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MEDIA ADVISORY

For Immediate Release

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50th Anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965

Richmond--The Honorable Jennifer L. McClellan, chairwoman of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission, announced today that the Commission will co-sponsor a symposium, "*50th Anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965: Protecting, Extending, and Ensuring the Franchise*," which will be held on August 3, 2015, at the Library of Virginia Auditorium, 800 East Broad Street, in Richmond, Virginia, at 7:00 p.m. This event, co-sponsored by the Library of Virginia, is a part of the Commission's commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation and the Library's Sixth Annual Anne & Ryland Brown Teacher Institute.

Other members of the Commission are Senators Mamie E. Locke of Hampton, *Vice Chairwoman*; Rosalyn R. Dance of Petersburg; Frank M. Ruff, Jr. of Clarksville; William M. Stanley of Moneta; Delegates C. Matt Fariss of Rustburg; Delores L. McQuinn of Richmond; Roslyn C. Tyler of Jarratt; Thomas C. Wright, Jr. of Victoria; Joseph R. Yost of Blacksburg; and nonlegislative citizen members Reverend Ricardo L. Brown of Richmond; Dr. Ronald L. Carey of Richmond; The Honorable William C. Cleveland of Alexandria; LTC (R) Wesley H. Motley, Jr. SAI of Richmond; Dr. Kirk T. Schroder, J.D., Ph.D. of Charlottesville; Dr. Robert C. Vaughan, III of Charlottesville; Mr. Charles Withers of Roanoke; and Mrs. Juanita Owens Wyatt of Petersburg.

The Commission has invited a distinguished panel for this important discussion, including the Honorable Robert C. Scott of Virginia, member of the U.S. House of Representatives; Henry L. Chambers, Jr., professor of law at the University of Richmond; Claire Guthrie Gustafnaga, executive director of the ACLU of Virginia; and the Honorable Jennifer L. McClellan, J.D. The panelists will provide the historical context of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and discuss the contemporary issues arising from the Supreme Court's decision in Supreme Court decision in *Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder*, 133 S. Ct. 2612 (2013). The Reverend Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker, who was the chief of staff for the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Honorable William Ferguson Reid, M.D., the first African American elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1967 after Reconstruction, have been invited as the Commission's *honorees* for the occasion. The panel will be moderated by Luranett L. Lee, Ph.D., Curator of African American History at the Virginia Historical Society.

The forum is free; however, space is limited. Therefore, persons desiring to attend should RSVP to bedwards@dls.virginia.gov. For additional information, please contact Brenda H. Edwards, Division of Legislative Services, General Assembly Building, 2nd Floor, 201 North Ninth Street, Richmond, VA 23219; bedwards@dls.virginia.gov or (804) 786-3591, ext. 232.