



May 26, 2021

Hon. Charles Schumer
U.S. Senator

Hon. Kirsten Gillibrand
U.S. Senator

Hon. Carolyn Maloney
U.S. Representative

Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler
U.S. Representative

Hon. Nydia Velázquez
U.S. Representative

Hon. Harvey Epstein, NY
State Assembly

Hon. Brad Hoylman
NY State Senator

Hon. Brian Kavanagh
NY State Senator

Hon. Deborah J. Glick
NY State Assembly

Hon. Yuh-Line Niou
NY State Assembly

Dear Senator Charles Schumer, Kirsten Gillibrand, Carolyn Maloney, Jerrold L. Nadler, Representative Nydia Velázquez, Harvey Epstein, Brad Hoylman, Brian Kavanagh, Deborah J. Glick, Yuh-Line Niou,

Enclosed please find a Resolution approved by Downtown Independent Democrats General Membership on May 26, 2021:

As we commemorate the one-year anniversaries of the killings of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, the mass protests against police brutality and racism in the United States, and the passing of Representative John Lewis, we urge our elected officials to fight for the passage of several key pieces of legislation that would protect the rights, voices, and lives of Black Americans, minorities, and all Americans facing discriminatory policing practices and barriers to equal participation in our democracy.

- **The George Floyd Justice in Policing Act (H.R.1280)**
- **Legislation to limit the use of no-knock warrants and forcible police entries (NYS: S11 and A2683)**
- **The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (H.R.4) and the For the People Act (H.R.1 and S.1)**

Sincerely,

Richard Corman
President, Downtown Independent Democrats



Enclosure

cc: Hon. Jumaane Williams, NYC Public Advocate
Hon. Scott Stringer, NYC Comptroller
Hon. Charles Schumer, U.S. Senator
Hon. Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Senator
Hon. Carolyn Maloney, U.S. Representative
Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, U.S. Representative
Hon. Nydia Velázquez, U.S. Representative
Hon. Andrew Cuomo, NYS Governor
Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins, NYS Sen. Leader

Hon. Carl Heastie, NYS Assembly Speaker
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator
Hon. Brian Kavanagh, NY State Senator
Hon. Harvey Epstein, NY State Assembly
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, NY State Assembly
Hon. Yuh-Line Niou, NY State Assembly
Tammy Meltzer, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 1
Jeannine Kiely, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 2
Alysha Lewis-Coleman, Chair, Manhattan Community 3

In Support of Federal/NYS Racial Justice Laws

May 26, 2021

Whereas:

1. We recently passed or are nearing the one-year anniversaries of Breonna Taylor's and George Floyd's killings and the mass uprising of protests against police brutality and racism that followed.
2. The Biden Administration has made it a top priority to tackle issues of racial equity,¹ and President Biden has asked Congress to pass the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, a police reform bill that "increases accountability for law enforcement misconduct, restricts the use of certain policing practices, enhances transparency and data collection, and establishes best practices and training requirements,"² before the one-year anniversary of Floyd's death. The bill passed in the House of Representatives on March 3, 2021 but has not yet passed in the Senate.
3. In March 2020, Breonna Taylor was killed during the execution of a no-knock warrant in Louisville, Kentucky. Her killing has led to increased attention to forcible police entries, and the introduction of legislation to limit their use and increase oversight in many cities

¹ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/priorities/>

² H.R.1280 - George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2021, 117th Congress (2021-2022), <https://www.congress.gov/bills/117th-congress/house-bill/1280>



and states - notably passing in Louisville and Virginia. Most governments don't require reporting of SWAT operations, but according to a New York Times investigation, at least 81 civilians and 13 police officers were killed nationwide in the execution of no-knock warrants between 2010 and 2016³. Legislation (Senate Bill S11⁴ and Assembly Bill A2683⁵) has been introduced in the New York State Legislature to ban no-knock raids, except in the most severe circumstances, and add additional reforms and oversight to all warrants. Legislation to ban no knock warrants has been introduced in the U.S. Senate⁶ and a ban on no knock warrants in drug cases is included in the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act.⁷

4. According to the Brennan Center for Justice, as of March 2021, legislators have introduced 361 bills with restrictive voting provisions in 47 states⁸. Many of these measures are considered racially biased, and if enacted would significantly increase barriers to voting for people of color.
 - a. In March 2021, the House of Representatives passed the For The People Act (H.R. 1), a sweeping electoral reform bill to address "voter access, election integrity and security, campaign finance, and ethics for the three branches of government⁹." The bill has not passed in the Senate.
 - b. The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act¹⁰ would re-establish and reform elements of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that were gutted by the Supreme Court's 2013 decision in *Shelby County v. Holder*¹¹, including the preclearance requirements for states with a history of voter suppression and racial discrimination when making changes to election procedure.

Therefore Downtown Independent Democrats resolves to:

1. Call upon our elected officials in Congress to support and advocate for the passage of the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act.
2. Call upon our elected officials in the New York State legislature to co-sponsor Senate Bill S11 and Assembly Bill A2683 to limit no knock warrants.
3. Call upon our elected officials in Congress to support and advocate for the passage of the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (H.R.4) and the For the People Act (H.R.1 and S.1).

³ Door-Busting Drug Raids Leave a Trail of Blood, NY Times, March 18, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/03/18/us/forced-entry-warrant-drug-raid.html>

⁴ Senate Bill S11, NY State Senate, 2021-2022 Legislative Session, <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2021/S11>

⁵ Assembly Bill A2683, NY State Assembly, 2021-2022 Legislative Session, <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2021/a2683>

⁶ S.3955 - Justice for Breonna Taylor Act, 116th Congress (2019-2020), <https://www.congress.gov/bills/116th-congress/senate-bill/3955>

⁷ H.R.1280 - George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2021, 117th Congress (2021-2022), <https://www.congress.gov/bills/116th-congress/house-bill/7120/text/HFAEFAC53D9DA483B8DE1D1CD24BA6163>

⁸ State Voting Bills Tracker 2021, Brennan Center for Justice, retrieved May 11, 2021, <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/state-voting-bills-tracker-2021>

⁹ H.R.1 - For the People Act of 2021, 117th Congress (2021-2022), <https://www.congress.gov/bills/117th-congress/house-bill/1>

¹⁰ H.R.4 - Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2019, 116th Congress (2019-2020), <https://www.congress.gov/bills/116th-congress/house-bill/4>

¹¹ Shelby County v. Holder, Brennan Center for Justice, retrieved May 11, 2021, <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/court-cases/shelby-county-v-holder>



Grassroots Action Plan:

Invite Membership to use these tools to email, call, & petition elected officials about ending the filibuster.

- [George Floyd Justice In Policing Act Petition](#)
- [Breonna Taylor No Knock Warrants NYS Petition](#)
- [John Lewis Voting Rights Act Petition](#)