



**MEDIA ADVISORY**  
January 16, 2018

Contact: Brian Walch  
Email: [bwalch@usccr.gov](mailto:bwalch@usccr.gov)  
Tel: 202-376-8371

**U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Public Briefing:  
An Assessment of Minority Voting Rights Access in the United States**

**Friday, February 2, 2018, Raleigh, North Carolina**

Washington, DC & Raleigh, NC – Continuing our legacy of influence on voting rights, the Commission will hold a public briefing as part of its ongoing [assessment](#) of federal enforcement of the Voting Rights Act. For more than six decades, the Commission has monitored the state of voting rights and advocated for equal access to the ballot box. Testimony from this briefing will form an integral basis for our 2018 report to Congress, the President, and the American people regarding the state of voting rights across the nation.

Our bipartisan [Commissioners](#) will hear from current and former state and federal government officials, legal experts, academics, and civil society actors. Panelists will discuss voter access, including federal voting rights enforcement efforts after the 2006 reauthorization of the temporary provisions of the Voting Rights Act (VRA), and the impact of the *Shelby County v. Holder* decision on the Department of Justice's enforcement strategies and priorities. We will offer an open comment period in which members of the public will be able to address the Commission.

The Commission will use North Carolina as a lens through which to examine voting rights nationwide. This briefing will continue the Commission's longstanding role as eyes and ears on the ground for the state of civil rights. From Reconstruction to the present, North Carolina has played a central role in the evolving story of voting rights in America, particularly under the Voting Rights Act.

Confirmed panelists include:

- **Anita Earls**, Executive Director, Southern Coalition for Social Justice, and former Deputy Assistant Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division;
- **John Fund**, Columnist, *National Review*;
- **Vanita Gupta**, President and CEO, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights; former Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General and head of the Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice;
- **Sherrilyn Ifill**, President and Director-Counsel, NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund;

- **John Merrill**, Secretary of State of Alabama.

Our briefing is open to the media and will be live streamed. Chair Catherine E. Lhamon and Commissioner Debo Adegbile will be available to speak with press in advance of the briefing, as well as at the event.

**DATE:** Friday, February 2, 2018  
**LOCATION:** Marriott Crabtree Raleigh Durham, 4500 Marriott Drive, Raleigh, NC 27612  
**AGENDA:** Briefing (expert panels): 9:00 am – 4:30 pm EST  
Open Comment Period (public testimony): 6:00 - 8:00 pm

We invite you to stay abreast of additional details on our [website](#) and social media.

#####

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, established by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, is the only independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights and reporting annually on federal civil rights enforcement. Our 51 state Advisory Committees offer a broad perspective on civil rights concerns at state and local levels. The Commission: in our 7th decade, a continuing legacy of influence in civil rights. For information about the Commission, please visit <http://www.usccr.gov> and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).