

TENNESSEE VOTERS COUNCIL; EAST TENNESSEE OFFICE; 1820½ WESTERN AVENUE; KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

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The Tennessee Voters Council is an organization whose purposes are: (1) to increase registration and the voting strength of minorities; (2) to do research and compile facts on candidates; and (3) to distribute and disseminate the facts to the people of Tennessee.

At a meeting of this Council in Nashville, Tennessee, of June 27, the Council voted overwhelmingly to support Ross Bass for Senator to succeed the late Estes Kefauver. All three candidates were invited to attend. Only Mr. Bass was present, however; the others sent reasonable excuses.

The Voters Council is only interested in the rights of Negroes in Tennessee, and has no other interest, political or otherwise. We do urge you to go to the polls on August 6th and vote for Ross Bass. He is for your rights--the right to register and vote, the right to equal employment opportunities, the right to an equal education and the right to use public accommodations and facilities. Ross Bass voted for this in Congress; out of respect for his stand we should vote for him.

Mr. Bullard and Mr. Clement have both publicly repudiated this stand, and here listed are excerpts from news clippings for your information:

Knoxville News-Sentinel, June 20, 1964.....Clement then turned on Bass again, saying, "But even a majority of the Senate of the United States could not go along with the Civil Rights Bill voted for by the Congressmen." A majority of the Senators . . . agreed for example, that the right of a trial by jury--a denial for which the Congressmen voted--was not in the interest of America. "I could not and would not have voted for the bill supported by the Congressmen."

Knoxville Journal, June 23, 1964.....Both Clement and his other Democratic primary opponent, Newport farmer and businessman, M. M. Bullard, "have taken stands opposite to the President on Civil Rights." Clement and Bullard expressed opposition in their campaign opening speeches to the Public Accommodations and Jury Trial portions of the Civil Rights Bill nearing completion in Congress. Bass voted for the bill and was criticized by Clement for doing so.

Knoxville Sentinel, June 30, 1964.....Speaking in Jonesboro, Clement charged that Bass "has gone down the line" with labor and Negro Rights groups in return for support. . Bass said he would go to Washington for the final vote on the Civil Rights Bill and would vote in favor of the Bill.

Knoxville Journal, July 2, 1964.....Representative Ross Bass and Representative Richard Fulton were the only two members of the Tennessee delegation in the United States House today to vote for the Civil Rights Bill which was passed and sent to President Johnson for his signature.

In a letter to the heads of the Tennessee Voters Council, dated June 23, Mr. Bass said: "I voted for the House version of the Civil Rights Bill and will vote for the final passage of the Bill when the Senate version is considered in the House of Representatives."