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## **More Than A Vote and Florida Rights Restoration Coalition Announce Partnership To Combat Disenfranchisement in Florida**

*MTAV Bolstering FRRC Fund To Assist Returning Citizens Pay Off Burdensome Fees*

*Proceeds from Screening of **John Lewis: Good Trouble** Will Fund FRRC Effort*

**ORLANDO, FL (July 24, 2020)** — More Than A Vote and the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition are announcing a partnership aimed at securing voting rights for citizens of Florida with past felony convictions.

More Than A Vote is raising \$100,000 in direct contributions for the FRRC's fines and fees fund, which provides financial assistance to Floridians who must pay off outstanding fees and fines associated with felony convictions before being eligible to vote.

In addition to the direct contribution, More Than A Vote is also partnering with Magnolia Pictures and Participant as a part of the Good Trouble impact campaign to host an ongoing online screening of **John Lewis: Good Trouble**, the new documentary that chronicles the life of the late civil rights activist and member of Congress. Athletes and artists from MTAV will promote the screening with proceeds going directly to the FRRC's fines and fees fund.

Viewers can watch the documentary and contribute to the FRRC [HERE](#).

The announcement marks the beginning of the partnership between More Than A Vote and the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition in their efforts to end disenfranchisement and discrimination against people with convictions in the state of Florida.

In 2018, the people of Florida overwhelmingly voted to approve the Amendment 4 ballot initiative to amend the state constitution to restore the voting rights of most citizens with past felony convictions. However, the state legislature responded by passing a law requiring returning citizens to pay off outstanding fees, fines, and restitution associated with their convictions prior to being eligible to vote.



FRRRC sponsored Amendment 4 and led the effort to restore the vote to 1.4 million Floridians with felony convictions. It was the largest voting rights expansion in over 50 years.

FRRRC launched the Fines and Fees Program because it believes that returning citizens can play an essential role in strengthening our communities and increasing public safety. The organization believes that people who are closest to the pain are also closest to the solution. Therefore, to foster the highest levels of civic engagement possible in Florida's returning citizen population, FRRRC is using its Fines and Fees Program to break down the barriers presented by outstanding financial obligations.

In 2016, 1-in-5 Black citizens in Florida were disenfranchised. Approximately one-third of citizens impacted by Amendment 4 are Black.

“We believe that your right to vote shouldn’t depend upon whether or not you can pay to exercise it, which is why More Than A Vote is proud to partner with the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition to ensure that formerly incarcerated American citizens -- many of them Black and brown -- are able to pay their outstanding fines and fees and register to vote in the 2020 election and beyond,” said **Miami Heat Forward and More Than A Vote Member Udonis Haslem**.

“This partnership will improve lives and strengthen our democracy,” said **Desmond Meade, Executive Director of the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition**. “FRRRC is thrilled to partner with More Than A Vote to help Florida’s returning citizens pay off their fines and fees, complete their sentence and move forward with their lives. We look forward to the positive impact it will have on our communities and the lives of those who are hoping to vote and have their voices heard.”

Additional announcements on the partnership between More Than A Vote and The Florida Rights Restoration will follow in the coming weeks.

More Than A Vote previously announced national partnerships with [When We All Vote](#), [Fair Fight Action](#), and the [Election Protection](#) coalition.

#### ***About The Florida Rights Restoration Coalition***

FRRRC is a grassroots, membership organization run by Returning Citizens (Formerly Convicted Persons) who are dedicated to ending the disenfranchisement and discrimination against people with convictions and creating a more comprehensive and humane reentry system that will enhance successful reentry, reduce recidivism, and increase public safety.

MOVIE LINK: <https://watch.eventive.org/johnlewis/play/5f188f2b29bd24004c6242bb>