



*Fighting for Voting Rights and a Democratic United States*

## **DEMOCRATIC LAW BRIEFS**

A Publication of the DC Chapter of the National Lawyers Council

*Volume 5 Issue 11 April 7, 2009*

**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**

### **MINNESOTA SENATE RACE**

**St. Paul, MN** - A three-judge panel ruled on Friday the 3rd that only 400 absentee ballots – far fewer than Norm Coleman (R) had sought – should be examined for possible counting. If the ruling stands, it could be devastating for Mr. Coleman, who trailed his Democratic challenger by 225 votes out of some 2.9 million cast and had hoped that nearly 1,400 absentee ballots might be recounted. Details can be found here:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/01/us/01franken.html?partner=rss&emc=rss>

**St. Paul, MN** - More than five months since Election Day, the marathon fight for the U.S. Senate in Minnesota enters another phase today as 400 previously rejected absentee ballots are heading from counties across the state to St. Paul for opening and counting. Read more here:

[http://www.startribune.com/politics/state/42504352.html?elr=KArks:EaPc:E7\\_8c7PaP3iU\\_3OyBooUiD3aPc:\\_Yyc:aULPQL7PQLanchO7DiU](http://www.startribune.com/politics/state/42504352.html?elr=KArks:EaPc:E7_8c7PaP3iU_3OyBooUiD3aPc:_Yyc:aULPQL7PQLanchO7DiU)

**National** - The Senate race in Minnesota seems no closer to resolution than it did on election night. With Al Franken (D) clinging to a 225 vote lead and Norm Coleman dealt a tough setback in state court last week, some of the highest ranking officials in the GOP are urging the St. Paul Republican to draw out all remaining options. In light of this, it is worth noting just how far the Republican Party's position has evolved from the last big poli-legal recount drama: the 2000 presidential race in Florida. Among the biggest cheerleaders for Coleman's increasingly bleak cause has been Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), who has urged the former Senator to pursue his case further in the courts despite the recent setback. McConnell, of course,

was not alone. A whole host of Republican officials who warned against a drawn-out recount in 2000 now want the process expanded in Minnesota. Senate Majority Whip Jon Kyl (R-AZ), for one, has sharply warned Senate Democrats to not seat Al Franken, holding up the possibility of courts ruling in Coleman's favor. National Republican Senatorial Committee Chairman John Cornyn (R-TX) has promised "World War III" if Democrats try to seat Franken, and the GOP leadership in Washington has urged Coleman to continue appealing court rulings that he loses. Read more here: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/04/06/republicans-urging-colema\\_n\\_183568.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/04/06/republicans-urging-colema_n_183568.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 [editor @ democraticlawyers.org](mailto:editor@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

A future President gave a eulogy at the funeral of this President, who were the two Presidents?

Hint: Both Presidents died in office.

### LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

This president became the sworn enemy of the United States after leaving office. Who was this President?

### ANSWER

John Tyler (Whig) joined the Confederacy twenty years after he was in office and became the only President named a sworn enemy of the United States. We had correct answers from Kevin Kingston, Walt Ellis, Rogelyn D. McLean and James Gibson. Congratulations to all of you!! Good Luck this week!

## JOBS

**Office:** Western Democrat

**Position:** LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT/COUNSEL

**Contact:** Please submit resume and cover letter to [westerndemcounsel@gmail.com](mailto:westerndemcounsel@gmail.com)

**Description:** Western Democrat seeks LA/Counsel for fast-paced office. In addition to covering Judiciary, Homeland Security, Immigration, and Election Reform portfolios, including related appropriations work, the candidate also will advise the Senator and staff regarding ethics compliance and general government oversight issues, as well as coordinate judicial nominations. Applicants should be highly motivated team players and creative problem-solvers. Must possess strong analytical skills, be able to meet tight deadlines and demonstrate excellent written and oral communications skills, including legal research and writing. JD required, Hill experience preferred, and Spanish language skills helpful.

**If you know of a legal or other position of interest position that should be listed here (or corrections or updates to job openings that are listed), please contact your editors at [editors@democraticlawyers.org](mailto:editors@democraticlawyers.org).**

*Editors' Note: The above listed job(s) were gathered from various sources in an effort to collaborate, disseminate, and share information with members of the DC Democratic Lawyers Council regarding career development and professional opportunities. No guarantee is given concerning the accuracy of the job announcement, job descriptions, qualifications, availability, application process, deadlines, salaries, work hours, or other information. If you have questions about a job, please follow up directly with the designated contact listed. Thank you.*

## 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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Democratic Law Briefs, E-Mail Edition, Volume 5 Number 11

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