Progressive Caucus – Strength in Solidarity

*Caucus power comes from the voice of its members. We move forward in unity.*

**Caucus Members Attend Racial Equity Task Force in Baltimore**

In mid-June, the AFT Racial Equity Task Force convened in Baltimore, with Progressive Caucus members contributing their thoughts as committee participants. The group is actively striving to provide proactive solutions in closing the opportunity gap for black males with educational justice, economic justice and criminal justice.

In a joint statement, President Randi Weingarten and Secretary-Treasurer Lorretta Johnson said, “*This sick act of cowardice—a massacre of people while they were in church—is reprehensible. It should shake the conscience of every American and summon us to do our part to create a fair and just society for everyone. The AFT’s Racial Equity Task Force, which will meet this weekend in Baltimore, was created for this purpose—to identify and support the steps that must be taken to curb violence and ensure children grow up in safe, healthy and welcoming communities.*” - See more at: [http://www.aft.org/press-release/afts-weingarten-and-johnson-charleston-sc-massacre#sthash.HirAQBD9.Oy9tYTw9.dpuf](http://www.aft.org/press-release/afts-weingarten-and-johnson-charleston-sc-massacre#sthash.HirAQBD9.Oy9tYTw9.dpuf)
#RestoreTheVRA - Advocacy in Action for Fair Voting Rights

On August 6, 1965, the Voting Rights Act was passed and signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson. Its goal was to overcome legal barriers that prohibited racial discrimination in voting under the 15th Amendment. Progressive Caucus members are again found at the forefront in advocating for fair rights, since a Supreme Court decision gutted the law roughly two years ago. Currently, legislation to strengthen the Act remains stalled in the Republican-controlled Congress.

Across the Country...

In New York, NYSUT has been battling a governor whose aim is to dismantle public education. Andy Pallotta has been a constant presence at the state Capitol, advocating for NYSUT’s 600,000 members and New York’s public school students and families.

In Philadelphia, PFT members campaigning for Jim Kenney resulted in a landslide win for the Democratic mayoral candidate during the May 19 primary. Education advocate and Democratic City Council nominee Helen Gym also came out with a major win during the primary. These wins were due to Progressive Caucus Officer and PFT President Jerry Jordan’s efforts in supporting the two candidates. PFT provided the major push to get out the vote in support of public education. President Jerry Jordan continues to push against attempts for school nurse privatization. "The PFT ... will be pursuing every option available to stop the privatization of our public schools."

In Minnesota, Denise Specht reminds us that four essential components are key in the retention of quality educators.

Wisconsin’s Candice Owley and other Caucus members from across the country have been watching Oregon’s progression in passing a bill for mandated paid sick leave. Oregon joins Connecticut, California, and Massachusetts as the fourth state to implement a statewide requirement for paid sick leave.

Look for Progressive Caucus at TEACH, 2015!

Progressive Caucus wants to hear your union news! Send your updates to the Progressive Caucus at progressivecaucus@aft.org

#RestoreTheVRA

Randi Weingarten @rweingarten · Jun 16
The fight to #RestoreTheVRA isn’t over. Here’s what activists are doing next week on the 2-year Shelby anniversary: on.msnbc.com/11I1WkF

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