



Village of Ossining Calls on Congress to Restore the Voting Rights Act

Ossining Celebrates Diverse, Inclusive Community; Stands Against Discrimination

Ossining, N.Y. (August 26, 2013) – On Tuesday, August 20, the Village of Ossining’s Board of Trustees passed a resolution calling on Congress to restore the Voting Rights Act, which bans discrimination in voting practices by the federal government as well as by all state and local governments. This follows a June 26, 2013 decision by the United States Supreme Court in *Shelby County v. Holder* that struck down Section 4(b) of the Act.

Passed by Congress and signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson in 1965, the Voting Rights Act is a landmark piece of national legislation prohibiting discrimination in voting. Section 4(b) of the Act requires federal preclearance for any and all changes to the voting laws that could result in discrimination before enactment by states or parts thereof that had been cited by the Department of State. Since the Supreme Court’s decision in June, harsh voter ID laws having a clear intent to limit the rights of minorities, first time voters, the aged, and the disabled have already been enacted and gone into effect in some states.

“The Village of Ossining is an inclusive community. We celebrate our diversity and are intolerant of discriminatory laws and practices,” said Mayor William R. Hanauer. “A ruling which opens the door for the unjust or prejudicial treatment of any person is against the principles of liberty and democracy.”

The Village’s Board of Trustees is urging Congress to restore to the fullest extent any and all safeguards to the Voting Rights Act in order to ensure protections against all discriminatory practices and policies. A copy of the resolution will be sent to President Barack Obama, Senators Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, and the New York State Congressional Delegation. The resolution will also be available to read on the Village’s website, www.villageofossining.org.

Hanauer continued, “Restoring the Voting Rights Act with language unassailable by the Supreme Court would correct the Court’s recent undermining of centuries of progress toward greater freedom and expanded rights for all Americans. Our Village is in the midst of a renaissance; we’ve made a number of important strides in recent years and look forward to a bright and fully inclusive future for all who live here.”

Earlier in May, the Village Board of Trustees adopted Local Law No. 1-2013, which provides opportunities for individuals to secure education in skilled construction trades by requiring apprenticeship training programs of contractors in connection with certain public works contracts. On an environmental front, the Village maintains its stance against hydraulic fracturing (“hydrofracking”) following a resolution last year requesting that the New York State

Department of Environmental Conservation extend the moratorium for an indefinite period to allow further evaluation of the risks posed.

“The Village of Ossining has a progressive Board of Trustees that recognizes the importance of developing and sustaining a strong workforce as well as protecting our environment, public health, and the rights of our people. We will continue to work on all fronts for the benefit of our current and future generations,” said Hanauer.

For more information on the Village of Ossining, please contact the Village Manager’s Office at 914-941-3554 or visit www.villageofossining.org.

About the Village of Ossining

On April 2, 1813, the Village of Ossining became the first incorporated village in Westchester County to be state-chartered. Today, Ossining is a culturally diverse, affordable place to live, rich in both history and natural beauty. Approximately 25,600 people reside in the three and one half square miles of this historic Village on the Hudson River, which boasts extensive shopping, recreational programs, educational enrichment opportunities, and excellent municipal services. Ossining’s role in New York’s heritage has been recognized by its inclusion, as one of only 14 areas, in an Urban Cultural Park System designed to attract visitors to the State. With its Bicentennial anniversary in 2013, the Village of Ossining has launched “Ossining in 3D,” a yearlong celebration of events designed to honor the Village’s past while embracing its future. Visit www.villageofossining.org for more information.

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