



## **Conyers, Hoyer, Brady, Nadler, Cleaver, Ellison to Hold Forum on State Voter Laws**

(WASHINGTON) – Across the country, the right to vote appears to be under attack. While couched as necessary to fight “voter fraud”, many state legislatures have enacted laws that may make it more difficult to cast a ballot. According to a recent report published by the Brennan Center for Justice, these new laws will limit voter participation by minority, low-income, elderly, and student voters. On Monday, November 14, 2011 at 2:00 p.m., House Judiciary Committee Ranking Member John Conyers (D-Mich.), House Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer (D-Md.), House Administration Committee Ranking Member Robert Brady (D-Pa.), House Judiciary Constitution Subcommittee Ranking Member Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.), Congressional Black Caucus Chair Emanuel Cleaver (D-Mo.), and Representative Keith Ellison (D-Minn.) as well as other members of the House of Representatives will hold a forum to examine issues related to new state voter laws entitled “Excluded from Democracy: The Impact of Recent State Voting Law Changes.”

### **Forum participants will include:**

**Ben Jealous, President and CEO, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.** The NAACP is this nation’s foremost civil rights group and is dedicated to ensuring a society in which all individuals have equal rights without discrimination based on race. For over a century, the NAACP has been at the forefront of civil rights issues and continues to advocate for voting right protections and equal access to the ballot box.

**Lee and Phyllis Campbell, Smyrna, Tennessee.** Under Tennessee’s new voter laws, all registered voters may apply for a free voter ID if they lack other valid forms of photo identification. But when the Campbells applied for free IDs at their local DMV they were initially charged. Though cognizant of their rights under the new law, the Campbells’ still had to wrangle with DMV staff for hours until they were finally furnished their free voter IDs.

**Elisabeth MacNamara, President, League of Women Voters.** The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan civil society groups that over the course of its history has registered thousands of

voters. However in Florida, the League of Women Voters suspended new voter registration drives for fear of running afoul of the state's new laws restricting such activities.

**Lawrence Norden, Brennan Center for Justice**, co-author of the report "Voting Law Changes in 2012". The Brennan Center for Justice is a non-partisan public policy and law institute that focuses on fundamental issues of democracy and justice. Recently, the Center issued a highly cited report that concluded that as many as 5 million voters may be disenfranchised under the new voting laws enacted by states across the country.

**Laura Murphy, Director, American Civil Liberties Union Washington Legislative Office.** The ACLU works daily in courts, legislatures and communities to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties guaranteed by law, including voting rights. The ACLU has litigated voting rights cases across the country and their staff is familiar with the legal and constitutional issues presented by the new changes to state voting laws.

**Barbara R. Arnwine, Executive Director, Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.** The Lawyers Committee is a nonpartisan, non-profit organization formed to involve the private bar in providing legal services to address racial discrimination. Through its work, the Lawyers Committee is familiar with the potential hurdles created by the new state voting laws and the historic challenges minority communities have faced in order to participate in our democracy.

**Matthew Segal, co-founder and President of OUR TIME and former Executive Director of Student Association for Voter Empowerment (SAVE).** Our Time is a national non-profit network focused on advancing the rights and opportunities of young Americans. Our Time advocates on behalf of students who may face additional challenges to voting under recent changes in state laws. For example, under Texas' new voter ID requirements, a conceal and carry permit is considered a valid form of voter identification but a student ID furnished by a university is not.

**WHEN:** Monday, November 14, 2011 at 2:00 p.m.

**WHERE:** 2141 Rayburn House Office Building

**WHAT:** "Excluded from Democracy: The Impact of Recent State Voting Law Changes"

**WHO:** Representative John Conyers, Jr. (D-Mich.)  
Representative Steny Hoyer (D-Md.)  
Representative Robert Brady (D-Pa.)  
Representative Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.)  
Representative Emanuel Cleaver II (D-Mo.)  
Representative Keith Ellison (D-Minn.)  
Representative Steve Cohen (D-Tenn.)

Representative Shelia Jackson Lee (D-Texas)  
Representative Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-Va.)  
Representative Marcia Fudge (D- Ohio)  
Other Members of the House of Representatives

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