



*Fighting for Voting Rights and a Democratic United States*

## **DEMOCRATIC LAW BRIEFS**

A Publication of the DC Chapter of the National Lawyers Council

*Volume 4 Issue 31, August 19, 2008*

**WELCOME TO DEMOCRATIC LAW BRIEFS**, the official newsletter of the DC Chapter of the National Lawyers Council. If you would like to be on our mailing list, please sign up at <http://www.democraticlawyers.org/join.php> or e-mail your name, title, company, addresses, and phone numbers to [signup@democraticlawyers.org](mailto:signup@democraticlawyers.org). We'll happily add you to the list.

## **HELP WANTED**

### **OBAMA VOTER PROTECTION PROGRAM - JOIN TODAY!**

*A special thank you and welcome to the HUNDREDS of volunteers from DC who have already signed up to help out in Virginia, DC, and the battleground states!*



The effort to promote and protect the vote has begun -- and it needs volunteers. Earlier than ever before, in a more comprehensive fashion than ever before, building on three years of base work and an extensive primary season, we're making sure that **every eligible citizen who wants to vote can, and that the vote will count.**

If you haven't already done so, please sign up at [my.barackobama.com/counselforchange](http://my.barackobama.com/counselforchange) and encourage every Democratic lawyer that

you know to sign up too. The information on that form will feed directly into our voter protection efforts in the states.

We'll connect you to trouble spots in the summer and fall, making sure that you're equipped and able to resolve problems before they happen. And on Election Day, we'll have broader coverage than ever, using your talent and energy across the country to safeguard every vote that's cast.

## EVENTS

### YLFO STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING - TONIGHT

- Who:** Young Lawyers for Obama
- What:** Learn how you can get more involved in YLFO and the Obama campaign.
- When:** Tuesday, August 19, 8:00 -9:00 a.m.
- Where:** Arnold & Porter, Conference room 300  
Mention at the desk that you are there for the YLFO meeting hosted by Clara Vondrich.

If you have any questions, please contact Jamie Long, Coordinator for DC YLFO, at [jamie@democraticlawyers.org](mailto:jamie@democraticlawyers.org).

## VOTING RIGHTS NEWS

### VOTER REGISTRATION

**New York** - Republicans are moving to examine surges in voter registrations in some states. The GOP is focusing its efforts to police new registration using its favorite scare tactic: voter fraud. A Republican lawyers group held a national training session on election law over the weekend that included campaign attorneys for Sen. John McCain and other Republican leaders. Republicans said they are particularly worried about prospects for fraud in Virginia and Pennsylvania, and are beginning to comb thousands of new registrations in those states for ineligible applicants. In some cases the huge numbers threaten to swamp their efforts -- and those of state and local governments to verify and process applications. Read the article here:

[http://online.wsj.com/article/sb121850477150231953.html?mod=googlenews\\_wsj](http://online.wsj.com/article/sb121850477150231953.html?mod=googlenews_wsj)

## [NO-FAULT ABSENTEE VOTING](#)

**Ohio** - Partisan battle lines are being drawn over Ohio Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner's directive to county boards of elections, clarifying that state law allows a five-day overlap during which Ohioans can register to vote and vote by absentee ballot at the same time. The "no-fault absentee" voting law has been in place since 2005, when it was passed by the Republican-controlled General Assembly and signed by GOP Gov. Bob Taft. The law allows absentee voting, for any reason, to begin 35 days before an election. Another law on the books for several years closes voter registration 30 days before Election Day. That leaves a five-day period during which people can register and immediately vote absentee. In Franklin County, about 60 did so for the 2006 general election, with no recorded complaints. Of course the GOP is now crying foul over the laws their party passed. Read the details of the story here: [http://www.columbusdispatch.com/live/content/local\\_news/stories/2008/08/14/early\\_vote.html?sid=101](http://www.columbusdispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2008/08/14/early_vote.html?sid=101)

## **DC DLC BRAIN TEASERS**

DC DLC BRAIN TEASERS - Each week we have a puzzle or a brain teaser or a trivia question for you to answer. You can e-mail your answers to [editors@democraticlawyers.org](mailto:editors@democraticlawyers.org). Please put "Brain Teaser" in the subject line. We will run the names of all those who get the right/best answer in the following issue.

### [THIS WEEK'S QUESTION](#)

Who was the first President to visit Canada while in office?

### [LAST WEEK'S QUESTION](#)

Who was the first President to visit China while in office?

### [ANSWER](#)

Richard Nixon was the first President to visit China while in office. We did not have any correct answers last week. Good luck this week.

## JOBS

**Office:** Project Vote

**Position:** Two full-time Staff Attorneys

**Contact:** Applicants should submit resume, 3-5 page writing sample, and three references. Applications will be accepted until positions are filled. Please send materials to [info@projectvote.org](mailto:info@projectvote.org), attention Ms. Rogers.

**Description:** Staff attorneys will assist in litigating challenges to restrictive laws and procedures that hamper voter registration and participation. Ensure that eligible applicants are registered in a timely manner and informed of their registration status. Enforce federal mandates that public assistance and disability agencies provide voter registration services for clients. Identify and address administrative barriers to registration. Assist with verification of registration applications. Meet with local election officials to gather information and negotiate solutions. Assess allocation of personnel and equipment for Election Day. Conduct legal research on applicable federal and state laws and regulations. Draft public education materials and correspondence with election officials. The candidate must have strong research, writing, and interpersonal skills. Familiarity with the National Voter Registration Act, Help America Vote Act, and Voting Rights Act is preferred but not required. Experience with voter registration process or Election Day voter protection activities also preferred. Litigation experience and ability to travel are required. Bar membership is required.

**If you know of a legal or other position of interest that should be listed here (or corrections or updates to job openings that are listed), please contact your editors at [editors@democraticlawyers.org](mailto:editors@democraticlawyers.org).**

*Editors' Note: The above listed job(s) were gathered from various sources in an effort to disseminate and share information with members of the DC Democratic Lawyers Council regarding career development and professional opportunities. No guarantee is given concerning the accuracy of the job announcement, job descriptions, qualifications, availability, application process, deadlines, salaries, work hours, or other information. If you have questions about a job, please follow up directly with the designated contact listed. Thank you.*

## WHO ARE WE?

The DC Democratic Lawyers Council (DC DLC) is a group of Democratic lawyers, affiliated with the National Lawyers Council of the Democratic National Committee, volunteering their legal skills to strengthen the democratic process. We work to ensure that every eligible citizen is allowed to vote and that every vote cast in every

election is counted. The DC DLC was formed out of a concern that voting rights are increasingly under attack in our country and an understanding that now is the time to put the skills of Democratic attorneys to work to ensure that every citizen's right to vote will be upheld in future elections. Our activities include advocating for better laws and regulations and initiating litigation when necessary to guarantee the fairness of and the widest participation in the U.S. electoral process.

The Democratic Lawyers Council was founded by attorneys who have served on the front line of election law for the Democratic Party in numerous elections, including most recently, the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections. The lesson learned from the recount debacle was that post-election day litigation will hardly ever fix any election injustice. Given that, many of the recount lawyers, particularly those based in Florida, engineered a comprehensive voter protection program to confront and deal with voter and election issues before Election Day. One aspect of this effort was the recruitment of 3200 lawyers who, after receiving specialized election law and procedures training, worked inside the polls in key precincts in Florida on Election Day to assure that every citizen who showed up to vote, was able to do so.

Our mission statement is simple:

We are a coalition of lawyers and others dedicated to fostering universal participation and trust in the electoral process by ensuring that:

- All eligible persons can register to vote easily;
  - All registered voters are able to vote simply, fairly, and without intimidation;
- and
- All votes are counted accurately and all voting systems are open and reliable.

We encourage you to send us an e-mail if you would like more information or are interested in becoming a part of our organization.

Please e-mail us at [erika@democraticlawyers.org](mailto:erika@democraticlawyers.org).

## COMMITTEES

We are a volunteer-driven and volunteer-dependent organization. Please lend your time, talents, and effort to helping to solve important voting rights issues. Please click on <http://www.democraticlawyers.org/join.php> and sign up for our committees, which include:

### **DC Community Outreach Committee**

*Co-Chairs*, David Goldblatt ([david@democraticlawyers.org](mailto:david@democraticlawyers.org)), Curtis LeGeyt ([curtis@democraticlawyers.org](mailto:curtis@democraticlawyers.org)) & Candice Jones ([candice@democraticlawyers.org](mailto:candice@democraticlawyers.org))

This committee is responsible for working with community leaders and Democratic elected officials in the District of Columbia on important voting rights initiatives.

### **Building the National Lawyers Council Committee**

*Chair, Rita Aguilar ([rita@democraticlawyers.org](mailto:rita@democraticlawyers.org))*

This committee is responsible for working with the National Lawyers Council to build chapters throughout the country, as well as developing “model” chapter and voting rights materials.

### **Federal Legislation Committee**

*Chair, Dick Meltzer ([dick@democraticlawyers.org](mailto:dick@democraticlawyers.org))*

This committee is responsible for monitoring federal election law activity, e.g., HAVA and UOCAVA, educating membership and helping push for voting rights reform at the federal level.

### **Redistricting & Voting Rights Act Committee**

*Chair, Jeff Wice ([jmwice@democraticlawyers.org](mailto:jmwice@democraticlawyers.org))*

This committee is responsible for preparing Democrats for the next redistricting cycle (2010), e.g., reviewing case law from the 2000 cycle, and monitoring Voting Rights Act developments.

### **Ex-Felon Voting Rights Committee**

*Chair, John Shuman ([john@democraticlawyers.org](mailto:john@democraticlawyers.org))*

This committee is responsible for helping non-incarcerated ex-offenders secure a right to vote in federal elections, e.g., congressional outreach, to encourage successful re-entry of these citizens.

### **Events Committee**

*Chair, Jordan Usdan ([jordan@democraticlawyers.org](mailto:jordan@democraticlawyers.org))*

This committee is responsible for organizing year-round activities. These can include professional networking opportunities, guest speaker events, assisting with National Lawyers Council events, and other social and political activities.

In addition, please consider participating in leadership positions and organizational committees, which include:

- Steering Committee
- Event Planning
- Recruiting and Publicity
- Election/Campaign Finance Law Compliance
- Democratic Party/Candidate Outreach
- Fundraising

## READING SOMEONE ELSE'S COPY???

To get your own copy of Democratic Law Briefs, please visit <http://www.democraticlawyers.org/join.php> or e-mail your name, title, company, addresses, and phone numbers to [signup@democraticlawyers.org](mailto:signup@democraticlawyers.org).

## GOT NEWS?

If you have news for Democratic Law Briefs, we'd love to get it. E-mail your news, ideas, rumors and thoughts to Paul Roath and Arielle Harry-Bess at [editors@democraticlawyers.org](mailto:editors@democraticlawyers.org). We reserve the right to use, not use, edit, paraphrase, or otherwise play with your submissions.

\* \* \*

Democratic Law Briefs, E-Mail Edition, Volume 4 Number 31

Copyright 2008 DC DLC, Paul Roath, Ph.D., Esq., Arielle Harry-Bess, Esq. and Erika Moritsugu, Esq.

This material is intended for personal use only. For other than personal use, it is illegal to make copies or faxes of the information or to store it in a database without permission. All material herein is copyrighted and is intended for the sole personal use of members of the Democratic Lawyers Council. While copies for personal use are permitted, the information otherwise may not be reproduced, republished or downloaded to a local area network without written permission. Violators risk penalties and \$100,000 in damages per offense.