



Fighting for Voting Rights and a Democratic United States

DEMOCRATIC LAW BRIEFS

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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.

VOTING RIGHTS NEWS

WIDE SPREAD VOTER FRAUD?

Cincinnati, OH - Hamilton County Prosecutor Joe Deters said he had allegations last fall of widespread voter fraud - allegations a special prosecutor reported Tuesday were wrong, noting the only voter fraud found was from a Connecticut man who told on himself. Deters claimed his office had concrete allegations that people were offered booze and cigarettes to vote specific ways, suggesting they were voting for Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama. "He said he had all of this evidence. He was fairly specific about some of his charges," Tim Burke, chairman of the Hamilton County Democratic Party as well as chairman of the Hamilton County Board of Elections, said of Deters. "Where the hell is it?" Read more here: <http://news.cincinnati.com/article/20090127/NEWS01/301270059>

VOTING MACHINE PAPER TRAILS

Trenton, NJ - Among the budget-balancing cuts announced by Gov. Jon S. Corzine is a delay in adding printers to New Jersey voting machines that are designed to create a paper trail for recounts, a move that would trim spending by \$19 million. State law, however, requires them. And the state Senate last month rejected the proposed delay and pilot program. Read the details here: <http://www.courierpostonline.com/article/20090125/NEWS01/901250350/1006/news01>

MONTANA'S ELECTION DAY REGISTRATION

Helena, MT - Bills that would eliminate same-day registration and require better identification from Montana voters failed in committee last Tuesday. The bills were sponsored by Rep. Ted Washburn (R-Bozeman). One bill, House Bill 88, would have made the Friday before Election Day the last day to register to vote. Another, HB99, would have barred the use of current utility bills and school IDs to register to vote. Read more here:

<http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/articles/2009/01/28/news/20washburn.txt>

VOTER IDENTIFICATION

Oklahoma - Senator John Ford (R-Bartlesville) has introduced legislation that will help protect the integrity of the election system in Oklahoma. Senate Bill 4 requires any individual that votes in person to show "proof of identity," which can be a document that includes the voter's name, a picture of the voter, and is issued by the United States, the State of Oklahoma or a federally recognized Indian Tribe or Nation. In instances where an individual does not have any of these methods of identification, the voter may show their county issued Voter ID card.

<http://www.examiner-enterprise.com/articles/2009/02/01/news/news050.txt>

STUDENT VOTING

Virginia - A bill is in the works to address several voting issues in Virginia. If it passes, some of those who will be impacted the most are college students.

<http://www.whsv.com/news/headlines/38658812.html>

CLOSED PRIMARY

Idaho - The Idaho Republican Party is moving forward with plans to close its primary - a subject the party has been debating for years. This weekend, the party's central committee voted to press on in its lawsuit against the state to allow closed primaries.

<http://www.ktvb.com/news/localnews/stories/ktvbn-feb0109-republicans.e4c13c3.html>

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 was the first time that the Presidential Oath administered by a woman?

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

True or false? According to the Constitution, the Presidential Oath must be administered by the Chief Justice of the US? Extra points: Which Chief Justice swore in the most Presidents?

ANSWER

False. While most Presidential oaths have been administered by the Chief Justice, it is not required. Chief Justice Roger Taney swore in seven Presidents. We did not have any correct answers last week. 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).

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 @](mailto:editors@democraticlawyers.org)

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