



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 43, November 18, 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.

EVENTS

ANNUAL PROGRESSIVE CAREER PANEL AND NETWORKING RECEPTION

Who: The Washington DC Lawyer Chapter of the American Constitution Society

What: The Annual Progressive Career Panel and Networking Reception

Featuring:

- Mark Agrast Senior Fellow, Center for American Progress
- Martina Bradford, Senior Advisor for Human Resources, Office of Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid
- David Douglass, Partner, Shook, Hardy & Bacon L.L.P.
- DeDe Lea, Executive Vice President, Government Relations, Viacom, Inc.
- Nancy Schiffer, Associate General Counsel, AFL-CIO
- Bob J. Nash, Former Director of Personnel, White House, Clinton Administration
- Jocelyn Samuels, Vice President, Education and Employment, National Women's Law Center

Where: Center for American Progress, 1333 H Street NW, 10th Floor

When: Thursday, November 20, 2008, 6:30 p.m.

This event is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served. RSVP [here](#). Please join us for this informative panel and networking reception to discuss careers for progressives in a wide variety of arenas.

MAKING ELECTIONS WORK: THE LAW AND THE PROCESS AFTER NOVEMBER

Who: AEI/Brookings Institute Election Reform Project, Election Law Journal, and the University of California

What: **Panel 1: Reflections on the two presidential campaigns**
Daniel Lowenstein, moderator, UCLA School of Law, Election Law Journal Robert Bauer, General Counsel, Obama Presidential Campaign Trevor Potter, General Counsel, McCain Presidential Campaign

Panel 2. Campaign Finance

Thomas Mann, moderator, Brookings Institution Anthony Corrado, Colby College Rick Hasen, Loyola Law School, Election Law Journal Michael Malbin, Campaign Finance Institute Michael Toner, Bryan Cave, LLP

Panel 3. Election Administration: Early & Absentee Voting Issues

Norm Ornstein, moderator, American Enterprise Institute Edward Foley, Moritz College of Law, Ohio State University John Fortier, American Enterprise Institute Paul Gronke, Reed College

Panel 4. Election Administration: Voter Registration & Voter ID Issues

Guy Charles, moderator, University of Minnesota Law School Doug Chapin, Director of electionline.org Karin MacDonald, University of California, Berkeley Michael McDonald, Brookings Institution, George Mason University Nathaniel Persily, Columbia Law School

Where: University of California Washington Center, 1608 Rhode Island Ave, NW

When: Thursday, December 4, 2008, 9:00 a.m.-5 p.m.

More information can be accessed [here](#).

Please RSVP to Roya Soleimani by Tuesday, December 2nd: conference@ucdc.edu or (202) 974-6345

VOTING RIGHTS NEWS

PRISONERS' COUNT

National - In a *New York Times* editorial, prison-based gerrymandering, which occurs when politicians draw legislative districts around prisons and count inmates —

who are denied the vote in all but two states – as residents, is discussed. At the state level, prison-based gerrymandering exaggerates the political power of the mainly rural districts where prisons are built. And it dilutes the power of the mainly urban districts where inmates come from and to which they nearly always return. Read the editorial here:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/12/opinion/12wed3.html?emc=eta1>

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

Who was the only vice president never to make it to the capital?

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

Who was the presidential candidate of the Peoples Party in 1972?

ANSWER

The presidential candidate of the People's Party in 1972 was Dr. Benjamin McLane Spock, aka "Doc Spock"! We had correct answers from Iris Rita Richard and Daniel Michelson-Horowitz. Congratulations to the both of you! 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).

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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???](#)

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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.

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Democratic Law Briefs, E-Mail Edition, Volume 4 Number 43

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