

Dear Chair LaMountain, Committee Members:

I am writing to express my strong support for S-3143, the RI Voting Rights Act (RIVRA). The Act secures the spirit of the federal 1965 Voting Rights Act, while more clearly enumerating groups that need to be explicitly included under the Act.

One would have expected that now, some 61 years after the sadly controversial federal voting rights bill was passed, we in the US would have long buried the kinds of bigotry that was repudiated by the 1965 bill. However, there is much public rhetoric that echoes those that same bigotry today. The Federal government is actively seeking to impair voter rights and most specifically minority voting rights as I write. It is incumbent upon our representatives to further secure all of our voting rights in the face of the current unwarranted onslaught.

The typical opposition to minority voter rights are the same today and they were when Alabama Gov. George Wallace said, "Segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever" in 1963. That bigoted opposition is wrapped in a thin veneer of justification around amorphous danger and hyperbolized threats.

Don't be a George Wallace. Send the VRA to the floor for the vote.

Sincerely,

Sean Hagberg, PhD

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