



*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.

### **VOTING RIGHTS NEWS**

#### **PA VOTING REGISTRATION LAWSUIT**

**Pittsburgh, PA** - The ACLU has filed a lawsuit in the Western District of Pennsylvania on the behalf of ACORN, challenging the constitutionality of PA's Solicitation of Registration Statute which makes it a crime in PA to pay registrants to solicit voters to register for pay or incentive based on the number of registrations obtained. Read the filing here: <http://www.aclupa.org/downloads/ACORNComplaintFinal.pdf>

Additional details can be found here:

<http://www.ballot-access.org/2009/07/23/aclu-sues-pennsylvania-over-ban-on-paying-voter-registration-activists-per-registrant/>

#### **OPTICAL SCANNING FOR VOTING MACHINES**

**Memphis, TN** —The Voter Confidence Act passed by the Tennessee General Assembly in 2008 is a creation of “the liberal wing of the liberal party” and a “bad idea,” according to Bill Giannini, the chairman of the Shelby County Election Commission. During remarks to the Southeast Shelby Republican Club the former chairman of the group argued that the current voting machines are “accurate enough”. Read more on this story here:

<http://www.memphisflyer.com/JacksonBaker/archives/2009/07/21/optical-scan-voting-insanity-says-election-commission-head>

## [TOUCH SCREEN VOTING GETS A DAY IN COURT](#)

**Tucson, AZ** – The Arizona Court of Appeals unanimously rejected arguments by attorneys for the secretary of state and county election officials on Tuesday that the decision to certify machines manufactured by Diebold Elections Systems and Sequoia Voting Systems cannot be challenged. Judge Philip Hall, writing for the court, said it is proper for courts to consider the issue of whether the machines comply with Arizona law. Read more on this story here:

<http://www.azstarnet.com/allheadlines/301859>

## [ELECTION DAY REGISTRATION](#)

**Washington, DC** - In a *Washington Post* editorial, the Omnibus Election Reform Act of 2009 is discussed. The Act aims to give more D.C. residents the opportunity to vote by allowing Election Day voter registration and eliminating restrictions on absentee and early voting. After noting that DC voting participation is below the national average the editorial calls on the DC Council to adopt the bill. Read the editorial

here: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/26/AR2009072602194.html>

## [VOTER REGISTRATION](#)

**New York, NY** - A *New York Times* editorial discusses the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law review of voter registration in 16 countries and four Canadian provinces. The Editorial points out that countries and provinces in the study with the highest registration rates sign people up by using data borrowed from other government agencies. The editorial points out that Senator Charles Schumer, the Democrat of New York who is chairman of the Senate Rules and Administration Committee, is at work on a national voter registration modernization bill. The editorial concludes that bolder action is needed to get eligible voters on the rolls. Read the editorial here:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/24/opinion/24fri2.html?\\_r=2&ref=opinion](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/24/opinion/24fri2.html?_r=2&ref=opinion)

## [VOTER REGISTRATION CASE](#)

**Minnesota** - The Minnesota Supreme Court dismissed a lawsuit that claimed the state elections system wasn't updated as quickly as it should have been after the 2008 election. The court found that it didn't have the jurisdiction to decide on the merits of the suit, which was filed in May by a group called the Minnesota Majority, a conservative advocacy group, against Secretary of State Mark Ritchie and local elections officials. [http://www.twincities.com/politics/ci\\_12903960](http://www.twincities.com/politics/ci_12903960)

## 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

What year was the 4<sup>th</sup> of July declared a legal holiday?

### LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

Which President was born on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July?

### ANSWER

John Calvin Coolidge, Jr. was born on July 4, 1872. We did not have any correct answers last week. Good Luck this week.

## JOBS

### FIELD ORGANIZER

The Virginia Democratic Coordinated Campaign is hiring field organizers to begin immediately! Virginia is a must win state for Democrats this year and is definitely the battleground state of 2009. We're looking to hire Field Organizers who are up to the challenge, passionate about field work, hard-working and resourceful. If you want to make a significant impact this year, please email your resume and 2 references to [Jobs@vavictory09.org](mailto:Jobs@vavictory09.org)!

Successful applicants will have the ability to: Build relationships with activists and organizations. Enjoy spending a significant amount of time on the phone and on the doors. Be a self-starter who is committed to electing Virginia Democrats to office. Responsibilities will include: Volunteer recruitment, training and retention; Organize daily phone banks and weekly canvasses; Participate in voter outreach by phone

banking and canvassing; Manage voter and volunteer databases; Increase involvement of activists and organizations within a specified region

**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: Any listed jobs 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).

### [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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