



BRIEFING ROOM

Statement by President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. On the One Year Anniversary of the Passing of Congressman John Lewis

JULY 17, 2021 • STATEMENTS AND RELEASES

Days before he died one year ago today, Jill and I spoke with John Lewis for the last time. He was in those final days as he was throughout his remarkable life – at peace and full of dignity and grace. Instead of answering our concerns for him, he asked us to remain focused on the unfinished work – his life’s work – of healing and uniting this nation.

Over the past six months in office, we find ourselves often reflecting on that last conversation. For all the historic progress we have made as a nation to beat this pandemic and repair and rebuild the economy, we know there is more work to do to deliver the promise of America to all Americans. That means ensuring equity remains at the heart of our vaccine effort and that health care is a right not a privilege. It means building an economy that respects the dignity of working people with good jobs and good wages. It means ensuring equal justice under law is real in practice and not just a promise etched in stone.

Perhaps most of all, it means continuing the cause that John was willing to give his life for: protecting the sacred right to vote. Not since the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s have we seen such unrelenting attacks on voting rights and the integrity of our elections – from the Big Lie to the insurrection on January 6th to the new waves of voter suppression and a new front of election subversion.

John once said, “*Freedom is not a state; it is an act.*” On this day of remembrance, let us continue to act.

I again call on Congress to pass the For the People Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act so I can sign them into law. And as a nation, let us act and forge a coalition of Americans of every background and political party – advocates, students, faith leaders, labor leaders, business executives – and raise the urgency of this moment.

For We the People, for our democracy, for America itself – we must act.

With John’s spirit guiding us, we must be unafraid and never, ever give up.

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Statement by President Joe Biden on DACA and Legislation for Dreamers

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