



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

PROGRESSIVE POLITICAL CAREER BOOTCAMP

Who: *Democratic GAIN* and the *George Washington Graduate School of Political Management* are teaming up to bring you a half-day of panel discussions with senior progressive political professionals from all areas of politics who will share their stories while providing information, insights and advice on how you can begin or continue your own successful political career.

When: Friday, July 17th, Noon - 6 p.m.

Where: George Washington University
Jack Morton Auditorium
805 21st St NW Washington DC

Cost: \$10 for non-dues-paying members of GAIN, and free for current dues-paying members.

RSVP: Space is limited, so [register today](#) to guarantee your spot at this great event

Register here:

<http://www.democraticgain.org/link.asp?ymlink=57308&finalurl=http%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Edemocraticgain%2Eorg%2Fevent%2Fcareerbootcamp>

VOTING RIGHTS NEWS

MINNESOTA SENATE RACE

St. Paul, MN - Republican Norm Coleman has conceded to Democrat Al Franken in Minnesota's contested Senate race, ending a nearly eight-month recount and court fight. Coleman announced his decision at a news conference in St. Paul, hours after a unanimous Minnesota Supreme Court ruled that Franken, a former "Saturday Night Live" comedian and liberal commentator, should be certified the winner. "The Supreme Court has made its decision and I will abide by the results," Coleman told reporters outside his St. Paul home. Read more on this breaking news here:

http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/31667236/ns/politics-capitol_hill

Read the decision here:

<http://www.nationaljournal.com/congressdaily/>

MAJORITY LEADER STATEMENT ON SENATOR-ELECT AL FRANKEN (D)

Washington, DC - Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D) made the following statement today:

"I congratulate Senator-elect Al Franken, the next Senator from the state of Minnesota.

"The people of Minnesota will now finally get the brilliant and hardworking new senator they elected in November and the full representation they deserve. After all the votes have been counted and recounted, the Minnesota Supreme Court has made the final determination that Minnesotans have chosen Al Franken to help their state and our country get back on track.

"The Senate looks forward to welcoming Senator-elect Franken as soon as possible. He will play a crucial role as we work to strengthen our economy, ensure all Americans can access and afford quality health care, make our country more energy independent, confirm the President's outstanding nominee to the Supreme Court, and tackle the many other challenges we face.

"I once again encourage Governor Pawlenty to respect the votes of his constituents and the decisions of his state's highest court. He should put politics aside, follow his state's laws and finally sign the certificate that will bring this episode to an end."

<http://www.democrats.senate.gov/newsroom/record.cfm?id=315226&>

NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION ACT

MISSOURI - Low-income voters in Missouri will see increased access to voter registration at Missouri public assistance offices as a result of a settlement agreement filed this week in federal district court. The settlement concludes a lawsuit filed against the Missouri Department of Social Services (DSS) in April 2008 by the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) and St. Louis resident Dionne O'Neal charging widespread violations of the federal National Voter Registration Act. United States District Judge Nanette K. Laughrey had previously issued a preliminary injunction in July 2008 directing DSS immediately to comply with the NVRA's requirement that DSS offices provide voter registration applications and assistance to their clients. Read more about the settlement here:

<http://www.lawyerscommittee.org/newsroom/clips?id=0045>

FEC RULING

Washington, DC - The Federal Election Commission gave former Sen. Norm Coleman (R) a break Thursday, allowing the Republican to use his campaign funds to defend himself against allegations that a long-time associate steered some \$100,000 to him through a company that employed his wife. Under the opinion, approved by the FEC by a 4-2 vote Thursday, Coleman would be allowed to dip into his campaign war chest in order to represent himself in the lawsuits and pay for all costs associated with them as well. Additional details here:

<http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0609/24208.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

What three Presidents died on the 4th of July?

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

Four presidents did not have any Supreme Court appointments. Who are they?

ANSWER

William Henry Harrison, Zachary Taylor, Andrew Johnson and Jimmy Carter did not have any Supreme Court appointees. 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)

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

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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. We reserve the right to use, not use, edit, paraphrase, or otherwise play with your submissions.

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