

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUGUST 6, 1975

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY"

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE SIGNING OF
THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT

THE ROSE GARDEN

AT 12:09 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Vice President, distinguished members of the Congress, and other distinguished guests:

I am very pleased to sign today H.R. 6219, which extends, as well as broadens, the provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The right to vote is at the very foundation of our American system and nothing must interfere with this very precious right. Today is the tenth anniversary of the signing by President Johnson of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which I supported as a member of the House of Representatives.

In the past decade the voting rights of millions and millions of Americans have been protected and our system of government has been strengthened immeasurably. The bill I will sign today extends the temporary provisions of the Act for seven more years and broadens the provisions to bar discrimination against Spanish-speaking Americans, American Indians, Alaskan natives and Asian Americans.

Further, this bill will permit private citizens, as well as the Attorney General, to initiate suits to protect the voting rights of citizens in any State where discrimination occurs. There must be no question whatsoever about the right of each eligible American, each eligible citizen to participate in our elective process. The extension of this Act will help to insure that right.

I thank the members of the Congress, I thank their staffs and I thank all the others who have been helpful in making this signing possible.

END (AT 12:12 P.M. EDT)