HNBA
HISPANIC NATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION

RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT VOTING RIGHTS REFORM

WHEREAS, the Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA) represents the interests of over 75,000 Hispanic legal professionals, which includes attorneys, judges, law professors, legal assistants, and law students in the United States and its territories;[i]

WHEREAS, the HNBA has since its founding in 1972 advocated extensively on voting issues;

WHEREAS, voting is the bedrock of representational government but voter suppression threatens the ability of voters to freely and fairly exercise that right;

WHEREAS, historically, the Hispanic community has faced challenges at the voting booth and continues to see many of them in the 21st century;[ii]

WHEREAS, the exponential population growth of the community and its unique challenges from language access to barriers to voting based on racial discrimination only continue to grow as the population grows;

WHEREAS, an estimated 34.5 million Hispanic Americans are eligible to vote this year, making Hispanics the fastest-growing racial and ethnic group in the U.S. electorate since the last midterm elections;[iii]

WHEREAS, Hispanics accounted for 14.3% of all eligible voters in the November 2022, a new high;[iv]

WHEREAS, the Hispanic community has been targeted unfairly with a series of restrictive voting rights laws (e.g., overly restrictive Voter ID laws);[v] and

WHEREAS, according to a Pew Research poll, 59% of Hispanics reported the issue of "Voting" as "very important" to making their decision about who to vote for in the 2022 congressional elections;[vi]

THEREFORE, IT BE RESOLVED, the HNBA urges the 118th Congress to focus on passing comprehensive voting rights legislation that will:

- Support the passage of the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021, which would establish new criteria for Section 5 preclearance;[vii]
- Ensure the minority language protections, found in Section 203 of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, are enforced to the fullest extent of the law, fully funded, and are being implemented where needed to ensure large language minority communities have proper translation and language assistance;

- Enact rules or regulations that would make it easier to vote, including same-day registration, vote by mail, among other things;
- Increase funding for voter election security (physical and cyber); and
- Eliminate overly restrictive voter laws; unnecessary voter purges and encourage state and federal authorities to prosecute voter intimidation and suppression at the polls.

Citations and Comments

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[i] No Author. HNBA, *About Us*. https://hnba.com/aboutus/#:~:text=The%20Hispanic%20National%20Bar%20Association,United%20States%20and%20its%20territories.

[ii] This resolution follows guidance of the US Census Bureau to refer to Hispanic origin as the heritage, nationality, lineage, or country of birth or the person's or ancestors before arriving in the United States." People who identify as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish may be of any race." No Author. United States Census Bureau, *Hispanic Origin*. https://www.census.gov/topics/population/hispanic-origin.html.

[iii] Natarajan, Anusha and IM, Carolyne. Pew Research Center, *Key Facts about Hispanic Eligible Voters in 2022*. https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2022/10/12/key-facts-about-hispanic-eligible-voters-in-2022/.

[iv] Id.

[v] Ortegon, Mira. Brennan Center for Justice, *Latino Communities on the Front Lines of Voter of Suppression*. https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/latino-communities-front-lines-voter-suppression.

[vi] Krosgstad, Jens Manuel, Edwards, Khadijah and Lopez, Mark Hugo. Pew Research Center, Most Latinos Say *Democrats Care About Them and Work Hard for Their Vote, Far Fewer Say So of Gop: Abortion rises as an election issue for Latinos, with majority saying it should be legal in all or most cases*. https://www.pewresearch.org/race-ethnicity/2022/09/29/most-latinos-say-democrats-care-about-them-and-work-hard-for-their-vote-far-fewer-say-so-of-gop/.

[vii] In 2013, *Shelby County v. Holder* found that the coverage formula that Section 5's Preclearance relied on was unconstitutional since it used data from over 40 years ago. Preclearance required certain jurisdictions with a history of voter suppression to submit any voter changes to the Department of Justice before making any changes.