



*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](mailto:signup@democraticlawyers.org). We'll happily add you to the list.

## **EVENTS**

### **ACS GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

- Who:** The Washington D.C. Lawyer Chapter of the American Constitution Society
- What:** General Membership Meeting
- Where:** Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale & Dorr LLP, 1875 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
- When:** Wednesday, December 3, 2008, 6:30 p.m.

RSVP [here](#).

Looking to get more involved in the American Constitution Society? At this meeting, we will discuss current and future activities of the chapter. To learn more about the ACS Washington D.C. Lawyer Chapter, please visit our website [here](#).

### **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](mailto:conference@ucdc.edu) or (202) 974-6345

## VOTING RIGHTS NEWS

### MINNESOTA SENATORIAL RECOUNT

**St. Paul, MN** - With the recount in Minnesota's U.S. Senate race now close to 90 percent complete, Democrat Al Franken's campaign said today it would announce the withdrawal of "more than dozens" of its ballot challenges later this week. Read the story here:

<http://www.startribune.com/politics/35329829.html>

## VIRGINIA'S 5<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

**Virginia** - Fifth District U.S. Rep. Virgil Goode Jr. will seek a recount in his close 5th District congressional race with political newcomer Tom Perriello. More on this story here: <http://www.martinsvillebulletin.com/article.cfm?ID=16744>

## MINORITY VOTING 2008

**Washington, DC** - The United States saw dramatic increases in the number of ballots cast by traditionally underrepresented groups, including Americans of color and young voters, according to an analysis released today by Project Vote. Countering the conventional wisdom that voter turnout on November 4 did not change as dramatically as predicted, Project Vote's new analysis demonstrates that African-Americans, Latinos, and young voters cast millions more ballots in 2008 than in 2004. Read the analysis here:

[http://projectvote.org/index.php?id=80&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=2726&tx\\_ttnews\[backPid\]=75&cHash=1fc560e9c7](http://projectvote.org/index.php?id=80&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=2726&tx_ttnews[backPid]=75&cHash=1fc560e9c7)

## VOTER IDENTIFICATION

**Maryland** - Any proposal that would require voters to present photo ID is unlikely to pass, Frederick's lawmakers say. Election judges now ask for people's names, addresses and month and day of birth to verify their identity.

[http://www.fredericknewspost.com/sections/news/reporters\\_notebooks\\_display.htm?StoryID=83278](http://www.fredericknewspost.com/sections/news/reporters_notebooks_display.htm?StoryID=83278)

## 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

The 25th Amendment has a provision providing for what event?

## LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

Who was the only vice president to serve more than a few hours without a president?

## ANSWER

John Adams was sworn in April 21, 1789 having arrived in the capital which was then New York City, nine days before George Washington. We did not have any correct answers last week. Good luck to all 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).

## 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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