



SISTERS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD  
**NATIONAL ADVOCACY CENTER**

*Rise Up AND Act for Justice*

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## **To Preserve Democracy, “Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act” Must Pass the Senate**

*Statement by Fran Eskin-Royer*

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Congressman John Lewis delivered an address to a crowd of thousands gathered at the Edmund Pettus Bridge on March 7, 2015, the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday in Selma, Alabama. Reflecting on that historic march demonstrating the need for voting rights, Lewis urged the crowd to recommit to the cause, to finish the work that had brought him to that bridge 50 years earlier. “Stand up for what you believe,” Lewis said. “Because in the final analysis, we are one people, one family, the human family. We all live in the same House, the American House, the world House.”

John Lewis passed away in 2020, but the legacy of his fight for voting rights lives on. The House of Representatives has passed the Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act in response to a recent surge of voter suppression laws enacted in states across the country. The Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act will ensure that voters can safely and freely cast their ballots, protect against election sabotage, stop partisan gerrymandering, and limit the influence of dark money in politics so that billionaires can't buy elections.

We urge the Senate to act now to pass the Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act so that every vote counts and we all have a say in our future. As an organization committed to ensuring that every voice is heard, a fair and free election is essential to our work.

The right to vote is sacred, and ensuring the ability for every American to participate in safe, accessible, and transparent elections is paramount in ensuring the continuity of our democracy. Each of us, including every senator, has a fundamental responsibility to protect the freedom to vote.

Martin Luther King, Jr., famously said that “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” If we truly are, as John Lewis said, one people, one family, living in the same house, then it is time for lawmakers in Congress to reflect that reality. Voting rights are under attack in America. The choice in front of every senator is a simple one: Do you support the freedom to vote?

Fighting for the freedom to vote, John Lewis was bloodied, beaten, and gassed. To protect the freedom to vote, all the Senate must do is pass the legislation named in his honor. The time to act is now.

*[The National Advocacy Center](#) educates and advocates on social justice issues for the transformation of society to the benefit of all people reflecting the spirituality, history and mission of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. NAC advocates at the Federal level for people living in poverty, immigrants, survivors of human trafficking, survivors of domestic abuse, and other vulnerable populations.*

*The Sisters of the Good Shepherd was founded in France in 1835 and are in 70 countries on 5 continents and have had a presence in the United States for over 175 years. With a presence in 22 states and 1 U. S. Territory, the Sisters and their Lay Mission Partners have dedicated themselves to serving girls, women and families who experience poverty, exploitation, vulnerability and marginalization.*

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