

WASHINGTON, DC – House Democratic Whip Steny H. Hoyer (MD) released the following statement today in recognition of the 42nd anniversary of the Civil Rights March on Washington:

“The words and images of the Civil Rights March on Washington 42 years ago have a unique and hallowed place in the history of America’s struggle to protect the rights and freedoms of all its citizens. On August 28, 1963, more than 250,000 people of all races, ages and backgrounds joined together to demand that politicians fulfill the promise of equality enshrined in the Constitution. Their call was powerful, and their call was heeded by Americans across the country who were inspired to join in the fight for civil rights by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s ‘I Have a Dream’ speech and the vision of a better and brighter America he represented.

“Some of America’s bravest and truest heroes stood with Dr. King on that day, including my colleague Rep. John Lewis of Georgia. This summer, I had the privilege of joining Rep. Lewis to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the ‘Bloody Sunday’ civil rights march in Selma, Alabama, an event that was undoubtedly inspired by what took place on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial two years prior.

“This summer also marked the 40th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The VRA is the very embodiment of the American civil rights movement, and out of dedication to the Constitution, out of reverence for those who gave their lives so that all Americans could vote, and out of recognition that America is strongest when the voices of all its citizens are heard, we must reauthorize this legislation.

“Now more than ever, we must commemorate the March on Washington through not just words, but through actions. We have made great strides in the effort to protect Americans’ civil rights, but there is much left to be done. It is up to us to continue the march towards equality.”

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