



## Latino Policy & Politics Initiative

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### UCLA LATINO POLICY AND POLITICS INITIATIVE ISSUES STATEMENT ON FAILURE OF THE U.S. SENATE TO MOVE THE FOR THE PEOPLE ACT FORWARD

In response to Congress failing to move beyond a procedural vote that would have advanced the For The People Act – a federal voting rights bill – to a debate in the U.S. Senate, Sonja Diaz, founding director of the [UCLA Latino Policy and Politics Initiative](#), issued the following statement:

“At a moment when our democracy is in the most precarious state we’ve seen in over a century, Congress failed to act to protect American’s fundamental and sacred right to vote.

“Since the gutting of the Voting Rights Act in 2013, we have seen states become foes of democracy, with legislatures across the country passing restrictive voting laws that target people of color. Just in the last few months, we have seen those efforts expand exponentially with almost 400 bills introduced in 48 states to suppress their vote.

“Our founders knew that democracy can be fragile, and built in safeguards to protect it, the most important of which is our right to vote for a representative government. Yet, that right is being attacked on a daily basis, and those elected to represent our best interests are failing us.

“As we look toward recovery and a nation that is rapidly changing, there is no issue more important than the right to vote. The ability to participate in free and fair elections is inextricably linked to the quality of a community’s schools, jobs, housing, green space, healthcare, and safety. Most importantly, these continued barriers to an inclusive democracy will solidify an unequal and uneven post-pandemic recovery at a time when the very Americans being left out of the franchise are the nation’s current and future workforce. It is beyond time for Congress to act to ensure every eligible American is able to cast a ballot and that their vote is counted. To do anything less is unconscionable and antithetical to the ideals our country was founded on.”

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### About UCLA Latino Policy and Politics Initiative

The UCLA Latino Policy and Politics Initiative addresses the most critical domestic policy challenges facing Latinos and other communities of color through research, advocacy, mobilization, and leadership development to expand genuine opportunity for all Americans.