August 24, 2021

The Honorable Terri Sewell  
2201 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Sewell:

AARP, on behalf of our nearly 38 million members and all older Americans, is proud to support H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021. The right to vote is the most fundamental of all political rights, and all Americans must be able to exercise their vote freely, easily, and safely.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA) has been our nation’s preeminent law protecting the voting rights of all Americans. But recent Supreme Court decisions have weakened several provisions of the law. H.R. 4 would help restore the law and ensure the protections contained in the 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution are enforced, by:

- Creating a new coverage formula for all states and political subdivisions that takes into consideration repeated voting rights violations in the preceding 25 years;
- Establishing a process for reviewing voting changes, focusing on measures that have historically been used to discriminate, including voter ID laws, the reduction of multilingual voting materials, changes to voting districts, and reductions in the number of polling locations;
- Increasing transparency through public notice when voting changes are made;
- Expanding voting accessibility for Native American and Alaska Native voters;
- Allowing the Attorney General authority to request federal observers where there is a threat of racial discrimination in voting;
- Allowing a federal court to order states or jurisdictions to be covered for results-based violations;
- Clarifying that a voting change or practice is discriminatory even if other forms of voting are available to a protected class and;
- Directing the Judicial Branch to discount a state or locality’s claims of fraud as a reason to pass harmful voting laws if no evidence is presented of such fraud.

AARP looks forward to working with Congress and the Administration to ensure every citizen’s right to vote. If you have questions, please contact AARP Government Affairs Senior Vice President Bill Sweeney at bsweeney@aarp.org or (202) 434-3750.

Sincerely,

Nancy A. LeaMond  
Executive Vice President and  
Chief Advocacy & Engagement Officer