

House Resolution 445

By: Representatives Mangham of the 94th, Bruce of the 64th, Porter of the 143rd, Orrock of the 58th, Brooks of the 63rd, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging President Bush and the Congress of the United States to extend the provisions of
2 Section 5 of the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended, for an additional 25 years
3 and to expand the scope of Section 5 to apply to the entire United States; and for other
4 purposes.

5 WHEREAS, the United States Congress enacted the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 in
6 response to the numerous obstacles and barriers that had been erected by many states and
7 local governments to prevent the free exercise of the right to vote and to participate on an
8 equal basis in the electoral process by members of racial minorities; and

9 WHEREAS, one of the main features of the Act was the preclearance requirement of Section
10 5 which provided that certain states and local governments could not implement or enforce
11 changes with respect to voting without first obtaining preclearance of such change through
12 the Attorney General of the United States or through the District Court for the District of
13 Columbia; and

14 WHEREAS, the preclearance provisions of Section 5 have prevented states and local
15 governments from playing shell games with their laws and regulations concerning voting and
16 have ensured that the voting rights of minority citizens have been protected; and

17 WHEREAS, the provisions of Section 5 were initially to be in effect for a period of 15 years,
18 but, due to the persistent need for the provisions to protect minority voting interests,
19 Congress extended the provisions for five years in 1970, seven years in 1975, and 25 years
20 in 1982; and

21 WHEREAS, while substantial progress has been made in this country in the area of
22 protecting minority voting rights, there still exists a need for the preclearance provisions of
23 Section 5 to ensure that the progress that has been made is not diluted or lost; and

1 WHEREAS, the provisions of Section 5 will expire in 2007 unless they are extended by
2 Congress; and

3 WHEREAS, the provisions of Section 5 presently apply only to a limited number of states
4 and local governments in this country, but problems in enforcing minority voting rights exist
5 in areas that are not presently covered as well as areas that are covered and such problems
6 could be alleviated by applying Section 5 nationwide.

7 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
8 the members of this body urge President Bush and the Congress of the United States to
9 extend the provisions of Section 5 of the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended, for
10 an additional 25 years and to expand the scope of Section 5 to apply to the entire United
11 States.

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
13 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to President George W. Bush
14 and each member of the Georgia congressional delegation.