

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

SILVER LAKE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL OFFICERS Clint Lukens Renee Nahum CO-CHAIRS Charles Herman- Wurmfeld VICE-CHAIR Anthony Crump TREASURER Rusty Millar SECRETARY	CALIFORNIA	SILVER LAKE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL Serving the Silver Lake Community Since 2003 TELEPHONE: (323) 413-SLNC (7562) FAX: (323) 661-7564 2658 Griffith Park Blvd #377 Los Angeles, CA 90039
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Community Impact Statement, adopted unanimously by the Silver Lake Neighborhood Council governing board, 2-7-13

We support the (reintroduction of) the Voter Empowerment Act which, among other things, allows citizens to register to vote and update their voter information on line, guarantees sufficient days of early voting, and bans deceptive advertisements aimed at suppressing voter turnout; and the Fair Accurate Secure and Timely (FAST) Act, which provides financial support to states to conduct elections more efficiently and more fairly. These Acts can help citizens freely exercise their most fundamental right of voting, at a time when such rights have too often been under assault.

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REQUEST FOR AGENDA ITEM SEEKING APPROVAL OF FUNDING, PROGRAMS, OR EVENTS

Date January 29, 2013
Name/Committee Governmental Affairs

Text of Motion on the Agenda*: moves that the Silver Lake Neighborhood Council adopt the following Community Impact Statement regarding Council File: 13-0002-S17 (S. 123/HR 12, the Voter Empowerment Act – Representative John Lewis and Senator Kirsten Gillibrand; and S.85, the Fair Accurate Secure and Timely – FAST – Act – Senator Chris Coons) and furthermore, that it be requested that all fellow neighborhood councils consider adopting the same or similar CIS:

We support the (reintroduction of) the Voter Empowerment Act which, among other things, allows citizens to register to vote and update their voter information on line, guarantees sufficient days of early voting, and bans deceptive advertisements aimed at suppressing voter turnout; and the Fair Accurate Secure and Timely (FAST) Act, which provides financial support to states to conduct elections more efficiently and more fairly. These Acts can help citizens freely exercise their most fundamental right of voting, at a time when such rights have too often been under assault.

Describe the event/project in detail. Include as much supplemental information as possible (background information; supporting and opposing viewpoints, if available, etc.) Attach additional sheets as necessary. Background information regarding the two Acts is attached. The City of Los Angeles Resolution regarding these Acts can be found at [HYPERLINK "http://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2013/13-0002-S17_RESO_01-25-13.pdf"](http://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2013/13-0002-S17_RESO_01-25-13.pdf)
http://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2013/13-0002-S17_RESO_01-25-13.pdf.

What is the perceived/potential impact on the community if we adopt the motion (pro and con)?

Pro: Our nation's greatness is endangered and demeaned when voters are unnecessarily kept from voting, or when they are intimidated from voting. Helping people to exercise their legitimate right to vote increases individual participation and promotes a spirit of ownership and responsibility regarding our shared society and its direction.

Con: It can be argued that neighborhood councils should only concern themselves with purely municipal problems experienced on their own local streets.

What is the total budget for the project? How much is the SLNC asked to commit? Are there alternate funding sources? (Please attach itemized budget.) N/A

What is the timeline for the project? (Be sure to include deadline for Board action, major dates, etc.) If adopted, the Community Impact Statement will be filed with the City and will be shared with leadership of all other neighborhood councils and neighborhood council alliances, within one week's time.

From which budget line(s) are the funds to be drawn? N/A

How will this motion be implemented, and by whom? The motion will be implemented by the co-chair(s) of the Governmental Affairs committee.

*If motion is approved, please be sure to see the Treasurer to fill out a Demand Warrant so that payment may be issued promptly.

Kirsten Gillibrand Introducing Voter Empowerment Act In Senate (Huffington Post)

WASHINGTON -- Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.) is introducing the Voter Empowerment Act Friday, a measure designed to protect voting rights as dozens of states have recently passed laws adding restrictions to voting.

The measure seeks to both expand voter registration, a goal of voting-rights activists, and ensure "integrity," which authors of state laws cite as the reason to pass such restrictive voter ID laws.

"We've come too far in our nation's history to re-fight old battles over voting rights that already have been won," Gillibrand said in a statement. "Instead of adding new burdens on voters, we should be giving them new protections. Ensuring that every vote counts is a cornerstone of our democracy that should be embraced by both sides of the aisle."

Gillibrand joins Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.), a leader in the civil rights movement who marched at "Bloody Sunday" in Selma, Ala. At the Democratic convention in Charlotte, N.C., Lewis [HYPERLINK "http://www.nationaljournal.com/conventions-speeches/john-lewis-s-speech-full-text-from-the-democratic-national-convention-20120906"](http://www.nationaljournal.com/conventions-speeches/john-lewis-s-speech-full-text-from-the-democratic-national-convention-20120906) \t "_hplink" [linked his](#) experience in the civil rights movement to GOP efforts to "suppress the vote." Lewis has already introduced the Voter Empowerment Act in the House.

"It should be easy to vote, as simple as getting a glass of water, in a society that believes in the immutable right of every human being to determine his or her own future," Lewis said in a statement. "We must eliminate every barrier and impediment to the electoral process to make voting fair, accessible, and an accurate representation of the will of the people. The vote is the most powerful non-violent tool we have in a democratic society to build."

The legislation has been referred to several committees in the GOP-controlled House and has 140 co-sponsors.

According to the [HYPERLINK](#)

"http://www.brennancenter.org/content/resource/2012_summary_of_voting_law_changes/" \t "_hplink" [Brennan Center For Justice at New York University](#), 25 laws restricting voting rights have passed since 2011, 17 of which could impact the November elections. A battle over Pennsylvania's voter ID law is currently brewing in the courts, with the state Supreme Court asking a lower court to review its decision upholding the law.

Here are the full details of the legislation, from Gillibrand's office:

Open access to the ballot box by:

Modernizing the voter registration system

Authorizing an online registration option

Authorizing same-day registration and permitting voters to update their registration data onsite

Providing additional tools to alleviate any additional burdens for people with disabilities

Requiring all universities that receive federal funds to offer and encourage voter registration to their students

Simplifying registration and ensuring that ballots from all military personnel serving overseas are counted

Ensure integrity of process by:

Authorizing funds for training poll workers and setting standards for polling place practices

Requiring provisional ballots be available and counted at all polling places

Prohibiting voter caging and designating it as a felony

Protecting against deceptive practices and intimidation

Protect accountability of result by:

Establishing a national voter hotline to ensure timely reporting and corrective action of voting related issues

Setting standards for voting machines to ensure accurate tabulation and confirmation of voter intent paper copy verification

Reauthorizing the Election Assistance Commission to ensure that the highest standards are being met nationwide to guarantee fair elections

Senator Coons introduces FAST Voting Act to help states improve their elections

The Fair, Accurate, Secure and Timely Voting Act would create a competitive grant program to encourage states to speed election reforms

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Chris Coons (D-Del.), a member of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights, introduced legislation Thursday to make substantial improvements in the states' administration of their elections to make voting faster and more accessible to all voters. The *Louis L. Redding Fair, Accurate, Secure and Timely (FAST) Voting Act of 2012* would create a competitive grant program in the model of *Race to the Top*, encouraging states to aggressively pursue election reform. The states that demonstrate the most comprehensive and promising reform plans will earn a greater portion of the grant funding.

"Too many voters waited far too long to cast their ballots in this last election," Senator Coons said.

"Long lines are a form of voter disenfranchisement, a polling place running out of ballots is a form of voter suppression, and making it harder for citizens to vote is a violation of voters' civil rights. This is the United States of America and the right to vote is in our DNA: we have to get this right. The *FAST Voting Act* is a creative way to jumpstart states' election reform efforts and ensure that what happened last week doesn't happen again."

The bill was introduced just over a week after an Election Day that saw extraordinarily long lines and a myriad of voting issues in more than a dozen states, including Florida, Pennsylvania, Colorado, Ohio, New York, Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Virginia, South Carolina, Montana, Tennessee, Hawaii, Arizona, Rhode Island and more.

This bill authorizes a federal program that would award grants based on how well applicant states are able to improve access to the polls in at least nine specified ways, including:

- Providing flexible registration opportunities, including same-day registration;
- Providing early voting, at a minimum of 9 of the 10 calendar days preceding an election;
- Providing absentee voting, including no-excuse absentee voting;
- Providing assistance to voters who do not speak English as a primary language;
- Providing assistance to voters with disabilities, including visual impairment;
- Providing effective access to voting for members of the armed services;
- Providing formal training of election officials, including State and county administrators and volunteers;
- Auditing and reducing waiting times at polling stations; and
- Creating contingency plans for voting in the event of a natural or other disaster.

The program also requires an assessment of steps the state has taken to eliminate statutory, regulatory, procedural and other barriers to expedited voting and accessible voter registration.

"Improving the mechanics of our elections is one thing, but we can't afford for the laws and regulations that govern the administration of our elections to contribute to the widespread disenfranchisement and suppression of voters," Senator Coons said. "That's why the *FAST Voting Act* would consider the legal climate fostered by a state when it applies for a grant in this program. States would need to show they are working to expand access, not limit it."

The bill is named for Louis L. Redding, a prominent civil rights advocate who became the first

African American to be admitted to the Delaware bar in 1929. He challenged school segregation in court and was part of the legal team that challenged *Brown v. Board of Education* before the U.S. Supreme Court.