The United States confronts perpetual challenges arising from race and economics. The Voting Rights Acts* were designed to address particular problems of racial discrimination and violence which denied citizens their fundamental rights. The Act became institutionalized around historic problems and defined by circumstances of the last quarter of the 20th century. The circumstances of the fall of the Voting Rights regime in the 21st century reveals how the ossification of the Act satisfied partisan interests. It also presents an opportunity for Congress to take action on new voting rights issues that transcend race. These issues include voter identification laws, voter caging practices, and efforts to engage in intimidation and coercion of voters. The prospects for meaningful action by Congress are few, due to the realignment of American politics and distortions of the translation of votes into representation. These changes are an ironic consequence of the implementation of voting rights law in the United States, which simultaneously increased minority voter participation and also realigned southern politics and ended six decades of Democratic dominance in Congress.