

# Large Corporations Have Publicly Supported Expanded Voting Access And Rights, But Their Political Spending Has Propped Up Conservative Attorneys General Who Oppose The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act

**SUMMARY:** In September, Attorney General Todd Rokita led a group of 23 attorneys general in a letter to congressional leaders opposing the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, or HR4. [The bill](#) would effectively reverse the 2013 Shelby County decision, require some states to get approval from the Justice Department's civil rights division to make changes to election procedures, and empower courts to block election law changes for violating constitutional protections that guarantee voting rights.

In essence, the bill [aims to](#) protect voting rights for those who have access to the ballot box and expand voting rights for those who've experience discriminatory practices that have barred them from exercising their right to vote.

Several corporations that have publicly supported voting rights have also funded the campaigns of Republican AGs who are attempting to obstruct passage of the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act:

- **Anheuser-Busch** and **General Motors**, two of Indiana Attorney General Rokita's top corporate donors, gave him thousands of dollars and have publicly supported voting rights and higher election participation.
- **Cozen O'Connor**, one of Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich's top corporate donors, gave him over \$10,000 and have publicly touted their involvement in a court win for voting rights in Louisiana.
- **Facebook**, **Coca-Cola**, and **Home Depot** each donated over \$12,000 to Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr and they all have made public statements supporting expanded access to the ballot box.
- **HCA Management Services**, one of Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody's top corporate donors, promoted making it as easy as possible for people to participate in elections.
- One of West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey's top corporate donors was **Home Depot**, which claims to support expanded election participation.
- The CEO of **AT&T**, one of Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton's top corporate donors, has called the right to vote "sacred."
- Two of South Dakota Attorney General Jason Ravensborg's top corporate donors, **Facebook** and **Comcast Corporation**, have publicly claimed to support expanded voting rights.
- **Walmart**, one of Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge's top corporate donors, gave her thousands of dollars, has publicly condemning voting restrictions and supporting expanded election participation.

- **Anheuser-Busch**, one of Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt's top corporate donors, publicly supported voting rights and higher election participation.
- **AT&T** and **Comcast Corporation**, which have supported access to voting, are top corporate donors to South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson.

Corporations that have funded the attorneys general who oppose protecting and expanding access to the ballot box have a decision to make between disavowing the AGs' actions or being complicit in their efforts to oppose the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act's passage.

## **23 Attorneys General, Led By Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita, Sent A Letter To Congressional Leaders Expressing Opposition To The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

### **Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita Was Accompanied By Attorneys General Brnovich, Carr, Moody, Morrissey, Paxton, Ravensborg, Rutledge, Schmitt, And Wilson In His Opposition To Expanding Voting Rights.**

Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita wrote a letter, with the support of 22 other attorneys general, to congressional leaders opposing the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, saying it would allow the DOJ to "usurp the authority states rightly possess over their own elections." "In a letter to congressional leaders, Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita warns that a reckless piece of legislation under consideration on Capitol Hill 'would allow the United States Department of Justice to usurp the authority states rightly possess over their own elections, essentially federalizing the election system.' Attorney General Rokita's letter opposing the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act — or H.R. 4 — is joined by 22 other attorneys general." [Press Release — Todd Rokita, [9/14/21](#)]

- **Signatories Of The Letter Included Attorneys General Brnovich, Carr, Moody, Morrissey, Paxton, Ravensborg, Rutledge, Schmitt, And Wilson.** [The Office of Todd Rokita, [9/13/21](#)]

## **Anheuser-Busch And General Motors, Which Publicly Supported Voting Rights And Higher Election Participation, Are Two Top Corporate Donors To Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita, Who Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

### **Anheuser-Busch, Which Launched Its Pandemic-Era "Brew Democracy" Initiative Designed To Increase Participation In The Political Process, Has Donated \$5,000 To Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita, Who Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

Anheuser-Busch donated \$5,000 to Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita. [FollowTheMoney.org, accessed [9/15/21](#)]

AG Rokita opposed the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. [The Office of Todd Rokita, [9/13/21](#)]

**Anheuser-Busch Launched Its Pandemic-Era "Brew Democracy" Initiative Designed To Increase Participation In The Political Process** "In support of its 'Brew Democracy' initiative designed to increase participation in the political process and bring the nation's political leaders together, Anheuser-Busch is producing and donating more than eight million ounces of hand sanitizer to polling locations across the United States for this November's General Election. In coordination with the National Association of State Election

Directors (NASED), the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), Anheuser-Busch will distribute the hand sanitizer to state election offices that have requested it to help ensure the safety of voters and polling site workers throughout the election process.” [Anheuser-Busch, [8/13/20](#)]

- **As A Part Of Its “Brew Democracy” Initiative, Anheuser-Busch Donated More Than Eight Million Ounces Of Hand Sanitizer To Polling Locations Throughout The Country For The 2020 General Election.** “In support of its ‘Brew Democracy’ initiative designed to increase participation in the political process and bring the nation’s political leaders together, Anheuser-Busch is producing and donating more than eight million ounces of hand sanitizer to polling locations across the United States for this November’s General Election. In coordination with the National Association of State Election Directors (NASED), the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), Anheuser-Busch will distribute the hand sanitizer to state election offices that have requested it to help ensure the safety of voters and polling site workers throughout the election process.” [Anheuser-Busch, [8/13/20](#)]

**Anheuser-Busch’s Chief External Affairs Officer, Cesar Vargas, Claimed The Company Was “Committed To Uniting Our Communities, Strengthening Our Democracy And Encouraging Even Greater Participation In The Political Process.”** ““As a leading U.S. employer, Anheuser-Busch is committed to uniting our communities, strengthening our democracy and encouraging even greater participation in the political process. One part of this commitment is shifting our production capabilities to donate hand sanitizer so that election officials and voters throughout the country can take part in a safe election this fall.’ said Cesar Vargas, Chief External Affairs Officer, Anheuser-Busch. ‘We like to say that ‘beer is bipartisan’ and we are proud to step up and serve our communities during this election season.” [Anheuser-Busch, [8/13/20](#)]

### **General Motors, Which Put Out A Statement Opposing Republican-Backed Legislation To Restrict Voting, Is Contributing Money To Indiana AG Rokita, Who Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act..**

**General Motors Donated \$5,000 To Attorney General Todd Rokita.** [FollowTheMoney.org, accessed [9/15/21](#)]

**AG Rokita Opposed The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.** [The Office of Todd Rokita, [9/13/21](#)]

**General Motors Put Out A Statement Opposing Republican-Backed Legislation To Restrict Voting.** “The top executives of more than three dozen Michigan-based companies, including General Motors Co (GM.N) and Ford Motor Co (F.N), on Tuesday issued a joint statement opposing Republican-backed legislation to restrict voting. The move appeared to be pre-emptive, after Georgia companies such as Coca-Cola Co (KO.N) and Delta Air Lines Inc (DAL.N) endured public backlash for failing to take a stronger stance before that state enacted a raft of voting limits last month. ‘Government must avoid actions that reduce participation in elections - particularly among historically disenfranchised communities,’ the statement, which bore the names of 37 top executives, read in part.” [Reuters, [4/13/21](#)]

**Cozen O’Connor, Which Publicly Touted Their Involvement In A Court Win For Voting Rights In Louisiana, Is A Top Donor Of Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich, Who Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

**Cozen O’Connor, A Law Firm That Has Fought Alongside The NAACP In Court To Secure An “Historic Voting Rights Victory” And Then Publicly Touted The Ruling, Has Given Over \$10,000 To Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich, Who Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

**Cozen O'Connor Gave Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich \$10,100.** [FollowTheMoney.org, accessed [9/15/21](#)]

**AG Brnovich Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.** [The Office of Todd Rokita, [9/13/21](#)]

**Cozen O'Connor Fought In And Won An “Important Civil Rights Case” That Paved The Way To Get Rid Of A “Discriminatory Voting Practice And For Black Voters To Have The Equal Opportunity” In Louisiana.** “A federal district court ruled in favor of the Terrebonne Parish NAACP and four Black voters, represented by the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF), the law firm of Cozen O'Connor, and longtime Louisiana civil rights attorney, Ronald L. Wilson, in an important voting rights case. Following an eight-day bench trial earlier this year, the court determined that Louisiana’s use of at-large voting for electing five members to the 32nd Judicial District Court (32nd JDC), the state court encompassing Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana, violated the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the U.S. Constitution. This decision paves the way for an end to a nearly 50-year old discriminatory voting practice and for Black voters to have the equal opportunity—for the first time since that state court was created in 1968—to elect their preferred judicial candidates.” [Atlanta Daily World, [8/30/17](#)]

**Cozen O'Connor Touted Their Touted Their Win Alongside LDF In A Voting Rights Case In Which The Court Ruled That Louisiana Was Violating The Voting Rights Act Of 1965.** “Cozen O'Connor, alongside co-counsel NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF) and New Orleans-based civil rights lawyer Ron Wilson, obtained an important trial victory for our clients—the Terrebonne Parish NAACP and four individual Black voters—in a voting rights case in the United States District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana. In a detailed and compelling 91-page decision announced on August 17, the court held that Louisiana’s use of at-large voting for electing five members to the 32nd Judicial District Court (the Judicial District that covers Terrebonne Parish) violated the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the U.S. Constitution.” [Cozen O'Connor, [8/30/17](#)]

**Facebook, Coca-Cola, And Home Depot, Which All Made Public Statements Supporting Expanded Access To The Ballot Box, Are Top Donors To Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr, Who Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

**Facebook, Which Signed A Letter Supporting The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, Donated Almost \$13,000 To Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr, Who Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

**Facebook Gave Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr Almost \$13,000.** [FollowTheMoney.org, accessed [9/15/21](#)]

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**Facebook Undersigned A Letter In Support Of The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.** “Congress needs to amend the Voting Rights Act to restore necessary safeguards by updating the Voting Rights Act’s coverage formula to prevent voting discrimination, as well as establish a more transparent and accountable system for states to report election law changes. Legislation amending the Voting Rights Act must help ensure that voters of color who remain the targets of voter suppression have equal and unfettered access to the democratic process. [...] Facebook.” [Business for Voting Rights, [7/14/21](#)]

**Facebook Signed A Letter Supporting Voting Rights And Condemning Legislation That Aimed To “Restrict Or Prevent Any Eligible Voter From Having An Equal And Fair Opportunity To Cast A Ballot.”** “Amazon, Apple, Google parent company Alphabet, and Facebook have joined hundreds of corporations, executives, and celebrities in signing a public letter today supporting voting rights and condemning legislation that would ‘restrict or prevent any eligible voter from having an equal and fair opportunity to cast a ballot,’ The New York Times reports.” [The Verge, [4/14/21](#)]

## **Coca-Cola, Which Condemned Georgia's Law That Restricted Voting, Donated More Than \$13,000 To AG Carr, Who Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

**Coca-Cola Donated Over \$13,000 To AG Carr.** [FollowTheMoney.org, accessed [9/15/21](#)]

**AG Carr Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.** [The Office of Todd Rokita, [9/13/21](#)]

**Coca-Cola Undersigned A Letter Blasting Georgia's New Voter Restriction Laws.** "A growing number of companies and top executives are blasting a new election law in Georgia that some critics have assailed as a concerted effort to suppress minority voters. The legislation, signed into law last week by Gov. Brian Kemp (R), limits the use of drop-off ballot boxes, introduces new voter identification requirements and prevents voters waiting in line from being given food or water.[...]. Coca-Cola." [The Hill, [4/2/21](#)]

**Coca-Cola's CEO, James Quincey, Condemned Georgia's Restrictive Voting Rights Law After It Was Passed, Calling It "Unacceptable" And "A Step Backwards."** "As Georgia lawmakers debated significant new voting restrictions over the last month, many of the most powerful companies in the state stayed neutral. Now, nearly a week after governor Brian Kemp signed the measure, companies are pivoting and speaking out more forcefully on the measure. [...] James Quincey, the CEO of Coca-Cola, which like Delta had declined to publicly take a stance on the bill, also condemned it on Wednesday. 'This legislation is unacceptable. It is a step backwards,' he told CNBC. 'This legislation is wrong and needs to be remedied and we will continue to advocate for it both in private and now even more clearly in public.'" [The Guardian, [4/1/21](#)]

- **Quincey Said Georgia's Restrictive Voting Law Was Wrong And Claimed Coca-Cola Would Advocate For Its Remedy "Both In Private And Now Even More Clearly In Public."** "As Georgia lawmakers debated significant new voting restrictions over the last month, many of the most powerful companies in the state stayed neutral. Now, nearly a week after governor Brian Kemp signed the measure, companies are pivoting and speaking out more forcefully on the measure. [...] James Quincey, the CEO of Coca-Cola, which like Delta had declined to publicly take a stance on the bill, also condemned it on Wednesday. 'This legislation is unacceptable. It is a step backwards,' he told CNBC. 'This legislation is wrong and needs to be remedied and we will continue to advocate for it both in private and now even more clearly in public.'" [The Guardian, [4/1/21](#)]

## **Home Depot Released A Statement In Support Of "Accessible, Fair, And Secure" Elections With "Broad Voter Participation," But The Company Continued To Donate To AG Carr, Who Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

**Home Depot Donated Over \$13,000 To AG Carr.** [FollowTheMoney.org, accessed [9/15/21](#)]

**AG Carr Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.** [The Office of Todd Rokita, [9/13/21](#)]

**Home Depot Put Out A Statement Saying The Company Believed "All Elections Should Be Accessible, Fair And Secure And Support Broad Voter Participation."** "The Home Depot, which is based out of Atlanta and employs more than 400,000 associates as Georgia's largest company, has not directly addressed the state's new controversial voting law. The bill, SB202, was signed into law by Governor Brian Kemp on March 25 and has been publicly denounced by other major Atlanta based companies such as Coca-Cola and Delta Air Lines. 'We believe that all elections should be accessible, fair and secure and support broad voter participation. We'll continue to work to ensure our associates, both in Georgia and across the country, have the information and resources to vote,' Stephen Holmes, a spokesman for The Home Depot said in a statement to Newsweek." [Newsweek, [4/5/21](#)]

- **Home Depot, Which Was Based Out Of Atlanta, Released A Statement Following The Restrictive Voting Law's Passage In Georgia.** "The Home Depot, which is based out of Atlanta and employs more than 400,000 associates as Georgia's largest company, has not directly addressed the state's

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**HCA Management Services, Which Promoted Making It As Easy As Possible For People To Participate In Elections, Is A Top Corporate Donor Of Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody's, Who Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

**HCA Management Services, Which Had A Government Relations Program That Included Voting Access As A Priority, Claiming It Strived To Make It As Easy As Possible To Participate In The Electoral Process, Has Donated \$18,000 To Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody, Who Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

HCA Management Services, Or HCA Healthcare, Donated \$18,000 To Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody. [FollowTheMoney.org, accessed [9/15/21](#)]

AG Moody Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. [The Office of Todd Rokita, [9/13/21](#)]

HCA Healthcare Used Its Government Relations Program To Encourage Voting, Claiming It Strived To Make It As Easy As Possible To Participate In The Electoral Process. "HCA, the nation's leading provider of healthcare services, contributes to the development and application of public policy through a program of informed working relationships with federal, state, and local governments. As a part of its corporate responsibility, HCA promotes interests in a manner compatible with those of the nations, states and communities in which we operate. HCA's government relations program is fortunate to have the long-time support of HCA management. [...] HCA encourages all employees to participate in the electoral process. Voting is a privilege and HCA strives to make registration, as well as corrections to your voter registration card as easy as possible." [HCA Healthcare, Accessed [9/17/21](#)]

**Home Depot, Which Claimed To Support Expanded Election Participation, Were Two Top Donors Of West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey's, Who Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

**Home Depot Release A Statement In Support Of "Accessible, Fair And Secure" Elections With "Broad Voter Participation," But The Company Continued To Donate Over \$16,000 To West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey, Who Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

Home Depot Donated Over \$16,000 To AG Morrisey. [FollowTheMoney.org, accessed [9/15/21](#)]

AG Morrisey Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. [The Office of Todd Rokita, [9/13/21](#)]

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Air Lines. 'We believe that all elections should be accessible, fair and secure and support broad voter participation. We'll continue to work to ensure our associates, both in Georgia and across the country, have the information and resources to vote,' Stephen Holmes, a spokesman for The Home Depot said in a statement to Newsweek." [Newsweek, [4/5/21](#)]

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**AT&T, Which Has Said It Does Not Support Voting Restrictions Bills, Is A Top Corporate Donor Of Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton's, Who Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

**AT&T, Which Has Said It Does Not Support Voting Restrictions Bills, Donated Over \$100,000 To Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, Who Publicly Opposed The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

AT&T Donated \$108,922 To Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton. [FollowTheMoney.org, accessed [9/15/21](#)]

AG Paxton Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. [The Office of Todd Rokita, [9/13/21](#)]

AT&T CEO Sohn Stankey Made A Statement That The Company Believed The Right To Vote Was Sacred And That AT&T Supported Voting Laws That Made It Easier For "More Americans To Vote In Free, Fair And Secure Elections." "AT&T issued a statement from its CEO, John Stankey. He said, "We believe the right to vote is sacred and we support voting laws that make it easier for more Americans to vote in free, fair and secure elections." [Deadline, [4/1/21](#)]

**Facebook And Comcast Corporation, Which Publicly Claimed To Support Expanded Voting Rights, Were Two Top Corporate Donors Of South Dakota Attorney General Jason Ravensborg, Who Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

**Facebook, Which Signed A Letter Supporting The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, Donated \$4,000 To South Dakota Attorney General Jason Ravensborg, Who Publicly Opposed The Bill.**

Facebook Donated \$4,000 To South Dakota Attorney General Jason Ravensborg. [FollowTheMoney.org, accessed [9/15/21](#)]

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**Comcast, Which Publicly Opposed Georgia’s Voting Restrictions Law, Has Donated Thousands Of Dollars To AG Ravensborg, Who Publicly Opposed The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

**Comcast Corporation Donated \$3,000 To AG Ravensborg.** [FollowTheMoney.org, accessed [9/15/21](#)]

**AG Ravensborg Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.** [The Office of Todd Rokita, [9/13/21](#)]

**Comcast Undersigned A Letter Blasting Georgia’s New Voter Restriction Laws.** “A growing number of companies and top executives are blasting a new election law in Georgia that some critics have assailed as a concerted effort to suppress minority voters. The legislation, signed into law last week by Gov. Brian Kemp (R), limits the use of drop-off ballot boxes, introduces new voter identification requirements and prevents voters waiting in line from being given food or water.[...]. Comcast Corp.” [The Hill, [4/2/21](#)]

**Comcast Corp. Said It Had “Long Supported And Promoted Voter Education, Registration And Participation Campaigns Across The Country.”** “Comcast Corp., the parent company of NBCUniversal, and AT&T, the parent of WarnerMedia, weighed in amid the controversy surrounding Georgia’s new voting law. Neither company specifically called out the state’s new voting restrictions, but instead addressed voting rights in general. Comcast said in a statement, ‘Voting is fundamental to our democracy. We believe that all Americans should enjoy equitable access to secure elections and we have long supported and promoted voter education, registration and participation campaigns across the country to achieve that goal. Efforts to limit or impede access to this vital constitutional right for any citizen are not consistent with our values.’” [Deadline, [4/1/21](#)]

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**Walmart, Which Publicly Opposed Georgia’s Voting Restrictions Law, Has Donated To Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge, Who Opposed The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

**Walmart Donated \$7,400 To Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge.** [FollowTheMoney.org, accessed [9/15/21](#)]

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Anheuser-Busch Donated \$75,974 To Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt. [FollowTheMoney.org, accessed [9/17/21](#)]

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**Comcast Corporation And AT&T, Which Both Opposed Efforts To Limit Or Impede Access To Voting, Were Top Donors To South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson, Who Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

## **Comcast, Which Has Decried The Aim Of Georgia's Voting Restrictions Bill, Donated To South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson, Who Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

**Comcast Corporation Donated \$16,500 To South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson, And AT&T, A Subsidiary Of Comcast, Also Donated \$16,500 To AG Wilson.** [FollowTheMoney.org, accessed [9/15/21](#)]

**AG Wilson Opposes The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.** [The Office of Todd Rokita, [9/13/21](#)]

**Comcast Corp. Blasted Efforts To Limit Or Impede Access To Voting Following Georgia's New Restrictive Voting Law.** "Comcast Corp., the parent company of NBCUniversal, and AT&T, the parent of WarnerMedia, weighed in amid the controversy surrounding Georgia's new voting law. Neither company specifically called out the state's new voting restrictions, but instead addressed voting rights in general. Comcast said in a statement, 'Voting is fundamental to our democracy. We believe that all Americans should enjoy equitable access to secure elections and we have long supported and promoted voter education, registration and participation campaigns across the country to achieve that goal. Efforts to limit or impede access to this vital constitutional right for any citizen are not consistent with our values.'" [Deadline, [4/1/21](#)]

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