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HARRIS COUNTY COMMISSIONER RODNEY ELLIS CONDEMNS ATTACKS ON BLACK AND BROWN VOTING POWER FOLLOWING THE SUPREME COURT'S GUTTING OF THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT

HARRIS COUNTY — Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis released the following statement in response to a wave of attacks on Black voting power and multiracial democracy across the American South:

"We are witnessing the resurrection of Jim Crow. The Voting Rights Act was a cornerstone of our democracy for 61 years. Within days of the Supreme Court's betrayal, extremists across the former Confederacy erased decades of progress by eliminating Black-majority congressional districts. The same forces that once used poll taxes, literacy tests, and direct intimidation wasted no time throwing elections into chaos with their racist redistricting schemes to make Black and Brown voters count for less. The same communities that fought hardest for fair representation are once again being carved up for political advantage.

"I have seen this fight firsthand in Texas for decades, where those desperate to cling to power are hellbent on silencing communities they fear will demand change. But Black political power was not handed down by courts or politicians. It was earned by sacrifice, protected by law, and defended through courage. We must, and will, fight for it."

On April 29, the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Louisiana v. Callais* effectively dismantled Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, making it harder for voters to challenge maps

that dilute Black voting power. The decision is the latest blow to the Voting Rights Act in a series of rulings that have steadily eroded one of the most significant pieces of civil rights legislation ever passed. The landmark law enforced the 15th Amendment's guarantee that the right to vote cannot be denied based on race, and expanded opportunities for communities of color to meaningfully participate in the political process.

In the wake of last month's decision, states including Alabama, Louisiana, Tennessee, South Carolina and Florida have targeted Black-majority districts by splitting Black communities across multiple districts or packing them into fewer seats.

In Texas, where the Voting Rights Act has long shaped fairer representation for Black and Brown voters, the Supreme Court's ruling could aid the state's defense of discriminatory maps and invite even more aggressive gerrymandering. Last year, Texas redrew its congressional maps to eliminate two of its four majority-Black congressional districts, including the historic TX-18."

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About the Office of Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis:

A longtime civil rights leader with more than four decades of public service, Commissioner Rodney Ellis represents Harris County Precinct One, a diverse, 365-square-mile region in the nation's third-largest county. Under Commissioner Ellis' leadership, the office champions purpose-driven public service to improve quality of life, build thriving communities, and advance opportunity, equity, and justice for all. Precinct One is home to more than 1.2 million residents, over 8,500 acres of greenspace, and major regional assets including the Texas Medical Center, George Bush Intercontinental Airport, leading sports and entertainment venues, several Fortune 500 headquarters, and all of Houston's major institutions of higher learning. For more information, visit www.hcp1.net.

ABOUT THE OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER RODNEY ELLIS

The Office of Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis is committed to championing purpose driven public service to improve quality of life, build thriving communities, and advances opportunity, equity, and justice for all.

CONTACT DETAILS

The Office of County Commissio...

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