

Durbin, Senate Steering Committee meet with civil rights leaders to discuss voting rights

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) released the following statement after taking part in a Senate Democratic Steering Committee roundtable discussion on voting rights. The meeting included leaders of prominent civil rights organizations and focused on the need for legislative action to address voting discrimination and inequality.

“Three years ago this week, the Supreme Court dealt a devastating blow to American democracy by overturning a key provision of the Voting Rights Act. That decision was issued amid a flurry of discriminatory state laws passed by Republican legislatures around the country that made it more difficult for elderly, minority, low-income, and disabled voters to cast a ballot,” said Durbin. “?”

Disenfranchisement may no longer take the form of poll taxes and literacy tests, but make no mistake, it is still a sinister threat to our most fundamental rights. The Voting Rights Act remains as relevant today as it was when it was signed into law over half a century ago, and Congress must act immediately to restore its critical protections.”

Leaders in attendance today include:

SusanHerman, *President*, American Civil Liberties Union

NicoleAustin-Hillery, *Director and Counsel, Washington, D.C. Office*, Brennan Center for Justice

Wade Henderson, *PresidentandCEO*, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

Hilary Shelton, *Director– Washington Bureau*, NAACP

KristenClarke, *PresidentandExecutiveDirector*, Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights under Law

MarcElias, *Partner*, Perkins Coie

JacquelinePata, *ExecutiveDirector*, National Congress of American Indians

SherrilynIfill, *President and Director-Counsel*, NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.

ThomasSaenz, *PresidentandGeneralCounsel*, Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund

Nkenge Harmon Johnson, *Presidentand CEO*, Urban League of Portland