The Voting Rights Act: Factors that Influenced Its Creation and Most Recent Renewal

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Introduction

From its foundation, the United States has actively engaged in protecting the rights of its citizens. Because the health of a democracy is dependent upon an active citizenry, the protection of voting rights is a noble pursuit. Madison argued, in the Federalist Paper #10, that “either the existence of the same passion or interest in a majority at the same time must be prevented, or the majority, having such coexistent passion or interest, must be rendered, by their number and local situation, unable to concert and carry into effect schemes of oppression” (Madison 1787: 03). The rights of minorities need protection because minorities lack the social and legal benefits of the majority. The Voting Rights Act (VRA) has been instrumental in the protection of minority voting rights; the reason why Congress enacted the VRA was to eliminate voting dilution throughout the South (Reynolds 2006: 05). The Voting Rights Act can be considered as an effective anti-discrimination voting measure (Reynolds 2006: 05). Ultimately, the VRA is one of the most important pieces of legislation of its time because it perfected problems with previous civil rights laws and provided an effective mechanism in which the government could reduce vote dilution.

In order to understand why Congress voted for the original Act and the 2006 renewal, the factors that influenced individual congressmen’s votes are incredibly important to discuss. The factors that affected members’ votes on the voting rights issue in both 1965 and 2006 were public outcry, interest group sway, political party pressure, and executive influence. Political parties are important because they improve group influence,
eliminate factions, and stabilize majority rule (Ryden 2000: 90). Parties influence congressmen’s votes because they lie at the center of the government’s decision-making process (Ryden 2000: 95). Interest groups influence legislators’ votes because by casting his vote, the congressman makes himself visible particularly to interest groups who will determine whether or not they are willing to support the candidate (Kingdon 1989: 04); “lobbyists and interest groups of every description calculate what legislators are likely to accept, consider how they can achieve their goals through the legislative process, decide which strategies work and which do not, and assess the reasons for their successes and failures in shaping legislative decisions in accordance with their wishes” (Kingdon 1989: 03). Constituents affect member’s voting decisions because they hold their legislators accountable when they vote. Furthermore, the Executive can affect particularly members of his own party because of the power that the Executive holds and the support that the President can offer to members of Congress.

Why, after more than a decade of trying did Congress finally pass meaningful voter reform? In regard to the creation of the VRA, I discovered that public outcry had the greatest impact on the voting choices of congressmen because of public outrage over Selma and the level of vote dilution that had occurred in the South. Both political parties and the Executive had a medium affect on members’ votes. Political parties did sway legislators’ votes because of the partisan nature of voting rights and the changes to the political party structure in the South. President Johnson impacted the creation of the Act because of the amount of pressure that he put on Congress to pass the legislation. However, in 1965, interest groups had a much smaller role in creating the initial Act
because of the newness of the civil rights movement and the existence of only a limited number of interest groups that were interested in protecting the voting rights of minorities.

Why did Congress, roughly 50 years later, renew the Act? In terms of the 2006 renewal of the Act, I found that interest groups had the most sway over members’ votes because of the number of interest groups involved in the fight to protect minority voting rights and the sheer magnitude of the coalition’s successes. Both political parties and the President had a medium impact on legislators’ votes. All members of the Democratic Party as well as most Republicans impacted the eventual renewal of the VRA by firmly standing behind the extension of the Act and voting in favor of the Act. However, some Republicans influenced the renewal of the Act by causing a rebellion and refusing to vote in favor of the VRA. The President also affected the 2006 extension of the VRA because he publicly stood behind the Act and encouraged Congress to act similarly. Finally, public outcry did not significantly impact the renewal of the Act because the level of vote dilution had declined dramatically since the creation of the Act and public outrage over vote dilution had simmered.
Chapter 1: History of the VRA: 1965-1975

The 1965 Voting Rights Act:

Prior to the creation of the 1965 Voting Rights Act (VRA), equal voting rights did not exist for both African Americans and other minorities (Hudson 1998: 01); “although civil rights had a long history as a political and legislative issue, the 1960s marked a period of intense activity by the federal government to protect minority rights” (“Major Features of…” 2006: 01). The first major piece of congressional legislation to address civil rights was the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The purpose of the Act was to dramatically enhance the “quality of life” for minorities living in the United States (“Major Features of…” 2006: 01). The 1964 Civil Rights Act “barred unequal application of voter registration requirements, but did not abolish literacy tests sometimes used to disqualify African Americans and poor white voters, outlawed discrimination in hotels, motels, restaurants, theaters, and all other public accommodations engaged in interstate commerce […], encouraged the desegregation of public schools […], authorized but did not require withdrawal of federal funds from programs which practiced discrimination, and outlawed discrimination in employment” (“Major Features of…” 2006: 01). Although the Act attempted to reduce discrimination of minorities, the Act was not incredibly affective and did not eliminate all problems associated with discrimination (“Major Features of…” 2006: 01).
President Johnson attempted to rectify the injustices done to minorities in the United States by dedicating his presidency to the establishment of the Great Society (Hudson 1998: 01). Despite the creation of several influential civil rights acts, the civil rights movement was newly formed and the image of the Great Society was not yet realized (Hudson 1998: 01). The creation of the Voting Rights Act in 1965 ushered in the dawn of the civil rights movement and a better society.

Unlike the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act focused specifically on voting Rights. The 1965 Act’s sole purpose was to eliminate impediments to registration and fraud that caused vote dilution for minorities (Peacock 1997: 345). The 1965 VRA was a departure from previous civil rights legislation because it provided for “direct federal action to enable blacks to register and vote, it placed the initiative for enforcement firmly in the executive branch and made unnecessary the case-by-case litigation that had been required” (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 17). Congress, unlike in later renewals of the Act, disregarded the impact that different types of elections have on minority voting (Peacock 1997: 345).

The results of the original VRA were very decisive. The 1965 Act significantly abridged disenfranchisement. Four years after the creation of the Act, the attorney general was able to send federal inspectors to a total of 64 counties so that they could oversee voter registration and elections (Hudson 1998: 67). In the states that originally came under the Act, African American registration grew from March 1965 to 1971 from 29.2 to 56.6 percent; the difference between black and white registrations greatly decreased
from 44.1 to 11.2 percentage points (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 21). The positive results of the VRA also encouraged a greater number of Southern congressmen to vote in favor of the VRA in the future; “in 1965, only 32 percent of the House southerners supported the Voting Rights Act [...] by 1975, 63 percent of the House southerners supported the Voting Rights Act Amendments” (Hudson 1998: 140). Furthermore, after the creation of the 1965 VRA, various civil rights groups in the Deep South grew in status and power (Ball, Krane, Lauth 1982: 71).

**1969-1970 Renewal of the VRA:**

In 1969, many voters remained passionate about minority rights issues. Civil rights organizations like the NAACP and NUL pushed for a renewal of the Act. The first extension of the Voting rights Act was politically motivated (Weaver 1969: 1) because many politicians were fearful of going against those who desired to further strengthen the VRA (Hudson 1998: 81).

Debate regarding the first extension was quite heated especially in the Senate (Weaver 1969: 1). Many Southern Congressmen, in particular, hoped that the Act would fail altogether and strongly opposed Section five’s pre-clearance requirements and the regional nature of the Act (Hudson 1998: 81). During the 1969 renewal, Attorney General John Mitchell deferred the blame for vote dilution to not only the South but the entire nation and attempted to expand the VRA by banning literacy tests across the nation, removing the Section 5 pre-clearance requirement, and giving “the burden of
voting discrimination proof to federal prosecutors” (Hudson 1998: 82). His plan was heavily scrutinized especially by the House Judiciary Committee and was blatantly rejected. Ultimately, the House Judiciary Committee recommended that the Act should be passed unamended (Hudson 1998: 82).

However, through skillful negotiations, Republicans and some Democrats in the House were able to ensure that parts of the Mitchell proposal passed. In order to make sure that the VRA remained intact, they agreed to a nationwide ban on literacy tests but stipulated that all other requirements should not be changed. Ultimately, the Senate recommendations passed both houses (Hudson 1998: 82), and the VRA, in 1969, was extended for another five years (Hudson 1998: 81).

1975 Renewal of the VRA:

In 1975, the Civil Right Commission went before Congress to issue its report. The commission conceded that voting rights for minorities had improved; however, they argued that the Act was still necessary (Hudson 1998: 109). The Commission contended that “while impressive progress had been made, especially regarding black registration and voting, Justice Department enforcement had been uneven […] discrimination both in terms of disenfranchisement and dilution, still existed” (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 34). Furthermore, the Commission also reported that minority representatives were underrepresented in almost every level of government in the seven covered states (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 34).
Congress used the progress that occurred in Selma to measure progress in the rest of the nation; “the Ford administration struggled with Congress to gain some concessions for the southern legislators upon whom Ford would rely in the next election [;] while the president was not successful in gaining a simple extension, he did rebuff a strong momentum for a ten-year renewal” (Hudson 1998: 109). In 1975, the Congress voted in favor of new language requirements, and continued the sanctions on literacy tests that were created by Congress in 1970 (Hudson 1998: 109). However, an overall expansion of Section 5 was probably the most significant of the 1975 amendments. Congress added to Section 5 a trigger formula which caused “coverage [to] occur if more than 5 percent of the voting-age citizens in the jurisdiction belonged to one language-minority groups (defined as Asian Americans, American Indians, Alaskan natives, and persons of Spanish heritage), fewer than 50 percent of the jurisdiction’s voting–age citizens voted in the 1972 presidential election, and that election was conducted only in English” (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 35-36). This expansion of Section 5 caused various jurisdictions as well as the State of Texas to come under the Act’s special provisions (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 35).
Chapter 2: History of the VRA from 1982-

Present

1982 Renewal of the VRA:

To understand the renewal of the VRA in 1982, it is important to appreciate the affect that various Supreme Court decisions had on minority voting rights. For example, the Bolden case had a tremendous impact on the renewal of the VRA in 1982. Prior to Bolden, the Court ruled in White v. Regester that voting practices could be deemed illegal if they caused minorities to not have an equal opportunity to vote and elect legislators of their choice (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 66); “unequal opportunity could be shown by evidence of the effect of the practice and factors such as a history of discrimination, the existence of cultural and language barriers, racially divisive campaign appeals, limited numbers of minority-elected officials, a depressed socioeconomic status for a minority, and the use of potentially discriminatory majority vote and numbered-post requirements” (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 66-67). However, when compared with the standard set forth in White, the Court created a very different standard to prove dilution in 1980 (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 37-38).

In Bolden, the court decided that in order to prove vote dilution, a defendant must prove intent. The intent standard put a great deal of pressure on the minority plaintiffs in vote dilution cases because after Bolden, the plaintiffs needed to prove intent (Grofman
and Davidson 1992: 38). Because of the *Bolden* decision, the number of voting dilution cases that were both filed and successfully won decreased substantially (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 67). The decision in *Mobile v. Bolden* was responsible for encouraging civil rights activists to become a unified force and helped them to put forth a national voting rights debate (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 67). In response to the decision in *Bolden*, Congress changed the Act in 1982 to eliminate the requirement of proof in order to show intent to the court (Peacock 1997: 348).

In the late 1970’s, the court also showed that it believed that equality of result rather than equality of vote was necessary (Hudson 1998: 03). The Court attempted to create a logical standard to prove racial vote dilution in *Thornburg v. Gingles*; this case effectively contested the legality of multi-member districts (Altman 1998: 180). In 1982, Congress argued whether or not single-member districts hampered minorities’ voting rights. Because “the Supreme Court made some ambiguous decisions concerning equal results, [the Congress was prompted] to amend the act in 1982, in practice, making equal results a statutory requirement [:] from that point on, the litmus test for fairness was the election of minority officials in equal proportion to the constituent population” (Hudson 1998: 03).

Opponents of the amendments argued that jurisdictions that had met the standards set forth in the VRA should be allowed to bailout. They contended that since the VRA had been incredibly effective, Congress should not need to increase the necessary requirements for bail out (Hudson 1998: 144). Although support for the 1982
amendments was not unanimous, supporters of the VRA in the House greatly
overpowered opponents to the amendments (Hudson 1998: 138). Congressional members
outside of the South were guided to vote for the VRA due to simple politics; if a
congressional member had voted against any civil rights legislation, he would have been
accused of not supporting civil rights (Hudson 1998: 140-141). Proponents of the Act
argued that the improvement that the past amendments caused would be lost if the
provisions were not secured in the future (Hudson 1998: 141). They did not want
jurisdictions to be able to bailout even though tremendous progress had occurred in the
advancement of minority voting rights (Hudson 1998: 141).

Most Congressmen contented that the renewal of the VRA was necessary since
the 1976 expansion of the VRA would soon cease to exist and the Court had issued such
an indefensible ruling in Bolden (Hudson 1998:137). In order to make sure that the VRA
did not expire, the provisions that were set expire in 1982 were extended (Grofman and
Davidson 1992: 40). In order to right the Court’s wrong, Congress responded by
continuing section five’s preclearance requirements for twenty-five years and by
broadening section two to limit all voting practices that ultimately resulted in voting
discrimination (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 67).

Ultimately the amendments passed by 385 to 24 in the House of Representatives;
“the Senate passed the bill with revisions by a vote of 85 to 8 and the House ultimately
concurred” (Hudson 1998: 140). Also, 82 percent of congressmen from the South
supported the VRA (Hudson 1998: 140), and every member of Congress that came from
a district with greater than 40 percent African American voted in favor of the 1982 amendments (Hudson 1998: 140). Finally, the amended VRA was approved by President Reagan (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 40).

1992 Renewal of the VRA:

The 1992 renewal of the Act dealt almost specifically with the rights of non-English speaking voters in America. Congress voted to extend Section 203 of the VRA until 2007; if Section 203 was not renewed by 2007, it would end with all of the other provisional requirements along with the remaining temporary provisions; “in extending and amending Section 203, Congress found that the four language minority groups covered by Section 203--Hispanics, Asian-Americans, American Indians, and Alaskan Natives--continue to experience educational inequities, high illiteracy rates, and as a result low voting participation” (“Need for the Original…” 2006: 01). By continuing Section 203, Congress hoped to further the rights of minorities whose language limited their ability to be aided by the VRA. The newly amended Act required that minorities would be given bilingual election resources as well as bilingual election assistance when voting. Also, in order to better protect Native Americans, “Congress made the 5 percent trigger applicable to entire reservations without regard to whether they crossed current jurisdictional boundaries.” (“Need for the Original…” 2006: 01). Although the renewal of the Act mostly focused on expanding the rights of language minorities, it also created a provision which allowed people to register to vote simply by applying for a driver’s
license (Hudson 1998: 03). Congress decided to implement this rule in order to ensure that registration was not simply left to chance (Hudson 1998: 03).

**2006 Renewal of the VRA:**

The 2006 renewal “of the Voting Rights Act [was] named after Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks and Coretta Scott King – three Southern women who represented the heart of the anti-discrimination movement in the 1960’s” (Perine and Ferrechio 2006: 01). One of the most contested debates that occurred during the 2006 renewal of the Act was in reference to Section five’s pre-clearance requirement. Supporters of the requirements believed that pre-clearance was still necessary because it acted as a deterrent for covered jurisdictions by encouraging those jurisdictions to not engage in vote discrimination. (Adegbile 2006: 5). However, opponents to the pre-clearance requirements contended that Congress was incredibly unlikely to find similar voting discrimination practices that previous commissions encountered. Furthermore, opponents claimed, “Congress should change the baseline due to the present so that the state election officials who [knew] of the State’s practices [could] defend them” (Park 2006: 05).

Ultimately, Southern legislators were the most outspoken in opposition to the pre-clearance requirements (Stern, “Voting Rights…” 2006: 03). They attempted to stifle debate after several members complained that the amendments unfairly centered on federal oversight of Southern states (Pantesco 2006: 01). In order to appease Southern Republicans who opposed portions of the Voting Rights Act, Congressional leaders permitted legislators to vote on four GOP amendments (Stern, “Voting Rights…” 2006:
One of the GOP’s amendments “would have limited the requirement to jurisdictions that currently use a discriminatory test or have had voter turnout of less than 50 percent in any of the three most recent presidential elections” (Stern, “Voting Rights…” 2006: 03). This proposed amendment was rejected in the House by 96-318. The second amendment dealing with pre-clearance requirements would have “required the Justice Department to compile annual lists of jurisdictions subject to pre-clearance requirements that have met the standards under current law so that they could be removed from that status” (Stern, “Voting Rights…” 2006: 03). The House rejected this proposal by a vote of 118-302 (Stern, “Voting Rights…” 2006: 03). Ultimately, the 2006 renewal of the Act was passed in the Senate by a vote of 98-0 (Stern, “Senate Clears…” 2006: 01), and when the Voting Act was passed, most Democrats heralded the occasion as a bipartisan victory (Stern, “Voting Rights…” 2006: 03).
Chapter 3: Why Congressmen Vote?

In his study, Kingdon indicates that various factors have an impact on legislators’ voting decisions. To Kingdon, floor voting is crucial to the discernment of policy-making and to the understanding of the greater polity; by casting his vote, the congressman makes himself visible to various actors who then decide whether or not they are willing to support the candidate (Kingdon 1989: 04). He also argues that since congressmen’s political actions encourage different groups of individuals to attempt to influence members’ voting decisions, various political actors such as constituents, party leaders, fellow congressmen, etc., can become engaged in the political process (Kingdon 1989: 05). Because Kingdon’s study is theoretically sound and clearly outlines the important factors influencing members’ voting behavior, I will use his study as the basis for my model to determine why congressmen did or did not vote for both the 1965 Voting Rights Act and the 2006 renewal of the VRA.
In Table 1, Kingdon measures the spontaneous mentions of actors in order to determine which factors greatly impact congressmen’ voting decisions. For example, the legislators questioned in his study spontaneously mentioned their fellow congressmen 40% of the time, and they mentioned their colleagues in response to a question 35% of the time. Congressmen spontaneously mentioned constituency almost as much as fellow congressmen, 37% of the time. However, legislators only mentioned congressional staff 5 percent of the time in a spontaneous manner. These results indicate that when questioned, legislators artlessly mentioned the importance of fellow congressmen over any other variable.

In Table 2, Kingdon also questioned legislators regarding how much constituency, fellow congressmen, party leadership, interest groups, administration, staff, and reading influenced their voting choices. For example, 51 percent of congressmen suggested that constituents were of minor importance whereas 31 percent of legislators suggested that constituents were of major importance when deciding how to vote on a particular issue. In regards to interest groups, 25 percent of congressmen claimed that interest groups were of major importance in determining their votes; however, 40 percent of legislators claimed that interest groups were only of minor importance. Furthermore, 21 percent of congressmen argued that the administration was of minor importance whereas 14% of legislators suggested that the administration greatly influenced their voting decisions. Therefore, it is evident that the members questioned in Kingdon’s study believed that
fellow congressmen impacted their voting decisions more so than constituency, party leadership, interest groups, administration, staff, and reading.

**Constituents:**

Constituents affect the voting decisions of their legislators because congressmen “serve at the pleasure of their constituents” (Kingdon 1989: 06). The constituency is the only actor to whom congressmen are directly held accountable (Kingdon 1989: 29). Congressmen are frequently asked by their constituents to explain their voting decisions (Kingdon 1989: 47). Politicians usually share the same opinion regarding policy issues as their constituency because for many legislators, they have adopted the same values as their constituents (Kingdon 1989: 45).

Constituents hold their legislators accountable through the re-election process (Kingdon 1989: 29). Also, constituents influence their legislators through direct communication. Direct communication between constituents and their legislators serves several purposes. Most direct communication comes in the form of mail. First, communication via mail serves as an interest centering agent (Kingdon 1989: 54); “the second function served by mail is that it offers some indication of the direction of the constituents’ thinking [:] a third function of communication from the constituency has to do with congressional oversight of administration [:; and] a final function of the mail is for use as an intra-House bargaining tool” (Kingdon 1989: 56). However, mail is not the only form of direct communication that congressmen have with their constituents.
Legislators engage in dialogues with their constituents when they make trips home to their districts (Kingdon 1989: 59).

In Kingdon’s opinion, a rather large percentage of congressmen’s voting decisions are influenced by their constituency (Kingdon 1989: 31). The intensity of constituents’ opinions on various issues will determine how heavily they influence their legislators (Kingdon 1989: 38). In Table 3, it is evident that if constituents feel strongly about a particular issue and the legislator also has strong feelings on the issue, the congressman will redefine the conflict or allow other actors to influence his voting decision; however, if constituents regard this issue more highly than their congressman, the member will prefer to vote with their constituents’ position on the issue. Also, if constituents are not concerned about the issue and their legislator has strong feelings regarding the topic, the legislator will prefer his own position. Furthermore, if both the constituents and their congressman do not have strong feelings about a particular issue, the legislator will consider other actors when making his decision (Kingdon 1989: 38-39).

Even when a congressman’s constituency feels strongly on a certain issue, the congressman can get away with voting against his constituency and still maintain his career (Kingdon 1989: 41). Some evidence suggests that constituents affect the decision making of legislators fairly little. Many constituents will win re-election simply because constituents are usually “unable to sanction congressmen at the polls for votes which are out of keeping with their wishes [;] the fact that voters know so little about their
congressman’s record, furthermore, can be said to indicate that they normally don’t control his behavior” (Kingdon 1989: 30). Since congressmen are not often given specific direction on how to vote by their constituents, legislators are often forced to rely on their own devices and choose freely how to vote (Kingdon 1989: 30).

In this paper, constituents are included under the broader factor, public outcry. Public outcry refers to the level of concern/passion that voters have for a particular issue. I argue that constituents had a large impact on the creation of the VRA in 1965 and a much smaller influence on the renewal of the Act in 2006; it is arguable that constituents were less vocal in the renewal of the Act simply because minority vote dilution has decreased substantially. Ultimately, in my model, I use both gallop poll data and editorials on the VRA to argue that public outcry has declined from 1965 to 2006.

**Fellow Congressmen:**

Once elected, legislators generally turn to their fellow colleagues for guidance particularly toward their party and committee leadership (Kingdon 1989: 07). To provide each other with cues on how to vote, congressmen use information, guidance, and direct advice to reach their fellow legislators (Kingdon 1989: 72). Politicians are an excellent source of guidance for several reasons. Fellow congressmen are able to give opinions that are customized to the congressman’s own political needs (Kingdon 1989: 73). Advice from other congressmen is also incredibly accessible, and most congressmen feel comfortable conversing with their colleagues because congressmen hold equal status
(Kingdon 1989: 72). Furthermore, a member can generally know his fellow colleagues’ trustworthiness and comprehend how good they are at providing advice (Kingdon 1989: 73).

When congressmen choose to seek advice from a fellow legislator, they choose to take advice from someone who they agree politically with (Kingdon 1989: 75). In regard to Table 4, it is evident that Northern, urban, liberal Democrats tend to confer with fellow congressmen who have similar opinions on various issues roughly 85 percent of the time and refer to the opinions of Southern Democrats only 4 percent of the time (Kingdon 1989: 76). Southern Democrats entertain advice from other Southern Democrats 51 percent of the time and listen to the advice of Northern Democrats 14 percent of the time and Republicans 6 percent of the time. Furthermore, Republicans confer with other Republicans 71 percent of the time and consult with Northern Democrats 3 percent of the time and with Southern Democrats merely 1 percent of the time.

Congressmen only tend to seek out informants when a problem needs to be solved. Legislators do not seek advice when trivial matters are involved (Kingdon 1989: 96), and they tend to seek out information regarding issues when they are interested in bargaining with another legislator (Kingdon 1989: 99). Also, credibility is important when choosing a colleague to take advice from; congressmen not only seek informants who not only have similar opinions but also seek out those who are trusted and believed (Kingdon 1989: 82). Because it is incredibly important for congressmen to be thought of as part of the “right crowd,” they try to take advice from legislators that are credible
Members usually will consult legislators that have some understanding of the legislation in question. Moreover, congressmen tend to rely on their colleagues who live in the same vicinity as they do for advice. There are a few reasons why members confer with colleagues from their state delegations; “one is that the congressman simply knows the colleague from his state delegation and feels he can trust him; within the same state party delegation, members have been through many political wars together and they probably largely share the same general attitudes.”

Finally, when deciding whom to accept advice from, seniority plays an important role. Table 5 shows that junior members of Congress consulted with informants who were of a higher seniority 83 percent of the time. Middle congressmen sought advice from more senior members 51 percent of the time, whereas senior members of Congress only consulted with individuals who were of a higher seniority 15 percent of the time. It is arguable that junior legislators consult with senior members of both the House and Senate because they have more experience and information in comparison to junior members. Senior congressmen are able to withhold favors if younger members do not follow their advice. For example, in regard to the passage of a cigarette bill, a junior member said that “one reason the cigarette bill passed was that ‘you had some pretty powerfully placed people who were lobbying for the bill, like ----, a power on appropriations and public works; it’s pretty hard for a congressman to turn a guy like that down, without risking losing a good deal; when in doubt, be safe’”.
important for Southern Democrats and Republicans and less important for Northern Democrats (Kingdon 1989: 93). Furthermore, junior members are more likely to seek advice from individuals within their own party whereas senior congressmen have a wider range of informants (Kingdon 1989: 95).

Unlike in Kingdon’s model, fellow congressmen will not be used as a separate factor. The impact that fellow congressmen have on other legislators’ votes will only be measured as part of the party factor. Fellow congressmen will not be considered separately from party in this paper because party was such an important factor in causing congressmen to encourage their colleagues to vote for or against the VRA. Ultimately, I will use member’s own party affiliations, regional data, and member’s own votes to indicate that political party pressure had a medium impact on congressmen’s votes in regard to both the 1965 and 2006 VRA.

**Formal Party Leadership:**

The formal party leadership can also influence the way that Congressmen vote. Legislators vote in line with their party because the party has a number of sanctions at its disposal that it can utilize against nonconformist party members, “such as committee assignments, passage of pet pieces of legislation, favorable or unfavorable scheduling of bills, and a host of minor favors” (Kingdon 1989: 111). The leadership controls whom gains control of the floor in both the House and Senate (Kingdon 1989: 126). Members like to vote with their leadership when they are politically able to which is when their
constituents do not insist that they vote a particular way and when they, of course, do not hold strong opinions regarding the political issue (Kingdon 1989: 123). The communication system that the leadership has in place requires whips to encourage the members to vote with the party (Kingdon 1989: 129). However, the party’s influence over legislators is not particularly strong even if they are elected by their party to hold a leadership position within the party.

Table 6 indicates that conflicts between party and constituency often affect how often Congressmen vote with their party leadership. On objective measures, conflict between constituency and party occur 48 percent of the time, and tension between constituents and party on subjective matters occurs 17 percent of the time; “when one contrasts the party leadership’s objective position with the congressman’s perception of his constituency’s opinion, a conflict between the two emerges nearly half the time” (Kingdon 1989: 117). Members tend to ignore the position of the leadership because when their opinion is ignored, there is no conflict between the party and the constituency (Kingdon 1989: 118).

Formal party leadership was a weak indicator in Kingdon’s study (Kingdon 1989:110). Because many democratic candidates believe that their party is fragmented, it is understandable that they do not rely on the party to influence their vote (Kingdon 1989: 113). Even though Republicans tend to believe that their party leadership represents them, “Republicans report that the party leadership was not involved in their decisions at all, compared with a 69 percent incidence for Northern Democrats and 77 percent for
Southern Democrats” (Kingdon 1989: 113). Furthermore, legislators that are electorally insecure are less likely to take into account party leadership when making voting decisions when compared with electorally secure members; “71 percent of the insecure congressmen show party leadership as unimportant, compared with 56 percent of the most secure” (Kingdon 1989:114).

In this paper, the influence that party had on the way members voted in regards to the VRA is measured. It is arguable that party did influence how congressmen voted in the creation of the VRA in 1965. Despite the fact that voting rights has become a bipartisan issue, party still had an impact on whether or not Congressmen voted for the 2006 renewal of the VRA.

**Interest Groups:**

It is arguable that interest groups also affect congressmen’s votes (Kingdon 1989: 07). For example, “lobbyists and interest groups of every description calculate what legislators are likely to accept, consider how they can achieve their goals through the legislative process, decide which strategies work and which do not, and assess the reasons for their successes and failures in shaping legislative decisions in accordance with their wishes” (Kingdon 1989: 03). For interest groups to be able to influence congressmen’s votes, a large amount of time and planning is necessary (Kingdon 1989: 158). Advanced planning is indispensable because of how cumbersome the process of lobbying can be. Good timing allows interest groups to either assist or hamper lobbying
efforts (Kingdon 1989:159). Lobbyists also attempt to relay their messages to congressmen who hold similar preexisting values (Kingdon 1989: 165). In order to affect legislation, interest groups speak directly to the committees that draft legislation that is of interest to them. Lobbyists reach out to committees because most of the major determinations affecting lobbyists are made in committee (Kingdon 1989:170). Ultimately, it is literally impossible to launch a massive campaign in order to affect floor activity, and committee members tend to be much more sympathetic to the requests of interests groups when compared with common members of Congress (Kingdon 1989:171).

Congressmen tend to rank interest groups based on the salience of the issue that the interest group represents (Kingdon 1989: 147). Interest groups that are liberal are generally more influential and active than conservative interest groups because “ideologically, liberals are likely to be more interested in changing the status quo than are conservatives and hence more” (Kingdon 1989: 148). Interest groups tend to be more liberal than most of the Congressmen that they lobby, and this can cause significant conflict with in particular, their ability to sway the votes of Republicans and Southern Democrats (Kingdon 1989: 148). The likelihood that a Southern Democrat will vote with the interest group’s position is 49 percent, the odds for a Republican are 51 percent, and for a Northern Democrat the probability is 85 percent (Kingdon 1989:149).

Also, the more visible that an interest group is the more likely it is to influence the votes of congressmen. In support of this theory, a congressman implied that “organizing
is no guarantee that one will succeed, but it appears to be a necessary condition to success” (Kingdon 1989:150). When an interest group has a strong connection with the legislator’s constituency, the legislator is more likely to vote with the interest group (Kingdon 1989:150). Washington based lobbyists are much less likely to get the support of congressmen because they have no direct connection with the congressman’s constituents, and members consistently view the lobbying methods of Washington organizations as corrupt (Kingdon 1989: 151). However, by working through a congressman’s colleagues or constituency base, Washington based interest groups can influence a legislator’s voting decisions (Kingdon 1989: 157).

In this paper, the impact that interest groups have on congressmen’s votes is determined. From various sources of evidence, it is arguable that interest groups’ influence on the Voting Rights Act has increased over time. Interest groups did not greatly impact the creation of the Act in 1965 because at that time, many of the prominent civil rights protective interest groups did not exist. However, today, interest groups are very involved in the voting rights issue as is evidenced by their involvement in various VRA hearings on Capital Hill. I used the number of interest groups involved in both the 1965 VRA and the 2006 renewal of the VRA, the number of interest groups involved in both the 1965 and 2006 Senate Judiciary Committee hearings, and the number of interest group statements made compared to the total number of statements made in both the 1965 and 2006 Judiciary Committee hearings to imply that the influence of interest groups on congressmen’s votes has increased over time.
Executive Branch:

The executive branch also desires to impact legislative outcomes (Kingdon 1989: 07). Of course, the administration does have some influence over congressional members of their own political party (Kingdon 1989: 180). Kingdon’s research was conducted during Nixon’s first congressional session (Kingdon 1989: 177-178). Because Republicans controlled the executive branch during the time of his study, it makes sense that “while Northern Democrats spontaneously mention[ed] the administration in their accounts of their decision only 14 percent of the time, and Southern Democrats [did] so in only 12 percent of the cases, Republicans, without prompting from a question, [brought] up the administration position and activity fully 42 percent of the time” (Kingdon 1989:183).

Even though the executive branch provides Congress with leadership, individual legislators do not pay attention to the President’s advice simply because of partisan causes. When the party affiliation of the President differs with that of a congressman, that congressman is much less likely to follow the advice of the executive branch (Kingdon 1989: 179). Also, a certain level of antagonism exists between the three branches of government (Kingdon 1989:179); administrators believe that congressmen are responsible for “rearranging and even ruining good programs for ‘political’ reasons, while congressmen view the ‘bureaucrats’ as not being sympathetic to their problems and too rigid in adjusting to political realities” (Kingdon 1989:179).
The role of the President in regards to both the creation and renewal of the Act is measured in this paper. I will argue that both President Johnson and President Bush were involved in the VRA. However, it is arguable that the reasons why each President got involved in the creation and renewal of the Act differ greatly. Ultimately, President Johnson influenced the creation of the Act because vote dilution was pervasive, and minorities’ ability to vote was greatly hampered. President Bush got involved in the VRA renewal only when political pressure forced him to support the renewal of the Act. In this paper, I will use the number of speeches made by both President Johnson and Bush on the VRA, the number of State of the Union Addresses that mention the VRA by both President Bush and President Johnson, a list of speeches made by both President Johnson and Bush on the VRA, and individual statements made by both Presidents on the VRA to indicate that both Presidents have had a medium influence on Congressmen’s votes on the issue. Furthermore, I believe that the evidence will show that President Bush’s statements are not as intense as President Johnson’s statements on the issue,

**Congressional Staff:**

Congressional staff have somewhat of an impact on the decisions of legislators (Kingdon 1989: 08); “the staff is of major or determinative importance only 9 percent of the time, and of no importance at all a full 66 percent [;]” congressional staff impact members’ votes less than all other actors (Kingdon 1989: 201). When controlling for both seniority and competitiveness of the district, members take their staff’s advice into
consideration equally. However, the existence of either low seniority or great competitiveness usually highlights staff importance (Kingdon 1989: 203).

One of the reasons why congressmen do not generally take their staffs’ advice to heart is that they appoint staff members who agree with their views (Kingdon 1989: 203-204). Many of the Congressmen interviewed by Kingdon argued that they were the experts on legislation and that their staff was responsible for conducting other duties (Kingdon 1989: 205). To the member, their staff is less of a direct influence on the member and more of an extension of the member (Kingdon 1989: 207-208). Ultimately, even though Kingdon argues that congressional staffs do influence the votes of their legislators, the impact that congressional staffs had on the creation and renewal of the Act is not discussed in this paper because I considered the pressure that congressional staffs place on members’ votes to be less significant than the influence of the Executive, interest groups, the public, and political parties.

**Media:**

Finally, Kingdon also argued that the media greatly impacted congressmen’s votes. Many of the media sources that the congressmen look to for information are internal to Congress (Kingdon 1989: 212). In regard to written material, Congressmen argued that reading greatly influenced their vote approximately 17 percent of the time. The amount of time that Republican and Democratic congressmen spent reading was the same (Kingdon 1989: 211). However, on issues that are of high importance, congressmen
generally read about the issue 68 percent of the time; for issues of medium importance, they read information on the issue approximately 42 percent of the time and only 34 percent for issues that are only of low importance.

The media that congressmen read simply reinforces legislators’ beliefs about certain issues (Kingdon 1989: 211). Media influences members because it also has an impact on the way that congressmen defend their votes; “the media are capable of interpreting a given issue in such a way as to make it extremely difficult for the congressmen to vote in a way that appears contrary to their interpretations and still have a graceful explanation for the vote” (Kingdon 1989: 216). Although Kingdon discusses the importance of the media, the impact that the media had on the VRA is not measured in this paper because I considered the pressure that media places on members’ votes to be less important than the influence of the Executive, interest groups, the public, and political parties. Moreover, unlike Kingdon, I will measure the impact that a member’s ideology had on his decision to vote for or against the Voting Rights Act’s creation in 1965 and renewal in 2006.

The Model:

In this paper, I plan to study the impact of public outcry, interest group influence, political party pressure, and executives sway on members’ votes in regard to both the creation of the Act and the renewal of the VRA in 2006. Public outcry refers to the level of concern/passion that the public has for a particular issue and the ability that
constituents have to influence their representatives’ votes. As a measure of public outcry, I review Gallup poll data from 1964, 1965, 2004, and 2005 in order to better understand the public’s opinions on the VRA and other racial issues. I also research the number of editorials written about the VRA in both the Washington Post and Los Angeles times. Interest group sway refers to advocacy groups that defend voting rights issues and pressure congress to vote in favor of voting rights legislation. In order to determine how powerful interest groups’ influence on congressmen’s votes were in 1965 and 2006, I looked at the number of interest groups that advocated openly for the VRA and the number of interest groups that gave testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Political party pressure refers to the impact that both Republicans and Democrats in Congress have on the issue. In order to measure the influence that political parties had on congressmen’s votes, I look at regional party differences and party vote data. Executive influence refers to the power that the President has over congressmen’s votes on a particular issue. In order to measure executive influence on member’s votes in regard to the VRA, I review the total number of speeches written in which both President Johnson and President Bush mention the VRA, the number of State of the Union addresses in which they mention the issue, the language that the Presidents use to discuss the VRA, and the agenda setting strategies of both Presidents.
Factors Influencing the Creation of the 1965 VRA

In this paper, I discuss the influence of four variables, public outcry, interest groups, political party, and executive, on the creation and the 2006 renewal of the Act. In regards to the 1965 Voting Rights Act, I will argue that public outcry had the greatest impact on the voting behavior of lawmakers. Both political party pressure and executive influence has less of an impact on members’ votes than public outcry. Moreover, interest groups had the least amount of sway over congressmen’s votes on the original VRA.

Public Outcry:

The data suggests that public outcry was incredibly influential in encouraging Congress to create the Voting Rights Act. In 1965, constituents were pleading for the conception of voting rights legislation for two important reasons; voting dilution was a real threat to minorities and the Selma riots had outraged the populous. By creating the VRA, citizens hoped that the government would be better able to protect particularly Southern minorities from vote dilution (Peacock 1997: 345). Scholars imply that constituents’ anger regarding vote dilution was explicable. For instance, South Carolina extended literacy tests so that they would be used during party primaries in order to further dilute the minority vote (Zelden 2002: 82); “Virginia allowed a proportionally larger black vote in primaries and general elections than other southern states, but largely
because it had faith that the existing system of poll taxes, understanding requirements, and literacy tests would limit the electoral impact of black voting” (Zelden 2002: 82). Moreover, Texas relied heavily on the poll tax to discriminate against both black and Hispanic workers (Zelden 2002: 82).

These various exclusionary attempts by Southern states did considerable damage and greatly limited the black vote (Zelden 2002: 82); “as late as 1940, only 3 percent of voting-age southern blacks had been registered to vote (and with the all white primary, none of them were able to vote in the one election that had practical meaning)” (Zelden 2002: 82). More specifically, in Alabama, from 1958 to 1964, the number of registered African Americans, 19.4 percent, only improved by 5.2 percent; “in Mississippi, only 6.4 percent of the voting age blacks were registered compared to 4.4 percent ten years earlier [, and] in Louisiana, the black registration had increased only one-tenth percentage in nine years – 31.8 percent of the eligible black voters were registered compared to 80.2 percent of the eligible white voters” (Hudson 1998: 60). Therefore, the level of vote dilution in 1965 can explain why public outcry for significant voting rights legislation was so powerful.

The riots in Selma also deeply outraged citizens and encouraged voters to pressure their congressmen for strong, effective legislation to combat civil rights abuses; “that the Voting Rights Act was introduced in March, 1965, and was signed into law in August, 1965, [had] to be attributed to the one major spark that set off a ‘deep outrage’ on the part of […] the general public: the events that took place in Selma, Alabama, from
January to March, 1965.” (Ball, Krane, and Lauth 1982: 45-46). Ultimately, the protest in Selma is considered as the climax of the civil rights movement (Colaiaco 1986: 22).

Selma served as an icon for the entire voting rights movement. Prior to the riots, most African Americans could not pass the tough literacy examinations that were designed to halt Blacks from gaining the right to vote (Cozzens 1997: 01). Because of the vast amount of discrimination that occurred in Selma, civil rights leaders such as Martin Luther King decided to march on Selma, Alabama. Although the protesters were threatened with physical violence if they continued with the march, the protesters decided to stand up for their rights. However, once the protestors stood up to the police, they were violently attacked (Cozzens 1997: 02). News reports of the Selma riots which depicted pictures of demonstrators assaulted by dogs, hit by police men, and hosed down by fire fighters were responsible for creating this deep public outrage (Ball, Krane, and Lauth 1982: 46). Ultimately, Selma revealed the nation’s support for equal opportunity (Hudson 1998: 01); “the unprovoked attack on March 7, 1965, by state troopers on peaceful marchers crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, en route to the state capitol in Montgomery, persuaded the President and Congress to overcome Southern legislators’ resistance to effective voting rights legislation” (“The Voting Rights Act of 1965” 2006: 01).

Demonstrations oftentimes are responsible for creating a need for both legislation and law enforcement because the federal government tends to act more quickly when a situation calls for serious intervention (Colaiaco 1986: 22). There are several reasons
why Congress acts only when a large, outspoken majority rather than when just a quiet majority favors legislation (Burstein 1979: 158). First, it is often times difficult for congressmen to measure public opinion on difficult matters (Burstein 1979: 158); “second, to the extent that their constituents value consistency and reliability, members of Congress may be loath to change their votes on an issue during a particular term in office” (Burstein 1979: 158). Also, Congress does not always uphold the majority principle (Burstein 1979: 159). Furthermore, both the House and Senate are unlikely to change their opinion on issues that are heavily determined by public opinion unless citizens request change (Burstein 1979: 159).

Prior to 1964 and 1965, the level of demonstrations remained high; however, after 1965, the level of demonstrations decreased most likely because the preferred law was passed (Burstein 1979: 168-169); “the data cannot show that demonstrations caused Congress to act but the major laws of 1964 and 1965 did pass after demonstrations had been occurring at a high rate for several years [;] the decline in the annual rate late in 1964 and 1965, after legislation was passed, is indirect evidence that some demonstrations were planned to influence Congress” (Burstein 1979: 169). Consequently, it is easy to believe that the demonstrations created an increase in public concern over race discrimination and vote dilution (Burstein 1979: 169) and that due to public sentiment, a majority of congressmen voted in favor of the 1965 VRA (Hudson 1998: 01).
**Empirical Results:**

The data supports the theory that public outcry was very significant in influencing congressmen’s opinions on the creation of the Voting Rights Act. Table 7 depicts the number of articles written on the Voting Rights Act between January 1965 and February 1966; in the Washington Post, 78 articles directly mentioned the 1965 VRA, and 119 articles in the Los Angeles Times discussed the original Act. The sheer number of articles written about the Voting Rights Act indicates that journalists were very interested in the topic of minority voting rights. Because journalists generally write articles about issues that their readers care about, the large number of articles also reveals the interest that the populace had about the issue of voting rights.

Gallop Poll data also reveals that public outcry on the issue of civil rights and voting dilution was substantial during the mid-1960’s. Table 8 requested that respondents indicate whether they approved or disapproved of Congress creating a bill to end vote dilution for minority voters; 76 percent of respondents answered that they favored the creation of the Voting Rights Act, 16 percent of answerers said that they were against the Act, and 8 percent of respondents had no opinion on the subject. This table shows that a substantial majority of respondents not only believed that the creation of the Voting Rights Act was necessary but also were willing to support the establishment of the Act.
Table 9 asked respondents “if candidates of your own party were alike in all respects except that one candidate took a strong stand in favor of civil rights and the other a strong stand against civil rights, which man would you be more likely to prefer” (Gallop 1972: 94). Although only 28 percent of Southern Whites were willing to throw their support behind a candidate who strongly supported civil rights, 67 percent of Whites outside of the South indicated that they would choose a candidate who backed civil rights. Ultimately, these numbers show that in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Mid-West, Southwest, and Western regions a large majority of individuals not only supported candidates who were pro-civil rights but also indicated that they cared greatly about the advancement of civil right for minorities.

Furthermore, Table 10 questioned respondents as to what they felt was the most important issue facing the country in 1965; 52 percent of answerers argued that the lack of civil rights was the biggest problem facing the country. Therefore, it is arguable that a majority of individuals were deeply moved by the issue of civil rights and that public outcry for the issue of minority voting rights was quite substantial.
Interest Groups:

Interest groups did not greatly influence Congressmen’s decisions to vote for the 1965 VRA because in 1965, the civil rights movement was in its infancy. The NACCP, which formed shortly after the 1908 race riots in Springfield, was one of the only major civil rights organizations in existence at the time when the VRA was first created (“A Brief History …” 2006: 01). Despite the fact that interest groups did not have great power over Congress in 1965, the civil rights movement was incredibly active prior to 1965. The NAACP won a major battle with the Supreme Court when it ruled on the side of the NAACP in Brown v. Board of Education. Martin Luther King also, during this period, “succeeded in forcing the desegregation of public transport in the South, most notably in Montgomery, Alabama, where a sit-in in a bus terminal created such chaos that the state government was forced to back down on its segregationist policies” (“March of the Titans …” 1999: 02). The Voting Rights Act was considered to be a incredibly successful victory for the civil rights movement (“March of the Titans …” 1999: 03); however, despite the civil rights movement’s best efforts, African Americans did not see any improvement in their short-term standard of living (“March of the Titans …” 1999: 04). Ultimately, it would take a few more decades until marginalized groups could see successes arising from their long fought campaign for civil rights (Stearns 2001: 05).

Empirical Results:

The data supports that notion that interest groups did not significantly sway congressmen’s opinions on the Act. Appendix 1 suggests that at the time when the
Voting Rights Act was first created, only 7 major interest groups indicated that they had any involvement in the creation of the Voting Rights Act. Appendix 2 indicates that only 4 interest groups were involved in the 1965 Senate Judiciary Committee hearings as well. Table 11 shows that the number of interest group testimony as a percentage of the total number of testimony involved in the 1965 Senate Judiciary Committee Hearings was merely 12.5 percent. When compared with interest group data for the 2006 renewal of the Act, the amount of interest group involvement was also very small; in comparison, Appendix 3 shows that 96 interest groups were involved in encouraging Congress to renew the 2006 VRA. The lack of interest group involvement during this time period makes complete sense considering that the power of interest groups over Congressmen is a rather recent phenomenon and that an explosion in the number of interest groups has occurred over the past couple decades (“A Brief History…” 2006: 01).

**Political Party:**

In regards to the creation of the VRA, political party pressure was an important factor. Political parties influenced congressmen’s votes for the 1965 VRA because of the partisan nature of the issue in 1965; “instead of the more typical cooperative mutually beneficial arrangements between ‘working partners,’ voting rights implementation had to be initiated in an atmosphere of conflict between federal and state actors predicated on a complete absence of any similarity in approach to programs and an absence of respect and confidence in the governmental efforts each put[s] forward.” (Ball, Krane, and Lauth 1982: 115). Supporters of the VRA recognized that the Act was indeed necessary because
of the amount of voting dilution that minorities particularly blacks had experienced (Hudson 1998: 59). Although legislation was already created to ensure voting rights, proponents of the Act felt that the VRA was necessary because the judicial process was extraordinarily slow in advancing rights for minorities (Hudson 1998: 59). Senator John J. Williams from Delaware who greatly supported the passage of the 1965 VRA argued “I have always been in favor of guaranteeing to every American citizen an equal opportunity to participate in the election process, but I feel just as strongly that this guarantee is meaningless if that vote is not counted properly, or if that vote is effectively canceled by a vote that is illegally cast, or if another person illegally registers to vote [;] I feel that the Congress, in its efforts to see to it that the integrity of a man’s right to vote is protected, is obligated to see to it that the integrity of his vote itself is protected” (“Voting Rights: Hearings…” 1965: 800). Even the attorney general at the time testified before Congress that the time it took to review voting records was too long and that the process greatly hindered the voting rights of minorities (Hudson 1998: 59).

Southern and Conservative opposition regarding the VRA existed in 1965 when President Johnson put forward the Act (Altman 1998: 176). Although opponents agreed that protecting minority suffrage was important, they believed that the Act was too quickly assembled, argued that it was illogical, and contended that it greatly undermined principles of basic fairness (Hudson 1998: 62). They also suggested that it was too soon to determine whether the Civil Rights Act of 1964 would effectively protect minority suffrage (Hudson 1998: 62). For example, Senator John. J. Sparkman from Alabama, an adamant opponent to the VRA, said “I want there to be no doubt, however, that I am opposed to this bill [;] it is a harsh bill, designed to punish the South [;] it is born out of
emotionalism, and is hastened by the heat of passion, which history clearly shows is
typical of the circumstances that usually surround hasty, stringent, and ill-advised

In addition, many states disagreed with the federal oversight provisions of the Act
because it greatly violated their belief in state supremacy (Ball, Krane, and Lauth 1982:
116). Republicans believed that federal examiners should only be sent to jurisdiction if
meritorious complaints by 25 or more people in any jurisdiction were received (Hudson
1998: 63-64). Opponents also contended that it was unfair that the District of Columbia
Court was the only court that could grant reprieve from the automatic trigger (Hudson
1998: 64); “Republicans […] took issue with Section 10 of the act which not only
outlawed poll taxes, but also any other payment prerequisite to voting[,]” and “they
pointed out that in many political subdivisions the payment of property taxes was
required before voting in referendums on changes in ad valorem tax rates or bond
issuance” (Hudson 1998: 64). Therefore, political parties influenced the creation of the
Act because, in 1964, race became an unequivocally partisan matter (Grofman and
Davidson 1992: 130).

The changes to the political party structure that occurred in the South during the
early to mid 1960’s also caused them to have a significant impact on the VRA. The
turning point in regard to Southern politics occurred in 1964. The 1964 election was
considered a “watershed event” (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 124-125) because party
stances on racial issues greatly transformed in 1964 (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 123).
Following Johnson’s election, Democrats became much more liberal in regard to their political platforms on racial matters (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 121). Between 1932 and 1964, Republicans discussed racial matters more so than Democrats when creating their platforms (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 121). However, after 1964, Democrats discussed racial matters in their platforms more so than Republicans (Grofman and Davidson 1992:121-122); “before 1964, when citizens were asked about the positions of the parties – specifically whether Democrats or Republicans were more liberal on racial issues – they failed to distinguish between the two […] by 1964, however, 56 percent identified the Democrats as the party ‘more likely to want the government to see to it that white and Negro children go to the same schools,’ and only 7 percent identified the Republicans” (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 123). Furthermore, after 1964, voters had a choice between candidates because Democrats did not continue to monopolize politics in the South (Whitby 1991: 516); “in time, a new southern politics emerged in which blacks joined whites as full-fledged participants, overt segregationist rhetoric dissipated, and the Democratic Party’s dominance gradually gave way to a more competitive two-party politics” (Black 1992: 592).

Because of the change in the political structure in the South, “the 1965 Voting Rights Act passed by a huge majority in the House […] again the winning coalition was a bipartisan northern one, but northern Democrats dominated the coalition, supplying 203 pro-votes – only seven votes short of a majority” (Brady and Sinclair 1984: 1053). Although Democrats helped to created a large margin, they did not single handedly pass
the VRA (Brady and Sinclair 1984: 1053); “before the passage roll call, proponents of the
discussion had to overcome a preliminary hurdle [;] a Republican substitute was
offered which, although it would not have gutted the bill, would have weakened it [;] the
coalition opposing the Republican substitute was dominated by northern Democrats and
included a small number of critically important Republican and southern Democratic
votes” (Brady and Sinclair 1984: 1053). The coalition that backed the alternative
legislation was mostly comprised of Republicans as well as a number of Southern
Democrats (Brady and Sinclair 1984: 1053).

**Empirical Results:**

The data indicates that political party pressure did impact the voting rights of
congressmen. Tables 12, 13, and 14 show that in the senate, 78 Senators voted for the Act
and 18 Senators voted against the VRA. Of the 18 who voted against the Act, all were
from Southern states, and 17 of the dissenters were Democrats. Only 5 Senators from the
South voted for the VRA; two of those Senators were Republican and three of the
Senators were Democrats. Tables 14, 15, and 16 demonstrate that 59 House members
voted against the VRA and 340 Representatives voted for the Act. Of the 59 dissenters,
40 were from Southern states 31 of whom were Democrat, 3 were from the West and
Republican, 3 were from the Mid-West and Republican, 1 was from the Northeast and
Republican, 10 were from the Southwest and Democrat, and 2 were from the Midwest
and Democrat. Only 45 of the supporters were from the South, 8 of who were
Republican and 37 of whom were Democrat. The remaining supporters from the House
were as follows: 15 were Republican and from the West, 2 were Republican and from the Southwest, 50 were Republican and from the Mid-West, 16 were Republican and from the Mid-Atlantic, 19 were Republican and from the Northeast, 38 were Democrat and from the West, 20 were Democrat and from the Southwest, 65 were Democrat and from the Mid-West, 32 were Democrat and from the Mid-Atlantic, and 38 were Democrat and from the Northeast.

This data suggests that party and region did influence whether or not Senators and Representatives voted for or against the Voting Rights Act. For example, in the Senate all of the members against the VRA were from the South, and all but one was Democrat. This indicates that Southern Democratic Senators voted as a bloc. Only 3 Senators voted against the majority of their particular party. Political party for Republicans in the South did not seem to be very important considering that two of the Republicans voted for the Act and one Senator voted against the VRA. Political party definitely mattered for Senators in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Mid-West, Southwest, and Western regions considering that all Senators from those regions voted for the VRA. In regard to House members, political party did not seem to influence their votes quite as much as their fellow Senators. For instance, in the South, 31 Democratic members voted against the Act and 37 Democratic Representative voted for the VRA; 9 Republican Southern members voted against the VRA, and 8 Republicans from the South voted in favor of the Act. However, in the Mid-West party was important; only 3 Republicans voted against the VRA whereas 50 Republicans voted for the Act. Furthermore, even though 2 Democrats from the Midwest voted against Act, 65 Democrats voted in favor of the 1965
Therefore, party did have an influence on the voting decisions of members in both the House and Senate during the mid-1960’s.

**Executive Influence:**

Like the political parties, President Johnson influenced the creation of the Voting Rights Act. During his attempt to win the election, “Lyndon Johnson tied the future of the Democratic Party to the black electorate and racial liberalism [;] indeed, the 1964 election marked a restructuring of American political parties around racial issues” (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 121). Even though, Lydon Johnson was able to mobilize the black vote, mobilizing black voters created political costs for the President (Grofman and Davidson 1992: 129). Ultimately, President Johnson won the Presidential election; his election resulted in Democratic majorities in Congress. In the House, Democrats gained 38 seats; however, in the Senate, they only won two (“Voting Rights Act of 1965” 2006: 01).

In order to change the political climate, Johnson wanted to restructure the political backdrop in the U.S. In Johnson’s address to the nation, he said "the Great Society asks not how much but how good; not only how to create wealth but how to use it; not only how fast we are going, but where we are headed. It proposes as the first test for a nation: the quality of its people" (“Voting Rights Act of 1965” 2006: 01). Towards the beginning of his Presidency, Johnson met with Dirksen to talk about the necessity of effective civil rights legislation. After Dirksen agreed to support a voting rights bill, Johnson presented
President Johnson argued that radical action was needed to defeat racial prejudice. Also, as “a thoroughly ‘political’ President, Johnson knew that it would be difficult to overcome southern intransigence in Congress and in the region itself; it would also be difficult to get the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division’s administrators to go beyond their litigative, passive civil rights strategies and frame of mind” (Ball, Krane, and Lauth 1982: 45). Johnson called for direct federal intervention in Southern States to speedily reduce voting barriers for African Americans (Ball, Krane, and Lauth 1982: 45).

After Selma, President Johnson pressured the Department of Justice to create a bill that protected voting rights (Ball, Krane, and Lauth 1982: 52). In regards to Selma, Johnson said "I should like to say that all Americans should be indignant when one American is denied the right to vote. The loss of that right to a single citizen undermines the freedom of every citizen. That is why all of us should be concerned with the efforts of our fellow Americans to register to vote in Alabama. . . . I intend to see that the right [to vote] is secured for all our citizens" (“Voting Rights Act of 1965” 2006: 01). Moreover, after making the statement, Johnson told his press secretary to issue a statement saying
that he was going to strongly recommend to Congress that they vote for a voting rights piece of legislation sometime during the year (“Voting Rights Act of 1965” 2006: 01).

**Empirical Results:**

The data shows that President Johnson attempted to influence Congress member’s voting decisions in regard to the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Both Table 17 and Appendix 4 indicate that President Johnson spoke about the VRA during 14 Presidential speeches. Also, Table 18 demonstrates that the President spoke about the Act in one of his State of the Union Addresses. This data implies that President Johnson mildly focused on the issue of voting rights because he only spoke publicly about the act 14 times. Although he only spoke about the issue of voting rights moderately, President Johnson’s statements regarding the Voting Rights Act conveyed a sense of immediacy. For example, President Johnson said “what final action will be taken in the [Voting Right Act] that is sent to me will be determined by what is going on now, and I hope that they will work every morning and afternoon and night and that we can have legislation very shortly” (Public Papers of the Presidents: Lyndon B. Johnson 1966: 305). Also, President Johnson’s statements conveyed a sense of intense passion. He argued “every American citizen must have an equal right to vote […] there is no reason which can excuse the denial of that right […] there is no duty which weighs more heavily on us than the duty to ensure that right” (Public Papers of the Presidents: Lyndon B. Johnson 1966: 292). Moreover, the President said “a law is not a ballot […] the right to vote is not a vote […] the law must be enforced. It
is my pledge to every American that as long as I am President I will enforce it” (Public Papers of the Presidents: Lyndon B. Johnson 1966: 732). Ultimately, even though the President mentioned the VRA only an average number of times during his Presidency, his passion for the extension of minorities’ voting rights was understood.

The data also indicates that President Johnson used the Voting Rights Act as well as other racially based issues to set his agenda. Because he spoke about the VRA in a State of the Union Address, he indicated that the dilution of minority voting rights was an important issue that his administration was willing to tackle. Gallup poll data also indicates that the VRA was an important part of his agenda. Table 19 questions respondents as to whether or not they believe the Johnson administration is attempting to push integration too fast. Table 20 questions answerers regarding whether or not they approved of the way that Johnson is dealing with civil rights issues. Because the Gallup poll asks questions specifically related to Johnson’s agenda on civil rights issues, it is arguable that the VRA and other civil rights issues were a priority in his agenda. Therefore, the evidence suggests that the VRA was an intricate part of President Johnson’s agenda and that he likely was able to influence both Congress and the public to vote for the VRA through his agenda.

**Member’s Own Ideology and Empirical Results:**

Members own ideologies also played a role in whether or not they voted for or against the Voting Rights Act. In order to create ideological categories for members in
Congress, I used the ADA voting records to determine how liberal and conservative members were in 1965. A member who was very conservative received a score between 0 and 19, a member who was deemed conservative was given a score between 20 and 39 by the ADA, and a congressman who was considered moderate received a score between 40 and 59. Also, a member who was deemed liberal was given a score between 60 and 79 by the ADA, and a very liberal member received a score between 80 and 100. Table 21 indicates that of the Senators who voted against the 1965 Act, 14 were very conservative, 2 were conservative, 1 was moderate, and 1 was liberal. Also, the breakdown of Senators who voted for the VRA was as follows: 19 were very conservative, 6 were conservative, 8 were moderate, 13 were liberal, and 33 were very liberal. Table 22 suggests that of the Representatives, who voted in opposition to the original Voting Rights Act, 50 were very conservative and 8 were conservative. In regard to members who voted for the Voting Rights Act, 104 were very conservative, 29 were conservative, 26 were moderate, 99 were liberal, and 77 were very liberal.

This data implies that a large majority of the Senators who voted against the VRA were either very conservative or conservative and that all of the Representatives who voted against the Act were either very conservative or conservative. This data makes sense because we would expect conservatives, who tend to be not in favor of civil rights legislation, to vote against the VRA. Moreover, a majority of the Senators who voted for the Act were moderate, liberal, or very liberal and a rather large majority of Representatives who voted for the VRA were moderate, liberal, or very liberal. This data is understandable considering that we would expect individuals who are more liberal to
vote in favor of the VRA because most liberals are very supportive of civil rights issues. Therefore, the data indicates that the members’ own ideologies influenced their voting decisions considering that their actual votes were consistent with ideological expectations of voting behavior.
Factors Influencing the 2006 Renewal of the VRA

In regard to the 2006 renewal of the Voting Rights Act, it seems that interest groups had the greatest impact on the renewal of the Act based on the data. Executive influence affected members’ votes on the renewal of the Act less than interest groups. Also, political party pressure had a lesser impact on the renewal than interest groups; however, unlike the original Act, voting rights was primarily a bipartisan issue in both the House and the Senate excluding a small number of Republicans that wanted to negatively impact the renewal of the Act. Finally, public outcry was the factor that had the weakest impact on lawmakers’ voting decisions.

Public Outcry:

Public outcry in regard to minorities’ voting rights had decreased significantly because individuals were incredibly unlikely to find similar voting discrimination practices that previous Commissions encountered. Government action as well as society’s changing position on equality has greatly lowered barriers to voting for minorities (Reynolds 2006: 02); “the current extension period between 1982 and 2004 has had the lowest level of DOJ objections of any time in Section 4’s history [...] the most revealing fact uncovered by the Commission staff is that overall DOJ records show a dramatic and
continuous decline in the percentage of objections to proposed changes over the 40-year period of the Act – dropping from 14.2 percent in the period 1965-1974 to mere 0.7 percent in the period 1982-2004” (Reynolds 2006: 03). Even though the total objections interposed have risen, the total number of objections submitted by the Department of Justice has increased from 429 (1975-1981) to 752 (1982-2004) (Reynolds 2006: 03). Moreover, “the Commission observed that the ratio of objections to submitted changes dropped to 0.7 percent in recent years – demonstrating a decline” (Reynolds 2006: 03).

Most reasonable individuals agree that infringement on localities is no longer appropriate considering that a cessation of hostilities toward the voting rights of minorities has occurred (Reynolds 2006: 05) and that black voter registration has grown substantially. Today, Southern black voter registration rates are comparable to or greater than the rest of the country (Reynolds 2006: 02). Over a majority of the original forms of voting barriers which negatively impacted minorities’ right to vote have been eradicated. Over the past few decades, the Civil Rights Committee discovered that the number of minorities who have both registered to vote and went out to vote has grown substantially. In several instances, minorities have higher registration rates and voting numbers than white voters (“Committee Findings – Progress” 2006: 88). The following charts review the progress that has occurred in regards to black voter registration in several southern states.
Table 23 shows that registration rates for minority voters in Texas has risen substantially over the years and is higher today than in non-Southern states. For example, in 2002, Black voter registration rates were 65.1 percent in Texas versus only 57.0 percent in non-Southern states. Registration rates for Latino voters in 2002 were also higher in Texas than in non-Southern with a difference of 39.1 to 30.6.

Table 24 demonstrates that voter turnout rates for minority voters in Texas have risen tremendously over the years and are greater today than in non-Southern states. For example, in 2002, Black voter turnout rates were 44.3 percent in Texas versus only 39.3 percent in non-Southern states. Voter turnout rates for Latino voters in 2002 were also higher in Texas than in non-Southern states by a difference of 19.1 to 18.2 percent.

Table 25 shows that registration rates were also higher for blacks in Georgia than in non-Southern states. In 2002, 61.6 percent of blacks in Georgia were registered to vote. In non-Southern states, however, black voter registration rates were only 57.0 percent in 2002. Also, registration rates for African Americans in Georgia exceed those of whites in the state.

In Table 26, it is evident that African American turnout rates were only slightly lower in Georgia than in the non-Southern states. For example, in 2000, the difference between voter turnout rates in Georgia and in all non-Southern states was 1.5 percent. In
2003, that difference declined to only 0.8 percent. However, Black voters are voting more today than White voters in Georgia.

In Table 27, black voter registration rates in Louisiana have also grown like in many other Southern states. From 1980 to 2004, voter registration for African Americans has grown from 69.0 percent to 71.1 percent. In 2002, voter registration in Louisiana for Black voters was 73.5 versus only 57.0 percent for all non-southern states. Furthermore, the difference between White and Black voter registration in Louisiana is not great.

It is evident from Table 28 that voter turnout rates for African Americans in Louisiana are also high. In 2002, roughly 46.9 percent of Black voters turned out to vote whereas only 39.3 percent of Black voters in non-southern states voted. Turnout differences between Black and White voters in Louisiana have also decreased significantly between 2002 and 2004.

Finally, while voting registration and voting among minorities has increased, the number of African Americans and other minorities serving as elected officials has also greatly increased. For example, “as of 2000, more than 9,000 African-Americans have been elected to office, an increase from the 1,469 officials who held office in 1970” [, and…] “as of 2004, 43 African-Americans currently serve in the United States Congress, with 42 individuals serving in the United States House of Representatives, and one serving in the United States Senate” (“Committee Findings – Progress” 2006: 88). Furthermore, in regards to state legislatures, over 480 African Americans have been elected. More importantly, “the number of African-American elected officials serving in
the original six States covered by the temporary provisions of the Voting Rights Act (Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, and Alabama) increased by approximately 1000 percent since 1965, increasing from 345 to 3700” (“Committee Findings – Progress” 2006: 88).

**Empirical Results:**

The data indicates that public outcry over the dilution of voting rights has declined dramatically. For example, the number of articles written on a subject can be a good indicator of public interest of that issue. In regards to the 2006 renewal of the Act, Table 29 indicates that only 27 articles were written in the Washington Post and merely 18 articles were issued in the Los Angeles Times. As referenced in Table 7, 78 articles were written in the Washington Post and 119 editorials in the Los Angeles times were written on the Voting Rights Act in 1965.

Gallop Poll data is a good indicator of the level of public interest on a particular issue. The data from 2004 to 2005 infers that voting rights issues were not salient in 2006. In 2004, Table 30 asked respondents about their satisfaction with various aspects of American life; 57 percent of answerers said that they were satisfied with the position of blacks and other racial minorities in the nation. Moreover, Table 31 discussed both Democratic and Republican respondents concern about various social issues; in terms of race relations, only 27 percent of Democratic respondents and 11 percent of Republican respondents said that they were concerned about race relations. These percentages were
very low compared to other concerns such as drug use and terrorism. Therefore, all of the
data supports the theory not only that public outcry over race issues has declined since
1965 but also that public outcry was most likely an insignificant factor in influencing
members’ voting decisions on the Voting Rights Act.

**Interest Groups:**

Interest groups were incredibly influential in regards to the passage of the 2006
renewal of the VRA. In a statement by the coalition for the renewal of the VRA, leading
interest group leaders came out in support of Congress creating a bipartisan extension of
the Voting Rights Act. Leaders including Karen Narasaki, head of the Asian American
Justice Center, argued, “that the preclearance provision is the heart of the VRA” (Lewis
2006: 01). Ultimately, many interest groups were involved in the effort to expand voting
rights. Some of these organizations include the American Bar Association, the American
Civil Liberties Union, African American Ministers in Action, Asian American Justice
Center, the League of Women Voters, and the American Jewish committee (“Advocacy
Letters” 2006: 01).

The NAACP was the most influential interest group in support of the VRA. Prior to
visiting Congress, the NAACP held a conference addressing many issues such as voting
rights. During the NAACP’s 97th national convention, the interest group attempted to
encourage both the House and Senate to back the VRA amendments (Fulbright 2006: 02).
The NAACP president claimed “this is our day […] we are going to the Hill today [, and
During their visit, NAACP members left their buses to stop by their representatives’ offices to discuss the VRA (Fulbright 2006: 02). Following the markup, Representative Frist stated that he planned to “bring the bill the Senate floor that very night after meeting with NAACP leaders” (Stern “Senate Clears Voting Rights…” 2006: 02). It is arguable that because the House heard that the NAACP was coming to Washington, the House decided to pass the bill a day prior to their arrival (Fulbright 2006: 01-02). Despite the fact that the Act passed in the House, the work of the NAACP was not finished. After hearing that the renewal of the Act passed in the House, Gordon, a NAACP leader, said, “we’ll celebrate the House, but we’ll pressure the Senate” (Otto 2006: 02).

During the reauthorization of the Act, the Senate Judiciary Committee held various hearings to discuss the importance of the VRA. At the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, NAACP leaders watched as the Committee passed the amendment and cheered loudly when it was sent to the President (Stern “Senate Clears Voting Rights…” 2006: 02). Ultimately, Democrats argued that the NAACP’s convention and visit to Washington caused the renewal to move forward; “‘if they had not come to town, this bill might not have passed,’ said House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif” (Stern “Senate Clears Voting Rights…” 2006: 02).
**Empirical Results:**

The data implies that interest group involvement in the 2006 VRA renewal was very strong. For example, as previously referenced in Appendix 3, a total of 96 interest groups were involved in the fight to extend minorities’ voting rights. Also, Appendix 5 shows that interest groups spoke at the Senate Judiciary Committee hearings a total of nine times, and Table 32 reveals that the number of interest group testimony as a percentage of the total number of testimony was 31.14 percent. Moreover, this data infers not only that the number of interest groups in support of the Voting Rights Act have grown substantially but also that the power that interest groups have over congressmen’s voting decisions in regard to the VRA has grown considerably.

**Political Party:**

Political parties did influence the renewal of the Act. Many congressmen considered voting rights to be a bipartisan issue; in regards to the Voting Rights Act, “both parties tried to be on the right side of history in moving toward more opportunity and striking down discrimination when it came to voting in elections in America” (“A Do Nothing Congress” 2006: 07). Since the creation of the Act, “Congresses […] have come together in bipartisanship to renew the Act, recognizing its continuing vitality and importance […] it would be a travesty for the 109th Congress to break that historic solidarity with American values and with the importance of protecting the foundational right to vote” (Leahy 2006: 01).
Three months prior to the Republican rebellion, “leading Republicans such as House Judiciary Committee Chairman F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. of Wisconsin stood side-by-side with liberal Democrats and members of the Congressional Black Caucus to back the law’s renewal” (Wallsten 2006: 02); “the revolt, which forced House GOP leaders to abruptly postpone a vote, came as House Republicans [were] stiffening their resistance to Bush’s bid to allow pathways to legal status for millions of illegal immigrants while also strengthening borders and deportation efforts” (Rangel 2006: 02). Many moderate Republicans are afraid that the rebellion would cause the Republican Party to be known as the party of exclusion rather than an inclusive party (Rangel 2006: 02). Senator Mel Martinez (R-Fla) said “under Bush’s leadership […] our party has shown a very welcoming approach to the emerging Hispanic vote [; however,] there obviously are those who feel that’s not important…I think there could be great political risks to becoming the party of exclusion and not a party of inclusion” (Babington 2006: 01).

Despite criticism from some Republicans and Democrats, opponents to the Act were outspoken in their dislike of the Act; “one of the conservatives supporting changes to the Voting Rights Act said GOP leaders were ‘playing politics’ with a law that is unfairly targeting his home region because of its past – and failing to account for progress in racial relations” (Wallsten 2006: 02). Rep. Patrick T. McHenry (R-N.C.) also said “some politicians in Washington wouldn’t dare vote against this bill because they’d be lambasted by the media and liberal interest groups […] I will not go along with bad public policy in the name of political correctness…this bill is a 1960s solution for a 21st
century world” (Murray 2006: 02). Even though opponents hoped that the Act would expire or become more lenient towards Southern states, they understood that they would not be able to change the VRA (Wallsten 2006: 02).

The Republican rebellion occurred because opponents to the Act were adamant that several issues with the Act needed to be addressed. Even though most individuals would argue that the VRA is an important piece of legislation and necessary in the struggle for civil rights, Opponents of the Act generally believed that it should be interpreted more narrowly (Altman 1998: 176). Southern Republicans, in particular, resented the Act’s stipulations especially those that required states to attain authorization from the Justice Department in order to implement a variety of voting activities (Rangel 2006: 03). In regard to the pre-clearance requirements, they argued that “Congress should amend Section 5 so that it no longer covers de minimis changes that have proven to have no potential for discrimination” because states are not active in limiting voting capability (Park 2006: 03). They contended that “the continued use of a baseline that is 42 years old presents a serious practical problem” because “none of the election officials who were serving in 1964 [are] still serving today, and those 1964 election officials are not available to tell us what procedures they used” (Park 2006: 04-05). They further argued that by not changing the preclearance provision, the Act does not make it easier for jurisdictions to bailout even though violations have radically diminished in these jurisdictions (Swain 2006: 02).
Also, some Conservatives did not agree with their leadership’s position on the VRA and argued that Congress should modify portions of the Act that deal with federal supervision of states that had allegations of institutional racism in the past and states that required the usage of bilingual ballots (Wallsten 2006: 02). Critics of the Act argued “that the idea of vote dilution is, at best, an excessively amorphous and contestable one that has led courts to go much farther than is justified in regulating systems of state and local politics” (Altman 1998: 176). Therefore, the Republican rebellion occurred because opponents had strong reservations about certain provisions of the Act.

**Empirical Results:**

Tables 33, 34, and 35 demonstrate that 32 House members, who were all Republican, voted against the VRA; of those 32 representatives, 8 were from the West, 8 were from the Southwest, 2 were from the Midwest, 13 were from the South, and 2 were from the Mid-Atlantic; 399 members voted for the 2006 renewal of the Act. Of the supporters of the Act, 31 were from the West and Republican, 49 were from the West and Democrat, 24 were from the Southwest and Republican, 15 were from the Southwest and Democrat, 57 were from the Midwest and Republican, 37 were from the Midwest and Democrat, 53 were from the South and Republican, 38 were from the South and Democrat, 27 were from the Mid-Atlantic and Republican, 37 were from the Mid-Atlantic and Democrat, 5 were from the Northeast and Republican, and 16 were from the Northeast and Democrat. Furthermore, Tables 35, 36, and 37 show that no Senators voted against the 2006 renewal of the VRA.
Ultimately, the data indicates that even though political party did impact the votes of congressmen in regard to the VRA, the influence of particularly regional political parties on congressmen’s votes has declined from 1965 to 2006. Political party did influence the votes of members to the extent that all Representatives from the Northeast voted for the Act and that no Democratic member voted against the Act. Also, all Senators voted for the Act which indicates that the leadership of both parties were behind the renewal of the VRA. However, regional party in terms of House members who did not vote for the VRA was insignificant. Therefore, party did mildly affect the voting decisions of congressmen.

Executive Influence:

Like political parties, the President had less of an impact on the 2006 renewal of the VRA than interest groups. Throughout Bush’s presidency, he has engaged in inclusionary politics and encouraged his party to seek out Hispanic voters in order to prevent Democrats from taking control (Rangel 2006: 01). Both President Bush and Ken Mehlman consider the VRA to be the centerpiece of the country’s civil rights regulations (Wallsten 2006: 02). Speaking at the NAACP convention, “President Bush acknowledged bitter strains between his party and African-Americans in an appearance before the nation’s oldest civil rights organization” (Davis 2006: 01). Shortly before signing the 2006 renewal of the VRA, the President spoke at the NAACP and received a warm response when he pledged to the membership that we would sign the Act (Davis 2006:}
01). Over the past several years, the administration has attempted to win over black voters (Davis 2006: 02); “Bush asserted that ‘racism still lingers in America’ and later called for immediate passage of the act without amendment” (Feldmann 2006: 01).

Despite President Bush’s attempts to urge his fellow Conservatives to vote for the Act, the President’s bipartisan efforts are being hampered as a result of the hard-line politics of a ultra conservative Republicans (Rangel 2006: 01); “By pushing English-only policies and tough measures against illegal immigrants, House conservatives are endangering President Bush’s goal of drawing millions of Latino voters to the Republican Party and helping realign ethnic politics for years to come, according to an array of analysts and officials” (Babington 2006: 01). Furthermore, the Republican Party, by affecting the renewal of the Act, has likely run the risk of disaffecting a sizeable minority voting population (Rangel 2006: 01).

However, most members at the NAACP felt that President Bush’s speech at the conference was a political speech directed more so at middle class Americans rather than black voters (Davis 2006: 03). When speaking with CBC members, Jesse Jackson Jr. recalls that the President said that he “[did not] know anything about the 1965 VRA” (Martin 2005: 01). Therefore, it is obvious that unlike President Johnson, Bush did not support the VRA because he believed in the issue; rather, he stood behind the renewal in order to gain political support.
Empirical Results:

The data illustrates that President Bush and President Johnson spoke about the VRA roughly the same number of times in their Presidential speeches. Both Appendix 4 and Table 17 show that President Bush spoke about the Act a total of 13 times and referred to earlier in the text. Table 18, which was previously discussed, denotes the fact that President Bush did not speak about the VRA in any of his State of the Union Addresses. However, it is important to note that the President did not impact the votes of congressmen significantly because the intensity of which the President talked about the VRA was lacking. For example, the most passionate statement that the President made about the act was “by reauthorizing this act, Congress has reaffirmed its belief that all men are created equal, its belief that the new founding started by the signing of the bill by President Johnson is worthy of our great Nation to continue” (“Remarks on Signing the Fannie…” 2006: pg. 1).

Moreover, from the statements of the President, it seems as if he does not believe that the VRA needs to renewed immediately in order for vote dilution to end; for example, several of President Bush’s statements were almost identical in language to this following statement: “the Voting Rights Act ought to be extended [;] the Voting Rights Act is a very important part of the civil rights legislation” (“Remarks on the National Economy…” 2006: 08). Therefore, although President Bush mentions the Act almost the same number of times as President Johnson, the language he used to discuss the VRA would be unlikely to persuade congressmen to vote for the renewal of the Act.
The renewal of the VRA does not seem to be a significant part of the President’s agenda. Because President’s only discuss important issues in their agenda during State of the Union addresses, it is significant that President Bush never mentions the renewal of the VRA during one of his State of the Union addresses. Also, none of the Gallup poll data asks respondents to comment on President Bush’s agenda in regard to civil rights issues or the VRA. However, it is easy to argue that terrorism, defense related issues, and immigration were an important part of his agenda due to the prominence of these issues in both Gallup Poll data and the President’s State of the Union addresses. Therefore, because the President’s agenda did not focus on the VRA, it is arguable that the renewal of the VRA was unimportant to the President and that both Congress and the public were not be swayed by President Bush to vote for the VRA.

**Members’ Ideologies and Empirical Results:**

The data indicates that both House and Senate members’ ideologies impacted their voting decisions in terms of the VRA renewal. Table 38 shows that of the 32 House members who voted against the renewal, 30 were very conservative, 1 was conservative, and 1 was moderate. The breakdown of members’ ideologies, who voted for the VRA in the House, was as follows: 173 were very conservative, 29 were conservative, 26 were moderate, 35 were liberal, and 132 were very liberal. Also, Table 39 implies that of the 98 Senators who voted for the Act, 46 were very conservative, 5 were conservative, 4 were moderate, 6 were liberal, and 35 were very liberal. Members’ ideologies were in
some instances significant because in both the House and Senate all members deemed very liberal and liberal voted for the Act; of the House members who voted against the Act, all but one Representative were either very conservative or conservative as well. However, one might have expected more very conservative and conservative members to vote against the VRA in both the House and Senate considering that conservatives tend to be not in favor of civil rights legislation.
Conclusion

At its inception, the Voting Rights Act was an incredibly important piece of legislation. The primary objective of the Act was to eradicate impediments to registration and fraud that produced vote dilution for minorities (Peacock 1997: 345); according to the evidence, the VRA was very successful at minimizing minority vote discrimination. Because of the Act’s popularity and successful track record, it has remained on Congress’ consciousness for several decades. However, from 1965 to 2006, the factors that have influenced members’ votes on the issue have changed dramatically.

Public outcry has changed on the issue of minority voting rights. In 1965, the public was very concerned about the vote dilution and was outraged by the various exclusionary attempts by Southern states that caused tremendous damage to the African American vote (Zelden 2002: 82). The riots in Selma also profoundly enraged citizens and encouraged voters to force their congressmen to enact a robust, successful piece of legislation to combat civil rights abuses (Ball, Krane, and Lauth 1982: 45-46). However, public outcry has dramatically decreased from 1965 to 2006 because individuals are very unlikely today to encounter similar voting discrimination practices that previous commissions encountered (Reynolds 2006: 02). Interest group influence on congressmen’s votes has changed considerably. In 1965, the affect that interest groups had on member’s voting decisions was miniscule because interest group involvement in the political sphere was immature, and the civil rights movement was in the beginning stages of its infancy (“A
Brief History …” 2006: 01). However, the sway that interest groups have over congressmen’s votes has grown substantially as the number of interest groups involved in protecting minorities’ voting rights has increased.

Political party pressure on member’s decisions has remained at the same relative level of intensity even though the notion of political party pressure has changed from 1965 to 2006. In 1965, regional political party was incredibly significant considering that in the Senate, Southern Democratic senators voted against the VRA as a bloc. Yet, the evidence indicates that Republicans and Democrats did not really vote together as a party in 1965. In 2006, regional political party was not nearly as important in determining members’ votes on the Act; however, despite a small faction of Republicans in the House, Democrats and Republicans voted in a bloc for the VRA. Furthermore, executive influence on the issue has remained moderate. From 1965 to 2006, the number of times that the Presidents spoke about the VRA was not incredibly significant nor did the number times that the President spoke about the VRA change substantially over time. Yet, the evidence indicates that the intensity of the Presidents’ statements on the VRA has changed significantly in that President Johnson’s statements were much more passionate than President Bush’s remarks on the VRA. Moreover, the VRA was the focal point of President Johnson’s agenda whereas President Bush focused his agenda on issues related to terrorism and immigration.

The data implies that the public, interest groups, political parties, and the Executive influenced members’ votes on both the creation of the VRA and the most
recent renewal and that the importance of these factors has changed over time. However, the data does not actually prove that these factors did in fact affect members’ votes on the 1965 and 2006 VRA because due to limitations in the data, no studies exist that clearly explain why legislators chose to vote for or against the Voting Rights Act. Therefore, limitations in the data have curtailed the ability of this research paper to definitively prove that the public, interest groups, political parties, and the Executive did in fact motivate members’ voting decisions in regard to the VRA.

Although the data is very easy to understand, there are a few, important conclusions that can be made from the data that are less evident. For example, even though public outcry on minority voting rights has decreased and vote dilution has diminished immensely, congressmen are still willing to support the VRA today. The logical conclusion is that the importance of the VRA has shifted from an Act that had an immediate, substantial purpose to a piece of legislation that is merely symbolic. As citizens, we would like to believe that our congressmen are voting in legislation that will have a dramatic affect on our lives as citizens. Yet, from this study it is evident that congressmen are willing to vote for legislation that is outdated but that shows our country’s solidarity around a cause. Furthermore, it is arguable that traditional ideas about how conservatives and liberals are expected to vote do not always hold true. For example, not all individuals who were conservative voted against the VRA, and not every individual who was liberal voted in favor of the VRA. From this data, it is arguable that our traditional ideological expectations of voting behavior may be changing or incorrect. Therefore, this paper is important because it not only reveals that a change in factors
influencing members’ votes on the Voting Rights Act has occurred but also explains that our understanding of Congress may be changing.
Tables

Table 1: 
Spontaneous Mentions of Actors

Notes: This table gives the percentages of members that indicated whether constituency, fellow congressmen, party leadership, interest groups, administration, staff, or reading were most important in influencing their votes. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1-1 Spontaneous Mentions of Actors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentioned in response to question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In this and subsequent tables, some column totals will not be exactly 100%, due to rounding error.

Table 2: 
Actor Importance

Notes: Members discussed whether or not various actors greatly affected their voting decisions and whether or not those actors were of major or minor importance. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1-2 Actor Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determinative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3:

Constituency Intensity

![Constituency Intensity Table](image)


Notes: This table explains the connection between members’ intensity on issues and their constituents’ intensity on issues.

Table 4:

Party Influence on Influence of Fellow Congressmen

![Party Influence Table](image)


Notes: This Table explains the connection between the respondents’ and informants’ party in order to show the importance of fellow congressmen.
Table 5:
Informant and Respondent Seniority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>informant seniority</th>
<th>respondent seniority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher than respondent</td>
<td>83% 51% 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same as respondent</td>
<td>16 46 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower than respondent</td>
<td>2 3 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>101% 100% 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total n</td>
<td>57 59 46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: This table shows the connection between the informants’ and respondents’ seniority and indicates that members seek advice from senior congressmen.

Table 6:
Extent of Three Classic Conflicts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>conflict</th>
<th>percentage of vote decisions in which a conflict between the two actors emerges*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>objectivea measure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency–party</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration–constituency</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party–administration</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Each cell entry’s n = 222 minus a few cases of missing data.
* Objective involves the actual position of the party leadership and administration, rather than the congressman’s perception of it and regardless of the degree to which they are involved in his decision. Subjective is the position of the party leadership or administration only if the congressman took account of that position in his decision.

Notes: This table indicates the percentage of vote decisions in which a conflict between constituency/party, administration/constituency, and party/administration occurs.
Table 7:

**Editorials on Voting Rights Act (1965-Feb. 1966)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total # of Editorials</th>
<th>Washington Post</th>
<th>Los Angeles Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>78</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes: This table indicates the number of editorials that appeared in the Washington Post and Los Angeles Times about the 1965 VRA.
Table 8:

Approval/Disapproval of the Voting Rights Act

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Favor</td>
<td>76 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppose</td>
<td>16 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Opinion</td>
<td>8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Southern Whites Only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Favor</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppose</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Opinion</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Republicans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Favor</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppose</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Opinion</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Democrats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Favor</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppose</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Opinion</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes: This table asked answerers to determine whether or not they supported the 1965 VRA.
Table 9:

Approval/Disapproval for Candidates Supporting Civil Rights

Southern Whites Only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candidate for Civil Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate Against</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whites Outside South Only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candidate for Civil Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate Against</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes: This table asks respondents to discuss whether or not they would vote for or against a candidate that supported civil rights.

Table 10:

What is Most Important Problem Facing Country?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civil Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immorality, Crime, Juvenile Delinquency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Cost of Living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes: In the table, the Gallup Poll questioned respondents about the issue that the felt was the most important problem facing this country today?
Table 11:

*Interest Group Statements Compared to Total Number of Statements Made at 1965 Senate Judiciary Committee Hearings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Interest Group Testimony</th>
<th>Total Number of Testimony</th>
<th># of Interest Group Testimony as a Percentage of Total # of Testimony</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes: This table gives the total number of interest group testimony as a percentage of total the total number of testimony given at the 1965 Senate Judiciary Committee Hearings.

Table 12:

**1965: Senate Members’ Votes For and Against the VRA By Region (Democrats Only)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voted For VRA</th>
<th>North East</th>
<th>Mid - Atlantic</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>Mid-West</th>
<th>South West</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>(48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(17)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>(65)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13:

1965: Senate Members’ Votes For and Against the VRA By Region (Republicans Only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Vote For the VRA</th>
<th>Vote Against the VRA</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>100% (5)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Atlantic</td>
<td>100% (5)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>67% (2)</td>
<td>33% (1)</td>
<td>100% (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-West</td>
<td>100% (9)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>100% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>100% (8)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (30)</td>
<td>0% (1)</td>
<td>100% (31)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 14:

1965- Votes For and Against the VRA in Both the House and Senate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Voted for the VRA</th>
<th>Voted Against the VRA</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>81% (78)</td>
<td>19% (18)</td>
<td>100% (96)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House</td>
<td>85% (340)</td>
<td>15% (59)</td>
<td>100% (399)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(418)</td>
<td>(77)</td>
<td>100% (495)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15:
1965: House Members’ Votes For and Against the VRA By Region (Democrats Only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>North East</th>
<th>Mid-Atlantic</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>Mid-West</th>
<th>South West</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vote For the VRA</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(230)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote Against the VRA</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>(43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(273)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 16:
1965: House Members’ Votes For and Against the VRA By Region (Republicans Only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>North East</th>
<th>Mid-Atlantic</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>Mid-West</th>
<th>South West</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vote For the VRA</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>(110)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote Against the VRA</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>(16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(126)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17:

**Number of Speeches Made By Both President Johnson and Bush on the VRA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>President Johnson</th>
<th>President Bush</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total # of Speeches</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes: The total number of speeches made both President Johnson and Bush on the Voting Rights Act.

Table 18:

**Number of State of Union Addresses Made By Both Presidents that Mention the VRA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>President Johnson</th>
<th>President Bush</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of State of Union</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addresses Dealing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with VRA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19:  
**President Johnson’s Stance on Integration**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too Fast</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Fast Enough</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About Right</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Opinion</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100%


Notes: The Gallup Poll asked respondents to determine whether or not the thought that President Johnson’s administration was “pushing too fast or not fast enough” for integration.

Table 20:  
**How President Johnson Is Dealing with the Civil Rights Problem?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approve</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disapprove</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Opinion</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100%


Notes: The Gallup Poll asked respondents whether or not they approved of the way that President Johnson dealt with the civil right issue.
Table 21:

**1965: Senate Members’ Votes For and Against the VRA By Ideology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideology</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Voted For the VRA</th>
<th>Voted Against the VRA</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>58% (19)</td>
<td>42% (14)</td>
<td>100% (33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Conservative</td>
<td></td>
<td>75% (6)</td>
<td>25% (2)</td>
<td>100% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td></td>
<td>89% (8)</td>
<td>11% (1)</td>
<td>100% (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td></td>
<td>93% (13)</td>
<td>7% (1)</td>
<td>100% (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Liberal</td>
<td></td>
<td>100% (33)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (33)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 22:

1965: House Members’ Votes For and Against the VRA By Ideology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Conservative</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>Very Liberal</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voted for the VRA</td>
<td>68% (104)</td>
<td>78% (29)</td>
<td>100% (26)</td>
<td>100% (99)</td>
<td>100% (77)</td>
<td>(335)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voted Against the VRA</td>
<td>32% (50)</td>
<td>22% (8)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>(58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (154)</td>
<td>100% (37)</td>
<td>100% (26)</td>
<td>100% (99)</td>
<td>100% (77)</td>
<td>(393)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 23:

**Reported Registration by Race in Texas and Outside the South: 1980-2004**

**TEXAS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>56.6</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>62.1</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>68.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NON-SOUTH:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>64.4</td>
<td>70.9</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes: The table explains the difference in registration rates for Blacks, Whites, and Latinos in both Texas and the Non-South.
Table 24:
Reported Turnout by Race in Texas and Outside the South: 1980-2004

TEXAS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>50.1</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>55.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>55.2</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>57.2</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NON-SOUTH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>58.9</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes: The table explains the difference in turnout rates for Blacks, Whites, and Latinos in both Texas and the Non-South.
Table 25:
Reported Registration by Race in Georgia and Outside the South: 1980-2004

GEORGIA:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>53.9</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>64.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>67.3</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>63.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NON-SOUTH:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>64.4</td>
<td>70.9</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes: The table explains the difference in registration rates for Blacks and Whites in both Georgia and the Non-South.
Table 26:

Reported Turnout by Race in Georgia and Outside the South: 1980-2004

GEORGIA:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>54.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>53.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NON-SOUTH:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>58.9</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes: The table explains the difference in turnout rates for Blacks and Whites in both Georgia and the Non-South.
Table 27: 
Reported Registration by Race in Louisiana and Outside the South: 1980-2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>LOUISIANA:</th>
<th>NON-SOUTH:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>67.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>73.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>75.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>74.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>76.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>74.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>75.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>77.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>74.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>75.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>71.1</td>
<td>75.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes: The table explains the difference in registration rates for Blacks and Whites in both Louisiana and the Non-South.
### Table 28:

**Reported Turnout by Race in Louisiana and Outside the South: 1980-2004**

**LOUISIANA:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>71.5</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>62.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>64.7</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>67.5</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>64.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NON-SOUTH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>58.9</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes: The table explains the difference in turnout rates for Blacks and Whites in both Louisiana and the Non-South.
Table 29:

**Editorials on Voting Rights Act (2006-Feb. 2007)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Washington Post</th>
<th>Los Angeles Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total # of Editorials</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“LA Times Archives.” 2006. The Los Angeles Times. 01 March 2007
Notes: This table indicates the number of editorials that appeared in the Washington Post
and the Los Angeles Times about the 2006 renewal of the VRA.

Table 30:

**Satisfaction with Aspects of American Life**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Nation’s Military Strength and Preparedness</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nation’s Security From Terrorism</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Position of Women in the Nation</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Position of Blacks and Other Racial Minorities in the Nation</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The State of Race Relations</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nations Policies to Reduce Or Control Crime</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nations Law or Policy on Guns</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Role American Plays in World Affairs</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Quality of Medical Care in the Nation</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nation’s Policies Regarding the Abortion Issue</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: The Table asked respondents to rate their satisfaction with various aspects of American Life.
Table 31:
Concern About Social Issues by Party Identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Percentage of Democrats</th>
<th>Percentage of Republicans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>that Consider Issue to be a Concern</td>
<td>that Consider Issue to be a Concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Economy</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime and Violence</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Use</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunger/Homelessness</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal Immigration</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race Relations</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 32:
Interest Group Statements Compared to Total Number of Statements Made at 2006 Senate Judiciary Committee Hearings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Interest Group Testimony</th>
<th>Total # of Testimony</th>
<th># of Interest Group Testimony as a Percentage of Total # of Testimony</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>31.14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Table gives the total number of statements made by interest groups at the 2006 Senate Judiciary Committee Hearings in comparison to the total number of testimony given at the Committee Hearings.
### Table 33:

**2006: House Members’ Votes For and Against the VRA By Region (Democrats Only)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>North East</th>
<th>Mid-Atlantic</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>Mid-West</th>
<th>South West</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vote For the VRA</strong></td>
<td>100% (16)</td>
<td>100% (37)</td>
<td>100% (38)</td>
<td>100% (37)</td>
<td>100% (15)</td>
<td>100% (49)</td>
<td>100% (192)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vote Against the VRA</strong></td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100% (16)</td>
<td>100% (37)</td>
<td>100% (38)</td>
<td>100% (37)</td>
<td>100% (15)</td>
<td>100% (49)</td>
<td>100% (192)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Table 34:

**2006: House Members’ Votes For and Against the VRA By Region (Republicans Only)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>North East</th>
<th>Mid-Atlantic</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>Mid-West</th>
<th>South West</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vote For the VRA</strong></td>
<td>100% (5)</td>
<td>93% (27)</td>
<td>80% (53)</td>
<td>97% (57)</td>
<td>75% (24)</td>
<td>79% (31)</td>
<td>100% (197)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vote Against the VRA</strong></td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>07% (2)</td>
<td>20% (13)</td>
<td>03% (2)</td>
<td>25% (8)</td>
<td>21% (8)</td>
<td>21% (33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100% (5)</td>
<td>100% (29)</td>
<td>100% (66)</td>
<td>100% (59)</td>
<td>100% (32)</td>
<td>100% (39)</td>
<td>100% (230)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 35:

2006- Votes For and Against the VRA in Both the House and Senate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Voted for the VRA</th>
<th>Voted Against the VRA</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>100% (98)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House</td>
<td>93% (399)</td>
<td>7% (32)</td>
<td>100% (431)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>(497)</td>
<td>(32)</td>
<td>100% (529)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 36:
2006: Senate Members’ Votes For and Against the VRA By Region (Democrats Only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North East</th>
<th>Mid-Atlantic</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>Mid-West</th>
<th>South West</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voted For VRA</td>
<td>100% (5)</td>
<td>100% (8)</td>
<td>100% (6)</td>
<td>100% (13)</td>
<td>100% (1)</td>
<td>100% (10)</td>
<td>100% (43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voted Against VRA</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (5)</td>
<td>100% (8)</td>
<td>100% (6)</td>
<td>100% (13)</td>
<td>100% (1)</td>
<td>100% (10)</td>
<td>100% (43)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 37:
2006: Senate Members’ Votes For and Against the VRA By Region (Republicans Only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North East</th>
<th>Mid-Atlantic</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>Mid-West</th>
<th>South West</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vote For the VRA</td>
<td>100% (6)</td>
<td>100% (2)</td>
<td>100% (18)</td>
<td>100% (11)</td>
<td>100% (7)</td>
<td>100% (10)</td>
<td>100% (54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote Against the VRA</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>100% (6)</td>
<td>100% (2)</td>
<td>100% (18)</td>
<td>100% (11)</td>
<td>100% (7)</td>
<td>100% (10)</td>
<td>100% (54)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 38:

2006: House Members’ Votes For and Against the VRA By Ideology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Conservative</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>Very Liberal</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voted For the VRA</td>
<td>85% (173)</td>
<td>97% (29)</td>
<td>96% (26)</td>
<td>100% (35)</td>
<td>100% (132)</td>
<td>(395)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voted Against the VRA</td>
<td>15% (30)</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
<td>4% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>(32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (203)</td>
<td>100% (30)</td>
<td>100% (27)</td>
<td>100% (35)</td>
<td>100% (132)</td>
<td>100% (427)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 39:

2006: Senate Member’s Votes For and Against the VRA By Ideology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Conservative</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>Very Liberal</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voted For the VRA</td>
<td>100% (46)</td>
<td>100% (5)</td>
<td>100% (4)</td>
<td>100% (6)</td>
<td>100% (35)</td>
<td>(96)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voted Against the VRA</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (46)</td>
<td>100% (5)</td>
<td>100% (4)</td>
<td>100% (6)</td>
<td>100% (35)</td>
<td>100% (96)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix

Appendix 1:

**Interest Groups Involved in the 1965 VRA**

1. A. Phillip Randolph Institute
2. American Association of University Women
3. American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
4. Anti-Defamation League
5. Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
6. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
7. United Auto Workers


Notes: This appendix indicates the number of interest groups involved in encouraging members to vote in favor for the 1965 VRA.

Appendix 2:

**Interest Groups Involved in 1965 Senate Judiciary Committee Hearings**

1. Liberty Lobby
2. United Auto Workers
3. NAACP
4. International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Warehousemen & Helpers of America


Notes: The appendix lists the number of interest groups which claimed that they were involved in the 1965 VRA hearings.
Appendix 3:

Interest Groups Involved in 2006 VRA Renewal

1. A. Phillip Randolph Institute
2. AARP
3. Advancement Project
4. American Association of People With Disabilities
5. American Association of University Women
6. American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
7. American Federation of Government Employees
8. American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations
9. American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees
10. American Foundation for the Blind
11. American Jewish Committee
12. American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
13. Americans for Democratic Action
14. Anti-Defamation League
15. Asian American Justice Center
16. Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund
17. Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote (APIA Vote)
18. Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance
19. Asian Pacific American Legal Center
20. Center for Civil Participation
21. Common Cause
22. Community Service Society
23. Demos: A Network of Ideas and Action
24. Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
25. Fair Vote
26. Federally Employed Women
27. Feminist Majority
28. Friends Committee on National Legislation
29. Gamaliel National Clergy Caucus
30. Hadassah, the Women’s Zionist Organization of America
31. Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
32. Human Rights Campaign
33. International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies
34. Japanese American Citizens League
35. Jewish Council for Public Affairs
36. Jewish Labor Committee
37. Korean American Resource and Cultural Center
38. Korean Resource Center
39. Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
40. League of United Latin American Citizens
41. League of Women Voters of the United States
42. Legal Momentum
43. Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund
44. NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc
45. National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees
46. National Asian Pacific American Bar Association
47. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
48. National Association of Human Rights Workers
49. National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund
50. National Association of Neighborhoods
51. National Association of Social Workers
52. National Community Reinvestment Coalition
53. National Congress of American Indians
54. National Congress of Black Women
55. National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA
56. National Council of Jewish Women
57. National Council of La Raza
58. National Council of Negro Women, Inc
59. National Education Association
60. National Fair Housing Alliance
61. National Federation of Filipino American Associations
62. National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce
63. National Institute for Latino Policy
64. National Korean American Service and Education Consortium
65. National Low Income Housing Coalition
66. National Organization for Women
67. National Partnership for Women & Families
68. National Puerto Rican Coalition
69. National Urban League
70. National Voting Rights Institute
71. National Women’s Law Center
72. Native American Rights Fund
73. NETWORK: A Catholic Social Justice Lobby
74. Organization of Chinese Americans
75. Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) National
76. People for the American Way
77. Poverty & Race Research Action Council
78. Presbyterian Church (USA)
79. Project Equality
80. Protestants for the Common Good
81. Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund
82. RainbowPUSH
83. Service Employees International Union
84. Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund
85. Southeast Asia Resource Action Center
86. Southwest Voter Registration Education Project
87. The Interfaith Alliance
88. The Massachusetts Latino Political Organization
89. The Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring
90. Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations
91. United Auto Workers
92. United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
93. United Steelworkers
94. William C. Velasquez Institute
95. YKASEC-Empowering the Korean American Community
96. YWCA USA


Notes: This appendix indicates the number of interest groups involved in encouraging members to renew the VRA in 2006.
Appendix 4:

List of Speeches Made By Both President Johnson and Bush on the VRA

President Bush:

1. Remarks On Signing Legislation To Place A Status of Rosa Parks in the National Statuary Hall at the United States Capitol, December 1, 2005
3. Remarks at the NAACP Annual Convention, July 20, 2006
7. Remarks on the National Economy and an Exchange with Reporters, April 28, 2006
8. Remarks Following a Meeting with Organizations That Support the United States Military in Iraq and Afghanistan and an Exchange with Reporters, June, 26, 2006
13. The President’s News Conference, December 19, 2005


President Johnson:

1. The President’s News Conference at the LBJ Ranch, March 20, 1965
2. The President’s News Conference of July 13, 1965
3. Remarks at the Dedication of the Gary Job Corps Center, San Marino Texas, April 10, 1965
4. The President’s News Conference of April 27, 1965
5. Statement by the President on the Eve of Senate Consideration of the VRA, April 20, 1965
6. Letter to the President of the Senate Proposing Legislation to Eliminate Barriers to the Right to Vote, March 17, 1965
7. Special Message to the Congress on the Right to Vote, March 15, 1965
8. Special Message to the Congress: The American Promise, March 15, 1965
9. The President’s News Conference of March 13, 1965
10. Statement by the President on the Situation in Selma Alabama, March 9, 1965
12. Statement by the President Following the Passage of the Voting Rights Bill by the House of Rep, July 10, 1965
14. The President News Conference on February 4, 1965


Appendix 5:

Interest Groups Involved In 2006 Senate Judiciary Committee Hearings

1. Native American Rights Fund (NARF)
2. Community Service Society of New York

3. Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)
4. Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund
5. National Labor Relations Board
6. Center for Equal Opportunity

7. NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc

8. Center for Equal Opportunity

9. ACLU Voting Rights Project
Appendix 6:

**Key to Understanding Data**

**Region:**
1. New England (Conn, Maine, Mass, New Hamp., Rhode Island, Vermont)
2. Mid-Atlantic (Delaware, MD, NJ, NY, PA)
4. Midwest (IL, IN, IO, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD, WI)
5. Southwest (AZ, NM, OK, TX)
6. West (Alaska, CA, CO, HI, ID, Montana, Nevada, OR, Utah, WA, WY)

**Ideology:**
1. Very Liberal
2. Liberal
3. Moderate
4. Conservative
5. Very Conservative

**Political Party Affiliation:**
1. Democrat
2. Republican
3. Other

**Vote:**
1. For VRA (Creation/Renewal)
2. Against VRA (Creation/Renewal)
Works Cited


