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KYRA PHILLIPS: We're coming on the air because the Supreme Court has just released a major decision, which could have a profound impact on the midterm elections. The justices issuing a ruling on a case out of Louisiana involving the Voting Rights Act, redistricting, and whether states must end any consideration of race when redrawing congressional maps, the decision potentially reducing the influence of minority voters and minority representation in Congress. Let's get right to our senior Washington correspondent, Devin Dwyer, who covers the Supreme Court for us. Devin.

DEVIN DWYER: And Kyra, this decision is 6-3 written by Justice Samuel Alito, and it's a significant decision in a setback for the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1965, which was passed to guarantee equality in how we vote. And of course, addressing the systemic and historic racial discrimination, especially across the South. This decision came in a case out of Louisiana involving a Court-ordered drawing addition of a second majority black district in that state because of the size of the state's population. And the Supreme Court today in this decision said that the Court violated the 14th Amendment by adding — the state rather — violated the 14th Amendment by adding that district. They used race impermissibly, consciously, to add a second district to aid those voters. And they said that is simply not allowed under our Constitution. Justice Samuel Alito didn't go as far as saying race can never be used in drawing these maps. That's something of the Court has affirmed before to comply with the Voting Rights Act. But he put a significant new limit on how courts can order states to draw their maps to be more equitable. He said that Section II "imposes liability only when evidence supports a strong inference that the state intentionally drew its map to discriminate." So, a setback for minority voters in Louisiana and now Kyra, the impact of this decision is going to start to ripple across the country.

PHILLIPS: Let's talk about that impact and bring in our legal contributor and law professor at Hofstra University, James Sample. I mean, James, this is clearly, you know, gutting landmark legislation here.

JAMES SAMPLE: Absolutely correct, Kira. This is a ruling that almost completely constitutionalizes a color blindness principle to the point that even race-conscious remedies designed to remedy racial discrimination are unconstitutional under the very amendments, the 14th and 15th Amendments that the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act were designed to make real and manifest in the country. So, this is a diametrical shift in voting rights practices, a diametrical shift in the area of race and racial discrimination and the remedies for racial discrimination.

PHILLIPS: James, thanks. Let's bring it in chief White House correspondent Mary Bruce. Now, Mary, let's just talk about what this will mean for the midterms and beyond.

MARY BRUCE: Well, Kyra, President Trump certainly has backed this nationwide effort to try and redraw districts ahead of the midterms to try and boost Republicans' chances. We haven't heard from the President yet about this ruling, but I suspect he certainly will have some positive comments to say about it. This is also worth noting that this announcement is coming just the morning after the President had six conservative Supreme Court justices on the guest list here last night for that lavish state dinner with the king. But there is no question that the President — we have seen him and other Republicans backing these efforts in many states across the country ahead of the midterms. And now, as Devin was noting, this will set off an opportunity for other states to try and follow suit. And it certainly could reduce the minority voter influence across the country going forward.

PHILLIPS: We'll be following it for sure. Mary, James, Devin, thank you all so much. And our special coverage will continue on ABC News Live and ABC News.com. We're going to return to the local programming now. David Muir, of course, will be here with the entire team for *World News Tonight*. I'm Kyra Phillips here in DC. I'll see you back over on ABC News Live.

DIANE MACEDO: We have breaking news. The Supreme Court has ruled to limit the Voting Rights Act. The case focused on whether states can use race and consider race when redrawing congressional maps. Now, the decision could reduce the influence of minority voters. And questions are growing about what it will mean for the future of voting in America. ABC News contributor, James Sample and ABC's Devin Dwyer, here to break it all down. James, the Court ruled 6-3 here in favor of the voters who challenged adding this second majority black congressional district. So, how did the court reach this decision?

SAMPLE: Well, Diane, you're right in the sense that that is what they decided and they decided this case 6-3. And what they essentially said is that although Louisiana had drawn that second district to comply with the Voting Rights Act under the prior interpretations of the Voting Rights Act that have been in place for more or less 60 years, the Voting Rights Act now effectively requires proof of intentional discrimination, not merely what is known as disparate impact discrimination. And therefore, since there wasn't evidence of that intentional racial discrimination, that second majority minority district violates the section two of the Voting Rights Act, the net effect of which is to take the Voting Rights Act and turn it from a weapon against racial discrimination into a much, much less significant version of its prior self.

MACEDO: And James, walk us through that part of it. Why does this do so much to disempower the Voting Rights Act?

SAMPLE: Well, what the Court did here, Diane, and this was an anticipated ruling to be clear. This has long been in the sights of Chief Justice Roberts who, as far back as when he was an attorney in the White House Council's office in the Reagan administration long before becoming a judge, much less the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. The Court here today effectively constitutionalizes a color blindness principle, almost completely absent the showing of intention and what that means is that even the remedies for racial discrimination, the remedies that are designed to prevent racial discrimination are themselves unconstitutional violations of the 14th and 15th Amendments, the irony being that that is what the Voting Rights Act was passed in

order to enforce.

MACEDO: And I want to bring our Devin Dwyer, who covers the Supreme Court. Devin, what sticks out to you from the language of this decision?

DWYER: Really, not a surprising decision, Diane, given this conservative Supreme Court's decision in history of wanting to roll back the Voting Rights Act, as James was talking about there. But this significantly raises the bar now for challenges to election maps as being a discriminatory against minority voters. It's gonna make it harder to sue in court and as the dissent puts it in this case written by justice, Elena Kagan, in her words, it is a completed demolition of the Voting Rights Act. Kagan goes on to describe, Diane, what she says, "the consequences that will be far reaching and grave," in her words. And she says, "if other states follow Louisiana's lead," in her view, "minority citizens residing in those states will no longer have an equal opportunity to elect candidates of those choice." That's a pretty significant statement, coming from the three liberal justices in this case, who have long insisted that Section II of the Voting Rights Act needs to remain in place to protect against the types of discrimination that have been present in this country going back generations.

MACEDO: And I want to bring in our chief White House correspondent, Mary Bruce. Mary, any reaction from the White House on this yet?

BRUCE: Not yet, but certainly President Trump has been a huge supporter of efforts across the country to try and change and redistrict some of these districts ahead of the midterms to try and give Republicans a boost and look, this decision means that ultimately, you could have less minority representation in Congress and in state houses across the country. I suspect the President will have a positive review of this decision, given his efforts to try and change and try and support redistricting efforts, although that has been to some mixed results. We should say over the last several months. It also comes of course as the President has been eager to put additional restrictions on voting writ large. He of course has been calling for this legislation, requiring proof of U.S. citizenship when registering to vote. He's even gone so far as to say he'll somehow act unilaterally if Congress does. And as the President has been taking steps to really undermine confidence in the voting system ahead of the midterms, but certainly he has been very supportive of these redistricting efforts across the country, all intended to give Republicans a boost in the midterms now just a few months away.