



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose M. Serrano

Senator Serrano Joins U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand and other Elected Officials Urging Congress to Restore the Protections of the Voting Rights Act

JOSÉ M. SERRANO August 7, 2013

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(South Bronx, NY) - Senator José M. Serrano joined U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr., Congressman José E. Serrano, and other elected officials at the Bronx County Courthouse urging Congress to restore the protections of the Voting Rights Act. This past June, key provisions of the Voting Rights Act were gutted by the Supreme Court's decision to strike down Section 4(b) of the Act. This section of the law was used in determining which states and counties required close federal monitoring to help prevent suppression of minority voting.

"Section 4(b) was instrumental in ensuring that voters across our country were protected against voter suppression efforts," said Senator Serrano. "Since the Supreme Court's decision,

laws that weaken the basic American right to vote have already passed in states like North Carolina and are being introduced in state legislatures across the nation. These laws appear to be designed to disenfranchise voters, especially in communities of color," continued Serrano.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 required federal review when proposing changes to a city or state's election law and redrawing district lines in certain localities - including the counties of Manhattan and the Bronx.

"I would like to thank Senator Gillibrand for her leadership on this issue, and convening this very important press conference in the Bronx. The right to vote is the cornerstone of a truly representative government. The recent decision by the Supreme Court to strike down the Voting Rights Act weakens our democracy and upends important policies that have been vital in ensuring equality among voters. I urge Congress to act quickly to rewrite the law and ensure voter protection, especially in poor communities and communities of color. I also stand in full support of Senator Gillibrand's Voter Empowerment Act, legislation which would modernize the voter registration system, protect against deceptive practices and intimidation, and promote accountability by setting standards for voting machines to ensure accurate tabulation," concluded Serrano.