

WHEREAS; on August 6, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson was joined by civil rights leaders, including Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks, to sign the Voting Rights Act of 1965 into law; and

WHEREAS; while the 15th Amendment was ratified 95 years prior and made it unconstitutional for any man to be denied the right to vote based on race, color, or previous condition of servitude, widespread voter disenfranchisement efforts against people of color and other historically oppressed communities—and against Black Americans, in particular—persisted; and

WHEREAS; among the law’s numerous landmark provisions is the prohibition of poll taxes and literacy tests at the polls, which had served as a major tool of voter suppression, as well as the institution of federal oversight and enforcement mechanisms aimed at states with a history of discriminatory election processes; and

WHEREAS; the immediate effects of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 included a significant rise in voter turnout across the United States, and by the end of the year, 250,000 Black Americans had been registered to vote, according to the National Archives; and

WHEREAS; despite the progress achieved over the past six decades, voting rights continue to face significant challenges today, as there are those who seek to undermine democracy and sow distrust in Wisconsin’s fair, safe, and secure elections; and

WHEREAS; however today, Wisconsinites are reminded that democracy is not a prophecy; it is self-actuating, and that we must choose every day to continue this grand experiment, to accept the duty our forebears entrusted to us, and to affirm the certainty of this legacy—one founded on the principles of the importance of holding free and fair elections that allow for all eligible voters across the state and country to have easy and equitable access to the ballot box—continues for future generations; and

WHEREAS; today, the state of Wisconsin reaffirms its commitment to eliminating barriers to voting, especially for those historically disenfranchised, and to supporting efforts to make voting as easy and as accessible as possible to every eligible voter;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tony Evers, Governor of the State of Wisconsin,
do hereby proclaim August 6 2026 as

**61ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT
OF 1965**

throughout the State of Wisconsin and I commend this observance
to all our state’s residents.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Madison this 23rd day of July 2026.

TONY EVERS, Governor

By the Governor:

SARAH GODLEWSKI, Secretary of State