

WHEREAS; the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on August 6, 1965, with civil rights leaders, including Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., present at the signing; and

WHEREAS; while the 15th Amendment 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 on the part of state and local governments 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 were the prohibition of literacy tests at the polls – up until then, a major tool of voter suppression – and 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 our country, and especially in southern states; and

WHEREAS; in 2013, the Supreme Court struck down the Act’s preclearance requirement, providing states more authority over their election rules and opening the door to discriminatory practices such as strict voter identification laws, some of the most restrictive being implemented in Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS; on this occasion, we are reminded both of the importance of holding free and fair elections that allow for and encourage the full civic participation of every citizen, as well as how far we have yet to go to achieve this goal for all Wisconsinites and all Americans; and

WHEREAS; today, the state of Wisconsin affirms its commitment to supporting nonpartisan redistricting, ensuring the accessibility of appropriate voter identification, and eliminating all barriers to voting, especially in lower income communities and communities of color;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tony Evers, Governor of the State of Wisconsin,
do hereby proclaim August 6, 2020, as

55TH 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 16th day of July 2020.



TONY EVERS, Governor

By the Governor:



DOUGLAS LA FOLLETTE, Secretary of State