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CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST, INC. STATEMENT ON VOTER SUPPRESSION EFFORTS

The Supreme Court, in a 6-3 split, ruled on Thursday, July 1, 2021 that two controversial Arizona voting laws do not violate the Voting Rights Act (VRA). Undeniably this decision weakens voting rights legislation as nationwide debate centers on Americans' access to the ballot.

As we approach critical 2021 elections, pivotal 2022 midterm elections, and the 2024 presidential primaries, protecting the right to vote, fair elections, and unrestricted access to the ballot box has never been more crucial. The draconian voter restrictions recently signed into law by Texas governor Gregory Abbott underscore this urgency. Under the guise of "making it harder for cheaters to vote," every effort is being made by those determined to restrict our freedoms and deny us justice, to suppress our votes. Congress must pass the **John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (JLVRAA)** to protect the right to vote and to expand registration and voting access for all communities.

The Church Of God In Christ, as the world's foremost African American Pentecostal denomination, challenges elected congressional leaders to respect the sacrifices made by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Medgar Evers, and so many others to ensure the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 by voting in support of the JLVRAA. Further, we stand against all measures introduced and issued by states prohibiting citizen access to vote. Currently 17 states have enacted 28 new laws that restrict voting access and we anticipate others will seek to do the same. Therefore, we call upon Congress to act according to Isaiah 1:17(a), "Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression;" and protect the rights of all regardless of ethnicity, race or political affiliation.

Founded in 1907 by Bishop Charles Harrison Mason and headquartered in Memphis, TN, The Church of God in Christ is one of the oldest Pentecostal denominations in the World and the 4th largest Protestant group in the United States with 10,000 churches in over 112 countries worldwide and millions of adherents.

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