



Fighting for Voting Rights and a Democratic United States

DEMOCRATIC LAW BRIEFS

A Publication of the DC Chapter of the National Lawyers Council

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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. We'll happily add you to the list.

HELP WANTED

VA-DC-MD LAWYERS AND LAW STUDENTS -
WE NEED YOU ON ELECTION DAY!!!



Change only happens when people enter the political process and make their voices heard. Senator Barack Obama's Campaign for Change in Virginia is assembling a legion of attorneys and law students to help promote and protect the rights of each and every voter in the Commonwealth on Election Day, November 4th. You are invited to be a part of this historic effort. Please put your legal skills to work for change on the front lines of a battleground state by clicking on <http://my.barackobama.com/counselforchange>.

N.B. For those of you who have expressed a generous willingness to travel to battleground states including Virginia (thank you!), you will be contacted directly by the respective state counsel/voter protection coordinators shortly.

SEEKING BILINGUAL ATTORNEYS FOR VA

The Democratic Party is recruiting bilingual attorneys fluent in Asian languages and Spanish to be available on Election Day for voter protection activities in Virginia's Asian American and Hispanic communities. If you are interested, please sign up at <http://my.barackobama.com/counselforchange>.

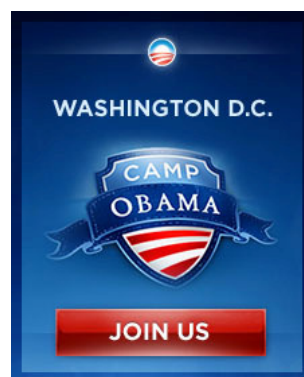
Know Non-Lawyers with Language Skills? If you have non-lawyer volunteers AND they are residents of particular cities or counties in VA, please also consider asking them to be serve as paid pollworkers in targeted precincts where there is need on Election Day (<http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/officers>).

For More Info Contact:

- Cara Huang and Manu Bhardwaj, VA Coordinators, DNC's Asian American Pacific Islander Task Force (carahuang@gmail.com, manubha@gmail.com)
- Sam Jammal, DNC's Hispanic Task Force Chair (sjammal@gmail.com)

Please provide your contact information and special language skills in the correspondence.

APPLY TO BE A DEPUTY FIELD ORGANIZER



From the State Director Obama campaign in Washington, D.C.:



As you know, we live right next door to a state that is shaping up to be a crucial general election battleground in a way that it hasn't been for decades -- Virginia. Barack's supporters here in D.C. have an opportunity to help a Democratic presidential candidate win there for the first time in more than 40 years.

That's why we're counting on supporters like you to take your commitment to the next level by spending a few weeks in Virginia to help put us over the top.

We're holding day-long Camp Obama trainings in the Washington, D.C. area to offer an in-depth look at the strategies and techniques that have driven this campaign. If you attend a Camp Obama, you'll walk out fully prepared to lead our Get Out The Vote efforts in Virginia as a Deputy Field Organizer.

Apply to attend a Camp Obama session, and make a big impact in Virginia.

In just the last three months, supporters like you have led an unprecedented voter registration drive that has helped more than 110,000 Virginians register to vote.

It's a remarkable accomplishment. But now we need to make sure that those voices are heard.

No experience is required. Our Camp Obama sessions on the weekend of September 27th-28th -- led by experienced Obama campaign staffers and other professional organizers -- will provide you with all the knowledge and resources you need.

Apply to attend Camp Obama and become a Deputy Field Organizer for the final five weeks before Election Day:

<http://dc.barackobama.com/VACampObama>

We can't do this without you.

Thanks,

John

John Bowman
Washington, D.C. State Director
Obama for America

P.S. -- If you are unable to attend Camp Obama, there are still lots of ways to get involved in Virginia. Sign up to volunteer through our Virginia Drive for Change program:

<http://dc.barackobama.com/CometoVA>

DC TO VA VICTORY TEAMS

The Virginia Campaign for Change, D.C. for Obama, YLFO, and others are teaming up to get volunteers down to Virginia to canvass between now and Election Day. This race will be close, and we need to do all we can to turn Virginia blue. We have seven teams focusing on different areas in Northern Virginia. Teams will get to know a precinct and make repeat visits to one area. To join, please visit http://rs6.net/tn.jsp?e=001mq1M0U_4cwZalYOZXlJ2xOeMFiRRJFVcsf-CrqZDYm2I1knpvKC8HLv3pWWXTXwbgt7MM4jO3OsMi62Q7htBrEhy1SLMfJuA50BRTUiUJTw4ACnOZJwYXMfusjAW6AJ1jyK6MSC8rHpbO-zZEzT484ugsnFGSAye.

Also, if you would like to help fund this program through a pledge of an in-kind contribution to go towards buses or vans, please contact Adam Barr (albarr@gmail.com).

YLFO



POLL MONITOR CALLS

We will be assisting the campaign by calling attorneys in swing states to encourage them to volunteer to be poll monitors. This will involve a commitment of 2-3 hours of calls over the span of a week. Please contact Jamie at jamiemlong@gmail.com if interested.

PHONE BANKING

We are starting a phone banking effort in D.C. and are looking for volunteers to help organize the effort and spaces to hold phone banks, such as offices. Please email Tree Martschink at treemartschink@gmail.com if interested.

EVENTS

JUDGE PATRICIA WALD - THURS. SEPT. 25

Who: Join esteemed jurist and Obama supporter Judge Patricia Wald, former chief judge of the D.C. Circuit, for a cocktail reception to benefit the campaign

Where: National Club of Negro Women
(please note that this is the *correct* location)

When: Thursday, September 25 at 7 pm.

Contribution: Ticket: \$150; Hosts: raise or write \$750. Please contact Neena (obama08neena@gmail.com) if you are interested in hosting or to RSVP

VOTING RIGHTS NEWS

VOTER PURGE

Michigan - The American Civil Liberties Union on September 18th that it filed a federal lawsuit against Michigan electoral officials over what the organization characterizes as two "statewide voter purge programs" that it claims would "disenfranchise hundreds of thousands of Michigan voters"—many of them college students—in advance of the fall presidential election.. Read the story here: <http://www.usnews.com/articles/news/national/2008/09/18/aclu-sues-michigan-over-voter-purge-program-saying-it-hurts-college-students.html>

VOTE CAGING

Michigan - Obama and Michigan Democratic officials say they are seeking an injunction to block alleged "caging" by the state GOP- using home foreclosure lists to seek to block residents from voting. Obama counsel Bob Bauer stated: "It is an absolute attack on their right to vote" and a "completely false and completely illegal basis" to challenge votes. "This is a standard operating procedure within the Republican party that's been under legal challenge Read about the latest caging effort here: <http://www.dailykos.com/storyonly/2008/9/16/131058/178/801/561594>

2008 VOTING

National - The 2000 presidential contest was a disaster and, since then, disturbing election problems have occurred in Ohio, Colorado, Florida and elsewhere. Will the 2008 presidential election be similarly flawed, or will it go smoothly? To help answer this question, Election Law @ Moritz researched dozens of election law issues over 17 states, categorized the approach of each state, and plugged them into a series of interactive maps and charts. Read more here:

<http://moritzlaw.osu.edu/electionlaw/comments/articles.php?ID=1505>

VOTER ID

Arizona - The Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) has filed its appeal with the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals and hopes to overturn an August ruling by U.S. District Judge Roslyn Silver. Silver upheld the law - known as Proposition 200 and passed by state voters in 2004 - and rejected claims that it constitutes a poll tax and disproportionately affects minority voting. She also noted the law's importance in fighting election fraud. Read about the law suit here:

<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/local/articles/2008/09/17/20080917voterID0917.html>

Birmingham, AL - Alabama's prisons commissioner has stopped a drive to register inmates to vote so they can cast absentee ballots from inside state prisons. Richard Allen's decision to halt the program Thursday afternoon came after opposition from the Alabama Republican Party. State Republican Chairman Mike Hubbard told Allen in a letter Thursday that the party supports the idea of registering more people to vote. But he says that doesn't extend to prisoners. Hubbard said he was concerned about possible voter fraud. Read about the latest claim of voter fraud here:

<http://www.waaytv.com/Global/story.asp?S=9035935>

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. 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

What other vice president served under two different Presidents?

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

William Jefferson Clinton's name contains the last names of two vice presidents. Under which Presidents did they serve?

ANSWER

Thomas Jefferson served under Adams and George Clinton served first under Jefferson, from 1805 to 1809, and then under *James Madison* from 1809 until his death of a heart attack in 1812. He was the first Vice President to die in office.

We had a correct answer from Gabriel Acevedo. Congratulations Gabriel! Good Luck this week.

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.

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), Curtis LeGeyst (curtis@democraticlawyers.org) & Candice Jones (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)
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)
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)
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)

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)

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.

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. We reserve the right to use, not use, edit, paraphrase, or otherwise play with your submissions.

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