



From the desk of

Parren J. Mitchell, M. C.

4/28/77

I have initiated off on this
primarily for the sake of
maintaining a unity front.
One area of concern is whether
or not as a matter of
strategy expansion should be
accomplished by adding
another title to the law
rather than adding a title to
the bill. Have we fully
resolved the issue of
constitutional challenges
which may tie us up in
endless litigation thus
rendering the act
impotent while it is in
litigation?

Congressional Black Caucus

306 House Annex

Washington, D.C. 20515

202-225-1691

APRIL 24, 1975

Charles Rangel, Chairman, N.Y.
Yvonne B. Burke, Vice Chairperson, Calif.
Walter Fauntroy, Secretary, D.C.
Andrew Young, Treasurer, Georgia

Shirley Chisholm, N.Y.
William Clay, Mo.
Cardiss Collins, Ill.
John Conyers, Mich.
Ronald Dellums, Calif.
Charles Diggs, Mich.
Harold Ford, Tenn.
Augustus Hawkins, Calif.
Barbara Jordan, Texas
Ralph Metcalfe, Ill.
Parren Mitchell, Md.
Robert N. C. Nix, Pa.
Louis Stokes, Ohio

MEMORANDUM

TO: CBC Members

FROM: Charles B. Rangel

RE: Caucus Position on Extension and Expansion
of the Voting Rights Act

At the April 22nd Caucus meeting, a Caucus position on extension of the Voting Rights Act was discussed. Those present agreed, with one reservation, to support extension of the Act and expansion to cover Spanish-speaking areas. This memorandum presents the current status of the Voting Rights Act extension bill and requests formal agreement of all Caucus members on that bill.

STATUS: The Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights of House Judiciary marked-up the Voting Rights Act and reported out a clean bill, H.R. 6219 on April 23rd. That bill calls for a ten (10) year extension of the Act, a permanent ban on literacy tests, and includes an expansion of the Act to cover Spanish-speaking persons in many areas (all of Texas and Alaska, scattered counties in California, Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado). This is accomplished by extending the act to members of a "language minority", in a new section 4(f). This is defined to include American Indians, Asian-Americans, Alaskan Natives and those of Spanish heritage. Further, "test or device" is defined to include English-only election materials where over 5 percent of the voting age population is of a single "language minority". Full Judiciary Committee consideration will be on Tuesday, April 29th.

The Senate Constitutional Rights Subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee has held several days of hearings.

ISSUE: The only major issue for the Congressional Black Caucus has been the inclusion of Spanish-Speaking and other minorities under the act's protections. While the Caucus legislative agenda

MEMORANDUM

page two

April 24, 1975

supports the concept of extending the act's coverage to Spanish-speaking and other minorities who face severe problems of disenfranchisement", we have not yet taken a position on a specific bill and method of such inclusion.

At Tuesday's Caucus meeting, eight of nine members expressed support for the House subcommittee's bill (members present: Rangel, Jordan, Mitchell, Young, Hawkins, Diggs, Metcalfe, Collins and Burke - staff present for members: Conyers, Chisholm and Fauntroy). Parren Mitchell expressed some reservation, questioning whether manpower would be available in the Justice Department to handle new areas covered by the bill. Barbara Jordan has been deeply involved in drafting the bill and strongly supports H.R. 6219. She pointed out that coverage of Texas under the act would protect Blacks as well as Chicanos, that the most invidious type of discrimination exists in Texas, and that Texas still has multi-member state legislative districts.

Given the strong support at the Caucus meeting of what is now H.R. 6219, the Caucus staff is prepared to move ahead and develop congressional district support among black elected officials and key organizations pending final approval by Caucus members today.

I hope you will be able to initial the attached approval sheet today.

SUPPORT OF H.R. 6219

(Extension of the Voting Rights Act with Coverage for Spanish-Speaking)

MEMBER

SUPPORT

NON-SUPPORT

Burke

Y. J. J.

Chisholm **S.C.**

approve

Clay *W.C.*

approve

Collins

Approve. @.

Conyers

approve C. J. C.

Dellums

W. J. B.

Diggs

C. J. S. W.

Fauntroy

C. J. S. W.

Ford *H. R. G.*

O. K.

Hawkins

O. K. - G. M.

Jordan

B. J. M.

Metcalf

O. K.

Mitchell

~~Sum. B. J. M. C. J. S. W.~~

Nix

C. J. S. W.

Rangel

O. K.

Stokes

O. K.

Young

Ames!

[Handwritten signature]