

## With Commencement of Black History Month Matsui Urges Improved Voting Rights Protection

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Washington, DC — With the start of Black History Month, Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (CA-05) issued the following statement encouraging all Americans to use this month to celebrate the numerous contributions of African Americans.

“Our nation’s history is interwoven with the accomplishments and contributions of African Americans — from Hank Aaron, Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong to George Washington Carver, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Maya Angelou — and because of their efforts our nation is stronger,” said Congresswoman Matsui. “The African American community recently lost two of its leaders and as we mourn the passing of Rosa Parks and Coretta Scott King, we should be reminded that we must continue the civil rights work they devoted their lives to. What better way to celebrate the legacy of these leaders and all of those who have worked to ensure racial justice than by reauthorizing the expiring portions of the Voting Rights Act. The struggle for civil rights continues today and we must make certain that all citizens not only have the right to vote, but that their ability to vote is protected.”

“Although the Voting Rights Act has been essential in protecting the voting rights of minorities, additional safeguards are necessary to ensure that every citizen is included in the election process. This is why I am a cosponsor of H.R. 4140, Ensuring the Vote for Victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Act of 2005. This bill would require infrastructure necessary for federal elections be restored and rebuilt for the regions impacted by the storms.” Congresswoman Matsui also commented that she is cosponsoring H.R. 4141 which will allow voters who are away from home on Election Day the ability to exercise their right to vote through federal write-in absentee ballots.

“I remain committed to furthering the causes of the Civil Rights Movement and will work hard in the coming months to guarantee the right to vote for every citizen. I hope that this month we will celebrate the lives of all of the strong and determined men and women who have worked to ensure equality for all Americans.”

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