



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **LDF WELCOMES HOUSE PASSAGE OF THE D.C. HOUSE VOTING RIGHTS ACT**

Theodore M. Shaw, LDF Director-Counsel and President, praised the House of Representatives' passage of the District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act of 2007. The vote on Wednesday, April 18<sup>th</sup> represents an important step toward resolving the long-standing problem of vote denial for D.C. residents. This landmark legislation would permanently provide District of Columbia residents with a meaningful voice in the Congress.

"The House vote was a historic step aimed at addressing a form of disfranchisement that disproportionately affects significant numbers of African Americans," said Ted Shaw, LDF Director-Counsel and President. "This bill will extend the right to vote to D.C. residents who have, for too long, been unable to meaningfully participate in our nation's political process."

A bipartisan effort, the bill expands the size of the House of Representatives to 437 members – D.C.'s current Representative will become a voting member and Utah will gain an additional seat. It is now in the hands of the Senate and then the President to pass the bill and remove one of the most significant legally sanctioned barriers obstructing voter access today.

Throughout its history, LDF has worked to provide greater access to the ballot box. LDF's support of the D.C. House Voting Rights Act comes on the heels of Congress's recent reauthorization of the expiring provisions of the Voting Rights Act. Congress in passing the reauthorization bill reaffirmed its commitment to dismantling barriers that inhibit the vote. The D.C. House Voting Rights Act represents a measured effort to dismantle an unnecessary and unwise barrier that has disenfranchised substantial numbers of otherwise eligible citizens.

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