

MICHIGAN CHAPTERS
apri
A. PHILIP RANDOLPH INSTITUTE

BATTLE CREEK

17 April 2012

DETROIT

To : Michiganders

FLINT

GRAND RAPIDS

HURON VALLEY

JACKSON

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MUSKEEGON

SAGINAW

The A. Philip Randolph Institute would like to take a position on the Voter Suppression Legislation being presented today. There are bills that have been drafted under the guise of 'protecting voter fraud', but there has been no evidence of fraud in any testimony. There has, however, been fear in legislator's hearts since the 2008 Election Cycle. Record numbers of voters stood in lines for many hours to participate in the political process by exercising their right to vote. In order to make sure that new voters are discouraged, elder voters are disenfranchised and hard working families are discriminated against, voter suppression legislation has been drafted.

Nationwide, it has been predicted that 5 million voters will be prevented from voting if these bills are enacted. In Michigan the photo identification bill alone would affect over 35,000 citizens. As we move forward, it seems that things are to be made easier, not more difficult. Placing road blocks in the paths of those wanting to be civically engaged, is without warrant. Elected officials win with votes. Shouldn't they want to encourage as many voters as possible to make it to the polls? Instead they continue to focus on suppression measures.

Third party organizations, such as the A. Philip Randolph Institute (APRI), Labor Coalition for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA), Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), and Pride @ Work to name a few, work in targeted areas to make sure their captive audiences are educated on the importance of voting. These organizations should be embraced, encouraged and applauded by elected officials. Instead they disgrace our ancestors.

Anita R. Dawson, *State President*

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How dare anyone forget the sacrifices made by those before us, so that we may have the right to vote? As my father-in-law describes the fear in the eyes of his parents when they were given the right to vote, I am more determined to register more voters, take more voters to the polls and explain the ballot initiatives that are being presented. You have to understand, our ancestors risked losing their homes, their families and their own lives if they cast a ballot. They understood the power of their vote and they were determined not to squander the opportunity. How dare I, or we for that matter, disgrace them by not voting. Let their lives, and deaths, not be in vain.

I encourage you to contact your elected officials and ask a simple question. What does Michigan have to gain by suppressing the vote? This is a democracy, and we should be able to enjoy the democratic process instead of being harmed by it.

See you at the polls,



Anita R. Dawson, President

Michigan A. Philip Randolph Institute

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