

**STATEMENT OF SENATOR HIRONO**

Hearing before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary

***“From Selma to Shelby County: Working Together to Restore the Protections of the Voting Rights Act”***

Wednesday, July 17, 2013

I would like to thank Congressman James Sensenbrenner, and my friend and civil rights icon, Congressman John Lewis, for sharing their valuable perspectives on the Voting Rights Act with us today.

The Voting Rights Act has been critical to ensuring every American has access to one of our country’s most fundamental freedoms -- the right to vote. We may not all agree on the Supreme Court’s decision last month, but the Court has now placed the ball in Congress’s court to update the law.

The Court explicitly stated that there is no denying that discrimination continues to exist – and the Court notably did not touch Section 5. That’s why it is all the more important that we do our job to restore the protections.

This hearing has been so helpful to demonstrate the bipartisan support for the Voting Rights Act. We should recall the initial enactment and every single reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act has had significant bipartisan support, so this is not a partisan issue. I believe that Congress must work together and act quickly to restore the provisions of the Voting Rights Act struck down by the Supreme Court and protect every Americans’ right to vote.