

Editorial: Restore protections in Voting Rights Act

Publisher's Note: This editorial is from the March 9, 2015, Los Angeles Times.

In his eloquent speech at the 50th anniversary of the march in Selma, Ala., President Obama did more than salute the men and women who braved “billy clubs and the chastening rod; tear gas and the trampling hoof” to demand the right to vote. He also exhorted Congress to honor their legacy by restoring protections of the Voting Rights Act that the Supreme Court stripped away almost two years ago.

Noting that some 100 members of Congress had come to Selma to commemorate the march, Obama said: “If we want to honor this day, let that hundred go back to Washington and gather four hundred more, and together, pledge to make it their mission to restore that law this year. That’s how we honor those on this bridge.”

Yet, thanks largely to opposition from Republicans, prospects are poor for legislation that would restore a role for the federal government in combating racial discrimination in voting.

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