

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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MEMORANDUM

February 21, 2020

To: Members of the Committee on Oversight and Reform

Fr: Committee Staff

Re: Hearing on “Voter Suppression in Minority Communities: Learning from the Past to Protect Our Future”

On **Wednesday, February 26, 2020, at 11:00 a.m., in room 2154 of the Rayburn House Office Building**, the Committee will hold a hearing to examine current barriers Americans face in exercising the right to vote, as well as lessons from the civil rights movement about overcoming these barriers to ensure the 2020 election is free and fair.

I. BACKGROUND

The Constitution enshrines the right to vote and grants Congress the authority to legislate to protect that right. Despite hard-fought victories to protect and expand voting rights, today many Americans—especially those in minority communities—face significant barriers to registering to vote and casting a ballot.

The Committee has been investigating barriers to voting for the last year. In March 2019, the Committee launched investigations of allegations of voter suppression in Georgia, Texas, and Kansas. On May 1, 2019, the Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties led by Chairman Jamie Raskin held a hearing on “Protecting the Right to Vote: Best and Worst Practices.”

II. HEARING PURPOSE

The hearing will examine the history and current state of voting rights in America, including how all Americans can ensure they are able to cast their votes in upcoming elections.

III. WITNESSES

Diane Nash

Civil Rights Activist

Founding Member, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)

Timothy L. Jenkins

Board Member, Teaching for Change

Board Member, Civil Rights Movement Archive

Founding Member, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)

Reverend Doctor William J. Barber II

President, Repairers of the Breach

Co-Chair, Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival

Desmond Meade

President

Florida Rights Restoration Coalition

Marcia Johnson-Blanco

Co-Director

Voting Rights Project

Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law

Staff contacts: Aaron Blacksberg, Chioma Chukwu, Tori Anderson, or Russ Anello at (202) 225-5051.