



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

NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION ACT

Washington, D.C. - California is failing to comply with its obligation under the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) to offer voter registration services to public assistance clients, according to a recent Project Vote memo. The report finds that the decline in agency registrations is due to the poor performance of key counties. The largest county in California, Los Angeles County, reported only 72 agency registrations from 2005 to 2006. This stands in stark contrast to Fresno County, which has less than one-tenth the population of Los Angeles but reported 3,418 agency registrations in that period. Other counties failed to report any registrations in public assistance agencies, and widespread non-reporting is often indicative of noncompliance with the NVRA. Read the memo here:

<http://projectvote.org/images/publications/State-Specific%20Documents/California/FINAL%20PV%20CA%20NVRA%205.7.09.pdf>

MAJORITY LEADER STATEMENT ON SENATOR AL FRANKEN (60!)

Washington, DC— *Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid made the following statement today (7/6/2009) after his meeting with Senator-elect Al Franken:*

“I am pleased to welcome Senator-elect Al Franken to the United States Senate. Senator-elect Franken ran a hard-fought, issues-based campaign and I know he will work hard for the people of Minnesota. But don’t take my word for it. This is what former Republican Congressman Vin Weber had to say about our newest Senator: ‘...when people find out he’s a smart guy who is serious about issues and a hard worker, they will be very pleasantly surprised.’

“Much has been made of the expectations of Al Franken joining the United States. I expect Al to work hard for the people of Minnesota, who have gone far too long without full representation. I expect him to help deliver the change this country demands as we work to strengthen our economy, ensure all Americans can access and afford quality health care, and make our country more energy independent. I am confident Senator-elect Franken will make a difference, but we will need more than just his presence to effectively address all of our nation’s challenges.

“The challenges we face are not Democratic or Republican in nature. They are America’s challenges and they are too great to be solved by partisanship. Moving America forward will still require the cooperation and collaboration of Democrats and Republicans alike. The last eight years have shown us that the American people want

us to work together. Democrats aren't looking at Senator Franken's election as an opportunity to ram legislation through the Senate.

"In turn Senate Republicans must understand that Senator-elect Franken's election does not abdicate them from the responsibility of governing. That is why we have and will continue to offer Senate Republicans a seat at the table. It is up to them to decide whether they will sit down and work for the common good or continue to be the Party of No."

<http://www.democrats.senate.gov/newsroom/record.cfm?id=315339&>

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

True or False: The first public reading of the Declaration of Independence was in Philadelphia on July 4, 1776, by Col. John Nixon.

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

What three Presidents died on the 4th of July?

ANSWER

John Adams and Thomas Jefferson died on July 4th, 1826 (the 50th Anniversary) and James Monroe died on July 4th 1831. Kevin Kingston provided us with the correct answer this week. Congrats Kevin! 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 @ 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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