has, in numerous 25
decisions, upheld the Voting Rights Act, but in 2013 in *Shelby* 26
County v. Holder, ruled a portion of the Act as 27
unconstitutional; and 28

WHEREAS, In delivering the five to four majority opinion in 29
Shelby County v. Holder, Chief Justice John Roberts expressly 30
invited Congress to update the Act's protections based on 31
current conditions of discrimination; and 32

WHEREAS, The United States House of Representatives passed 33
H.R. 4 in 2019, to amend and renew the Voting Rights Act, but 34
the United States Senate has failed to act on the legislation; 35
and 36

WHEREAS, Since the *Shelby County v. Holder* ruling, while 37
Congress has failed to update the Voting Rights Act, many states 38
have enacted laws making it more difficult to register to vote 39
or to cast a ballot; and 40

WHEREAS, Countless thousands have been assembling and 41
marching through the streets of this nation to shine a light on 42
the racism and inequity that is still present in the United 43
States; and 44

WHEREAS, Following the recent passing of Representative 45
John Lewis, who played a pivotal role in bringing about the 46
Voting Rights Act in 1965, and who spoke forcefully for its 47
renewal before his death, the United States House of 48
Representatives passed a measure renaming H.R. 4, as the John R. 49

Lewis Voting Rights Act; now therefore be it 50

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the House of 51
Representatives of the 133rd General Assembly of the State of 52
Ohio, in adopting this resolution, urge the Congress of the 53
United States to enact the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act; and 54
be it further 55

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the House of Representatives 56
transmit duly authenticated copies of this resolution to the 57
Speaker and Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, 58
the President Pro Tempore and Secretary of the United States 59
Senate, each member of the Ohio Congressional delegation, and 60
the news media of Ohio. 61