

## US History II Voting Rights Legislation Timeline

**14<sup>th</sup> Amendment (1868)** granted citizenship to all people "born or naturalized in the United States" and "equal protection under the laws," including formerly enslaved people. Congress could punish states that excluded voters on the basis of race. It gave Congress the right to reduce the congressional representation of states that withheld suffrage on the basis of race. (Andrew Johnson)

**15<sup>th</sup> Amendment (1870)** granted Black men the right to vote and Congress the power to enforce the right. However, laws, including poll taxes, literacy tests and grandfather clauses, are enacted in mostly Southern states, suppressing Black voting rights until 1965. (Grant)

**19<sup>th</sup> Amendment (1919)** granted women the right to vote. (Wilson)

**Indian Citizen Act of 1924** granted the right to vote to Native Americans born in the United States. Despite its passage, some states continued to bar Native Americans from voting. (Coolidge)

**Chinese Exclusion Act ended 1943** (after WWII) Chinese immigrants and their American-born families become the first Asian Americans eligible to naturalize and gain citizenship—and vote. (FDR)

**23<sup>rd</sup> Amendment (1960)** allowed American citizens living in the District of Columbia to vote for president and vice president. Prior to its passage, D.C. residents could only vote for those offices with valid registration in one of the nation's states. (Eisenhower)

**24<sup>th</sup> Amendment (1964)** prohibited the use of poll taxes in federal elections. "There can be no one too poor to vote," President Lyndon Johnson said during a ceremony announcing the amendment. (Johnson)

**Voting Rights Act (1965)** bans literacy tests and enforcing the 15th Amendment on a federal level. It also provides for federal examiners who can register voters in certain jurisdictions. (Johnson)

**26<sup>th</sup> Amendment (1971)** grants the right to vote to U.S. citizens who are 18 or older. Prohibiting discrimination based on age, it lowers the age from 21, largely in reaction to the number of 18-20-year-olds fighting in Vietnam. (Nixon)

**Rights for Non-English-Speaking Voters (1975)** requires districts with significant numbers of non-English-speaking voters to be provided with instructions or assistance in registering and voting. (Ford)

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**Voting Rights Act** extended by Reagan in **1982**.

**Voting Accessibility for Elderly and Handicapped (1984)** requiring polling places in federal elections to be accessible for people with disabilities and the elder. It also states that if no accessible location is available, an alternative way to vote on Election Day must be offered. (Reagan)

**National Voter Registration Act of 1993** requires state motor vehicle agencies to offer voter registration opportunities, states to offer mail-in voter registration applications, states to maintain current and accurate voter registration lists and opportunities to register to vote at certain state and local offices. (Clinton)

**Help America Vote Act (2002)** mandating that the U.S. Election Assistance Commission improve and certify voting equipment, maintain the National Voter Registration form and administer a national elections clearinghouse with shared practices, among other items. It provides states with funds to meet the new standards and provisions. (G.W. Bush)

**Voting Rights Act of 1965 walked back in 2013.** In *Shelby County v. Holder*, the U.S. Supreme Court, in a 5-4 vote, rules that Section 4(b) of the Voting Rights Act is unconstitutional, holding that the constraints placed on certain states and federal review of states' voting procedures, known as preclearance, are outdated. Seen as a blow to civil rights activists. (Obama)