



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 111<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Washington, D.C.

Tuesday, September 14, 2010

## *House of Representatives*

### VISCLOSKY COMMEMORATES 45<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF VOTING RIGHTS ACT

**Madam Speaker:** I rise today with a great sense of honor to commemorate the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the enactment of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson on August 6, 1965, it is important for us as a group to honor this important piece of legislation that helped America fulfill its promise.

The Voting Right Act of 1965 ensured that African Americans' 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment rights were protected and enforced. The 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment guarantees every American their right to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any other State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Before this piece of legislation was passed African Americans in many parts of the country were unable to exercise the most fundamental right of a democracy.

This historic piece of legislation was too meaningful to be forestalled by the habitual partisan fighting that has historically come to define Congress. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 32 to 74 and the Senate by a vote of 79 to 18. These margins evidence the fact that the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was a bill that didn't just protect the rights of minorities in America, but helped the country heal past injustices and become closer to reaching the ultimate promise of ensuring equal freedom to all.

Although we have come a long way to ensuring the equal protection of rights of every single American, we must never stop fighting against the forces of hate and ignorance that exist. Much remains to be done before true equality can be found in both Northwest Indiana and America as a whole.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me commemorating the Voting Rights Act of 1965. When we feel like today's struggles for equality are too much to handle, we must take the time to look back on how far we have come and find the strength to fight on from the advances in freedom and liberty that have occurred in our not so distant past.