



SENATE MEMORIAL 22-001

BY SENATOR(S) Coleman and Gonzales, Bridges, Buckner, Donovan, Fenberg, Fields, Garcia, Ginal, Hansen, Jaquez Lewis, Kolker, Lee, Moreno, Rodriguez, Story, Winter, Zenzinger.

MEMORIALIZING CONGRESS TO ADOPT COMPREHENSIVE VOTING RIGHTS LEGISLATION TO PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY AND THE SACRED RIGHT TO VOTE.

WHEREAS, Every January we honor the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and his heroic efforts to advance voting rights and we aspire to follow in his footsteps; and

WHEREAS, No one did more to promote the right to vote for disenfranchised Americans than the civil rights leaders of the 1960s, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Congressman John Lewis, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Ella Baker; and

WHEREAS, Until the United States Congress passed the federal "Voting Rights Act of 1965", people of color in the United States were frequently subject to poll taxes, literacy tests, and fraud and intimidation, preventing them from exercising their right to cast a ballot; and

WHEREAS, The United States Senate is considering critical federal elections reform and long overdue updates to the federal "Voting Rights Act of 1965" to preserve voting rights for generations to come, in honor of the legacy of the late Congressman John Lewis; and

WHEREAS, Colorado's electoral system serves as an example to the rest of the nation, and in fact the world, of how to expand voter access

while protecting electoral integrity through safeguards including risk-limiting audits and signature verification; and

WHEREAS, In the 2020 election, Colorado had the second highest voter turnout of any state in the nation, and Colorado's largest voting bloc -- young people ages 18 to 34 -- turned out in record numbers; and

WHEREAS, Efforts to suppress the vote and disenfranchise Americans who historically have had the least access to the ballot have been on the rise across the country in recent years; and

WHEREAS, Last year, more than 440 bills with provisions that restrict voting access were introduced in 49 states, including here in Colorado, where legislation was introduced to restrict voters' access to Colorado's vote by mail system, a national model of excellence for election access, security, and integrity; and

WHEREAS, Last year, 19 states passed 34 laws restricting access to voting, including Georgia's Senate Bill 202 and Texas' Senate Bill No. 1, both of which made it more difficult for voters to exercise their fundamental right to vote enshrined in the United States Constitution and the federal "Voting Rights Act of 1965"; and

WHEREAS, Falsehoods and conspiracies regarding the integrity of the 2020 election have run rampant in our media and public discourse; and

WHEREAS, The months-long, coordinated attempt to interfere with the democratic process following the November 2020 election and prevent the peaceful transfer of power by overturning the legitimate results of the presidential election, which culminated at the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021, serves as a violent reminder of the fragility of our democracy; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Seventy-third General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

That we, the members of the Colorado Senate:

(1) Reassert the validity of the 2020 presidential election results as legitimate and verified;

(2) Offer Colorado's premier electoral system as a model for states across the country to adopt in order to increase voter participation while ensuring electoral integrity; and

(3) Call on the United States Congress, and specifically members of the United States Senate, to pass comprehensive voting rights legislation to protect the fundamental right to vote, which has been the cornerstone of our democracy since the founding of our republic.

Be It Further Resolved, That copies of this Memorial be sent to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, the Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, the President of the United States Senate, the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, the Minority Leader of the United States Senate, and all members of the Colorado Congressional delegation.

Leroy M. Garcia
PRESIDENT OF
THE SENATE

Cindi L. Markwell
SECRETARY OF
THE SENATE