



# City of Aventura

Government Center  
19200 West Country Club Drive  
Aventura, Florida 33180

August 7, 2013

Ranking Member Chuck Grassley  
and Members of the Judiciary Committee  
United States Senate  
135 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Restoration of Protection of Voting Rights Act Hearing Follow-Up

Dear Senator Grassley:

Thank you for your letter and follow-up question to my testimony on July 17th regarding what specific language I propose to amend the Voting Rights Act in light of the Shelby County decision. I am very happy to provide you my response below for the record.

The Supreme Court, Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle, and communities across our country have all acknowledged and reminded us that discrimination in voting still exists, that the Voting Rights Act work is still not done, and its valuable protections are still very much needed in 21st Century America. Laws and policies that selectively diminish opportunities for Latinos and other underrepresented voters to participate in elections continue to be enacted throughout the country, and demand a multi-faceted, dynamic solution in the form of a renewed and strengthened Voting Rights Act.

An amended Voting Rights Act should provide for the strongest possible enforcement of Constitutional guarantees against racial or ethnic discrimination in voting, a task that is firmly committed to Congress. An updated Voting Rights Act might, therefore, focus federal oversight on policies or practices that have been shown to discriminate against voters based on race or ethnicity, rather than on denoting whole jurisdictions as either bad or benign. A revised VRA shall also arm the federal courts with the tools they need to ensure the promise of the Constitution is real for all voters.

A modernized Voting Rights Act ought to also provide workable means by which discriminatory voting practices will come to the attention of interested and relevant parties, as well as practical procedures for conducting timely review of those laws most likely to violate federal voting rights laws. These are all critical areas that will ensure American voters once again feel protected when exercising their right to vote.

On behalf of all whom I represent and those whose concerns I voice, I thank you for your work in this very important issue. I remain available to the Senate and House through this delicate process, and trust that American voting rights' protections will be properly and timely restored.

Humbly yours,

Luz Urbáez Weinberg  
Commissioner, City of Aventura, FL  
Vice President, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials  
PHONE: 305-466-8900 • FAX: 305-466-8939

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