



# PRESS RELEASE

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## MAYOR MAYNARD JACKSON AND ATLANTA COALITION ANNOUNCE SUPPORT FOR VOTING ACT EXTENSION

ATLANTA, GA..... A coalition composed of human rights and civil rights organizations was joined by Mayor Maynard Jackson today in announcing support for the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act.

The measure, which comes before the U.S. House of Representatives this Fall, would extend the 1965 Voting Rights Act through 1992 and would provide a new way for jurisdictions covered by the Act to "bail-out." Under the new provision, states would no longer have to bail-out as a unit but states and or counties could come out from under coverage once they prove that they have not had discriminatory voting practices for the ten years previous to the bail-out suit.

The coalition supporting the extension of the Voting Rights Act is composed of the Voter Education Project (VEP), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the National Conference of Black Mayors (NCBM), the Atlanta Urban League, the Southern Regional Council (SRC), the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Social Change, the Georgia Black Legislative Caucus, the Institute of the Black World (IBW), and the Equal Rights Congress.

Acting as spokesperson for the coalition, Mayor Jackson stated, "The Voting Rights Act of 1965 changed the face of an unjust electoral system

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and brought millions of formerly disenfranchised citizens into the mainstream. The protection of the federal government is still needed to ensure the right of all our citizens to register, to vote, and to have their votes count. We urge citizens to contact their congresspersons and encourage them to support this measure which means so much to so many."

Geraldine G. Thompson, executive director of the Voter Education Project, which is the organizer of this coalition, added, "The Voting Rights Act is the most important civil rights law ever passed. The bill now before Congress provides for the Act's extension with new provisions which we believe are fair and workable. We call on all who believe in participatory democracy to support the extension of this vital Act."