

NEWS

Geo. Crockett, Jr. CONGRESSMAN

13th District
Michigan

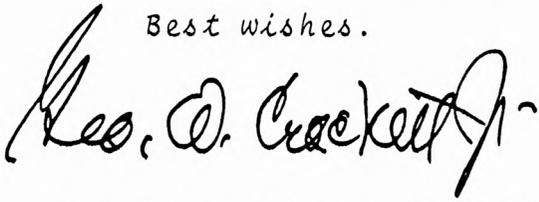
1531 Longworth
Washington, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-2261

* * * * *

Dear Friend,

I thought you might be interested in seeing the remarks I made in the House of Representatives on Friday regarding the Voting Rights Act extension.

Best wishes.



* * * * *

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

October 2, 1981

SUPPORT THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT

Mr. Chairman, in the summer of 1964, I left my law office in Detroit and went down to Mississippi, to volunteer my services to defend civil rights workers who were engaged in voter registration. In those days, it was almost impossible for blacks to become registered voters in the State of Mississippi.

Among the young people engaged in that campaign who consulted with me were three young men - Michael Schwermer, Andrew Goodman and James Chaney. I am sure that those names are familiar to those of you who were around in those days, because the day after they talked with me about voter registration, they disappeared in the vicinity of the city of Philadelphia, Mississippi, and a few days later their murdered bodies were found buried in a shallow grave. The deaths of those three civil rights workers perhaps accounted more than anything else for President Johnson insisting that Congress pass the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

I was back in Mississippi not very long ago, and the changes that have been wrought as a result of this Act are outstanding. Today Mississippi has more black elected public officials than any other State in the Nation. But the prevalence of voting rights abuses which caused the development of this Voting Rights Act has not ended, Mr. Chairman. That was made clear in the extensive hearings before the Judiciary Committee and its subcommittee, as well as in the informal gatherings around the country and in the studies conducted by civil rights organizations, and others, over the years. Just last month, in New York City, the Federal Court enjoined a discriminatory City Council election when that city failed to get preclearance of its election law changes under section 5.

In Richmond, Virginia, Mr. Chairman, the Federal Court also had to step in when a new redistricting statute was found in violation of the Voting Rights Act.

These and other cases attest to the ongoing need for this legislation and the judicial remedies it establishes, to protect the Constitutional rights of voters around the country.

I strongly urge my colleagues in the House to fully support the Voting Rights Act extension and to vote against all crippling amendments.