



Fighting for Voting Rights and a Democratic United States

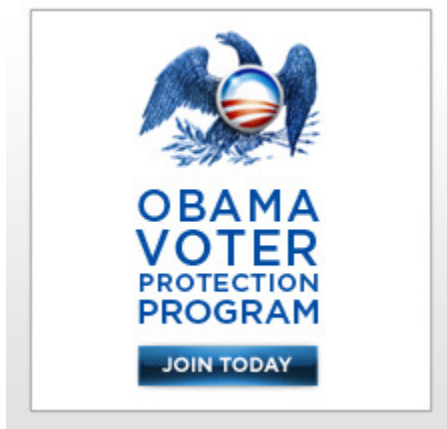
DEMOCRATIC LAW BRIEFS

A Publication of the DC Chapter of the National Lawyers Council

Volume 4 Issue 40, October 28, 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



OH, PA, NC VOLUNTEERS

For those of you traveling to Ohio, Pennsylvania, or North Carolina, if you want to share rides or housing, contact Mike at mikemcvicker@hotmail.com, who will connect you with other volunteers.

VA VOLUNTEERS

If you want to share rides or housing for your election protection assignment in Virginia, please fill out [this survey](#). We will do our best to match you with other YLFO volunteers going to the same area.

HELP WITH THE CANVASS IN VIRGINIA

You have gone above and beyond to help the Obama Campaign and the Virginia candidates. With Election Day soon upon us, we now need Attorneys and other professionals who are Virginia residents to help us monitor each of the Commonwealth's City and County "Canvass" operation beginning November 5th. The Canvass is where the provisional ballots are counted and results are tabulated. Most of the Canvass operations will only take a few hours, but it is of the utmost importance that we have a representative there and that representative needs to be an eligible voter in the locality.

Please commit to being our representative on November 5th by sending an email to: VACanvass@Gmail.com.

GOTV

We need all the help you can provide to get out the vote. We are prioritizing two swing areas with a high need for volunteers. If you can canvass any time between now and the election, please contact the people below for information and to help coordinate rides.

Manassas - email Clara at cvondrich@gmail.com

Tidewater (Norfolk or VA Beach) - email Tree at treemartschink@gmail.com

EVENTS

ELECTION NIGHT WATCH PARTY

Who: Young Lawyers for Obama

What: Watch the returns come in with YLFO and celebrate all of your hard work for this campaign!

Where: Local 16, 1602 U St NW (TVs will be set up throughout the bar)

When: Election Night, 7 p.m. to close

Ticket: \$20, includes OPEN BAR until midnight (beer, wine and rail drinks) and light food

An RSVP is required and space is limited, so please RSVP [here](#) today.

VOTING RIGHTS NEWS

VOTING MACHINES

Pennsylvania - Concerned that voting machine breakdowns could cause long lines on Election Day, particularly in minority neighborhoods, several groups filed a lawsuit last Thursday to force Pennsylvania election officials to provide paper ballots when half the machines in a precinct have failed. The about the lawsuit here:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24ballots.html?ref=politics>

EARLY VOTING

Indiana - A divided Indiana Supreme Court has rejected an effort by Republicans to close satellite early voting sites in three largely Democratic cities near Chicago. The state's highest court, voting 3 to 2, declined on Friday to grant a Republican request to rush its appeal of a special judge's ruling this week that the voting centers in the Lake County cities of Gary, Hammond and East Chicago should remain open and that closing them could jeopardize residents' right to vote. Read the rejection here:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/26/us/politics/26indiana.html?ref=politics>

VOTER SUPPRESSION

Wisconsin - Republican Party efforts to stop thousands of voters from casting meaningful ballots in 2008 because their registration information does not match government databases with high error rates was set back by legal rulings in Wisconsin, Ohio and Nevada on Thursday. Read more here:

http://www.alternet.org/election08/104322/big_setbacks_for_gop_voter_suppression_efforts_in_swing_states/

New York, NY - In a *New York Times* editorial, the GOP is blasted. When it comes to voting, "the real threat to democracy is the nonstop campaign by the G.O.P. and its supporters to disenfranchise American citizens who have every right to cast a ballot. We saw this in 2000. We saw it in 2004. And we're seeing it again now." Read the editorial here:

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/21/opinion/21herbert.html?_r=2&ref=opinion&oref=slogin

National - The Brennan Center has compiled a comprehensive synopsis of current voter suppression incidents around the country. The stories are categorized by theme, and this document will be continually updated in the days prior to the election. Read the synopsis here:

http://www.brennancenter.org/content/resource/voter_suppression_incidents/

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

When did Congress select a uniform date on which the states were to choose their Electors?

Hint: The First Tuesday following the first Monday in November in years divisible by four.

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

Who was Al Smith's Republican opponent in his run for President?

ANSWER

Al Smith's Republican opponent was Herbert Hoover. We had correct answers from Jeff Norman and Mac Campbell. Congratulations! 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](mailto:erika@democraticlawyers.org).

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 @](mailto:editors@democraticlawyers.org)

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 40

Copyright 2008 DCDLC, 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.