

HR1/S1 & Filibuster Implications

*The fight for HR1/S1 (and HR4) has outsized implications for every social justice issue, including climate change, racial justice, health care, immigration, police reform, tax reform and economic justice. **If we cannot pass the popular pro-democracy HR1/S1 and HR4 bills, there is near zero chance that we can pass the other bills. Even if we did, if we don't stop voter suppression and gerrymandering via HR1/S1 and HR4, any progress could be reversed in the next Congress.***

First, the reforms in HR1/S1 and HR4 are pro-democracy and are highly popular. . HR1/S1 are less partisan than most social justice issues and have significant rank and file Republican support. If we cannot pass HR1/S1 (via a majority, a supermajority, or changing the filibuster), the more partisan social justice bills have almost no chance.

Second, if we don't pass HR1/S1 and HR4, 18 months from now, the impending GOP voter suppression laws, along with newly gerrymandered Congressional district maps, will make election of a Democratic majority in the House or Senate nearly impossible structurally.

These bills will finally allow the *preclearance clause* of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to be updated. It was the Shelby vs Holder *preclearance clause* decision which cleared the way for the tsunami of over 360 Republican voter suppression bills in 47 states. Successful voter suppression is key to enabling the GOP to gain the Senate majority in 2022.

These bills will make gerrymandering by party affiliation illegal. Many GOP-controlled legislatures are set to continue to use partisan gerrymandering to expand their control as they redraw the Congressional district maps in response to the 2020 Census. As a result, the GOP will be able to retake the House majority without gaining a single new vote – especially in conjunction with voter suppression.

As a result, any progress is made in the 117th Congress would be fought by the 118th Congress, and repealed in the 119th Congress, if through voter suppression, Trump or a Republican is elected in 2024.

Democratic Senators should and are doing due diligence of trying to find Republican “dance partners” for passing S1 and other legislation. However, if this good faith effort falls short of the 60 bipartisan votes needed to pass S1, we must be ready to change or eliminate the filibuster.

The filibuster will come down to 3 Senators: Joe Manchin (WV), Krysten Sinema (AZ) and Angus King (ME).

To pre-empt the redrawing of Congressional maps, we have a window from now till **July 2021** get HR1/S1 and HR4 passed. **We need all hands on deck for WV, AZ and ME.**

After we protect democracy with HR1/S1 and HR4, THEN there will be a viable path to pass (and protect) all the legislation we “*really*” care about, like climate change, racial justice, police reform, economic justice, tax reform, immigration and health care. Otherwise, almost NOTHING will go forward.

No matter what your traditional justice focus is, for the next 3 months, we will need “all hands on deck” to focus on HR1/S1 and HR4, and probably the filibuster.

The best way forward is to partner with and support citizens and organizations on the ground in those 3 states to put pressure on their Senators.

Here are three in-state organizations we can support, locally, by phone banking or through donations:

[For West Virginia's Future](#) (WV)

[Unite Here](#) (AZ)

[Maine Citizens For Clean Elections](#) (ME)