

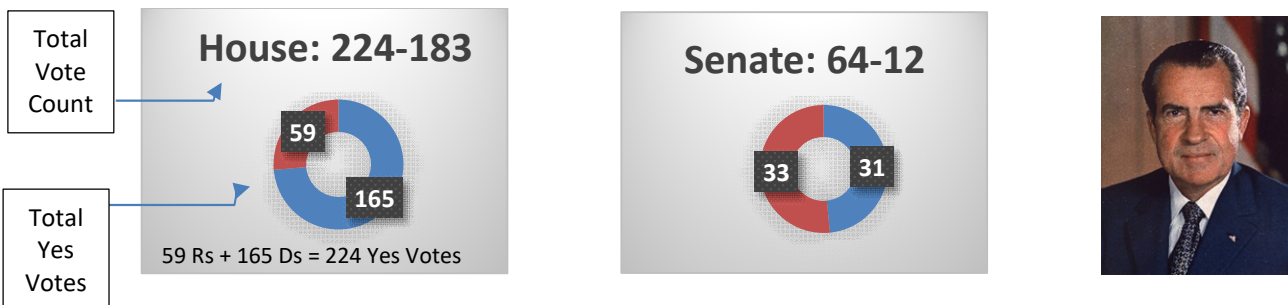
# The Voting Rights Act: A History of Bipartisanship

For nearly 50 years, the Voting Rights Act (VRA) enjoyed strong bipartisan support. In fact:

- Republican Presidents have signed into law every reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act; and
- The 2006 reauthorization passed the Senate unanimously

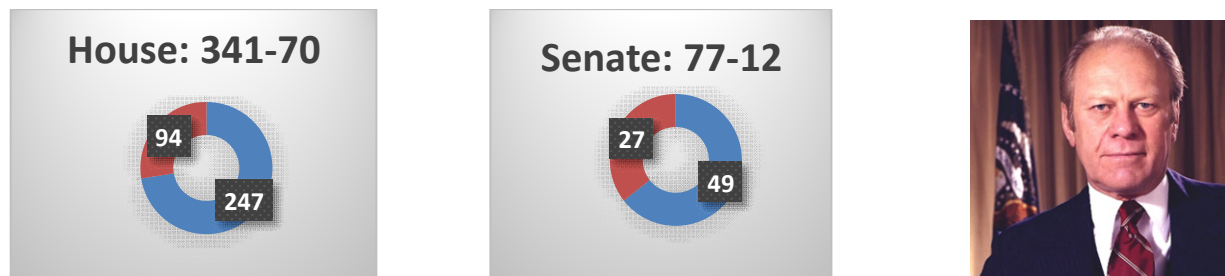
## The Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1970

The first reauthorization of the VRA passed with bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. In the House, 59 Republicans, who made up nearly a third of the GOP conference at the time, voted for the bill.<sup>1</sup> In the Senate, more Republicans (33) voted for passage than Democrats (31)<sup>2</sup>. The bill was signed into law by a Republican, President Richard Nixon.



## The Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1975

The second reauthorization of the VRA passed with bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. In the House, 94 Republicans, who made up nearly two-thirds of the GOP conference at the time, voted for the bill.<sup>3</sup> In the Senate, Republicans provided a third of the aye votes (27) while Democrats provided two-thirds (49).<sup>4</sup> The bill was signed into law by a Republican, President Gerald Ford.



## The Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1982

The third reauthorization of the VRA passed with bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. In the House, 161 Republicans, who made up more than 80% of the GOP conference at the time, voted for the bill.<sup>5</sup> In the Senate, more Republicans (43) voted for passage than Democrats (42).<sup>6</sup> The bill was signed into law by a Republican, President Ronald Reagan.

<sup>1</sup> House vote [#273](#) in 1970

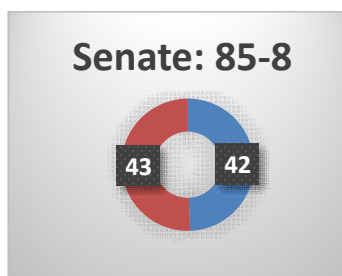
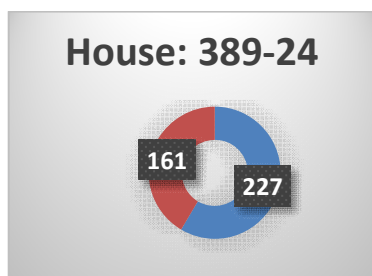
<sup>2</sup> Senate vote [#342](#) in 1970

<sup>3</sup> House vote [#192](#) in 1975

<sup>4</sup> Senate vote [#329](#) in 1975

<sup>5</sup> House vote [#228](#) in 1981

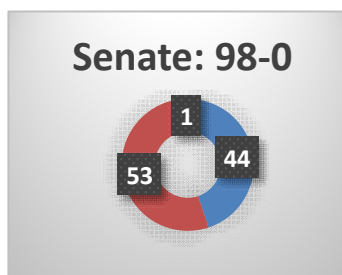
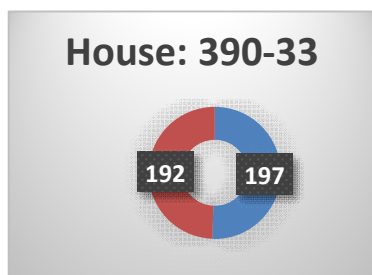
<sup>6</sup> Senate vote [#687](#) in 1982



*“Citizens must have complete confidence in the sanctity of their right to vote, and that's what this legislation is all about. It provides confidence that constitutional guarantees are being upheld and that no vote counts more than another.” – President Ronald Reagan upon signing the Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1982<sup>7</sup>*

### **Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006**

The fourth reauthorization of the VRA passed with bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. In the House, 192 Republicans, who made up more than 80% of the GOP conference at the time, voted for the bill.<sup>8</sup> In the Senate, the bill passed unanimously with every Republican (53) and every Democrat (44) supporting the bill.<sup>9</sup> (Note: one independent Senator, Jim Jeffords, also supported the bill). The bill was signed into law by a Republican, President George W. Bush.



*“In four decades since the Voting Rights Act was first passed, we've made progress toward equality, yet the work for a more perfect union is never ending...Today, we renew a bill that helped bring a community on the margins into the life of American democracy.” President George W. Bush upon signing the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act<sup>10</sup>*

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**For More Information on How to Support the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act**  
 Visit <https://www.businessforvotingrights.com/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/speech/remar-ks-signing-voting-rights-act-amendments-1982>

<sup>8</sup> House vote [#374](#) in 2006

<sup>9</sup> Senate vote [#212](#) in 2006

<sup>10</sup> <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2006/07/20060727.html>