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The Honorable Bob Goodlatte  
2138 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

July 18, 2013

Re: The Voting Rights Act after the Supreme Court's Decision in *Shelby County*

Dear Chairman Goodlatte:

Full and equal access to the ballot box is one of our nation's most important civil rights. I applaud the House Judiciary Committee for taking swift action to restore a core provision of the Voting Rights Act following the U.S. Supreme Court's June 25, 2013 ruling in *Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder*. Today's hearing marks an important step in the effort to restore the important protections provided by the Voting Rights Act. The Section 5 preclearance provision, which lies at the heart of the Act, has helped bring about tremendous progress in those jurisdictions where the law has applied, including those jurisdictions that have been covered in the State of New York. Section 5 has proven to be a vital mechanism in our ongoing work to achieve equality in opportunities for political participation.

During the 2006 reauthorization hearings concerning Section 5, Congress conducted extensive hearings and carefully examined the continuing need for the Section 5 preclearance provision. Section 5 was ultimately renewed by a tremendous bi-partisan margin of 390-33 in the House and 98-0 in the Senate. I am confident that Congress can act now to restore the full protections afforded by the Voting Rights Act given the important role that this federal civil rights law occupies in our democracy.

Sincerely,

Eric T. Schneiderman  
Attorney General, State of New York