



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

VOTER IDENTIFICATION

Mississippi - The Mississippi Republican Party's investment of time and money in a voter identification initiative has likely improved the odds the proposal will make it to the ballot. Contentious debate over voter ID has been a legislative distraction for a while. Each year, bills are filed calling for voters to present photo ID when they cast ballots. The legislation is debated, usually in rancorous tones, but dies by session's end. Lawmakers came close to reaching a deal in the 2009 session, but the measure was killed by Senate Republicans. One of them, Sen. Joey Fillingane of Sumrall, later filed an initiative petition with the secretary of state's office to let voters decide whether presenting ID at the polls should be required. The petition needs about 100,000 signatures by Oct. 1 to be placed on next year's general election ballot. <http://www.sunherald.com/218/story/1541562.html>

Georgia - Georgia has asked the Justice Department to reconsider its rejection of the state's system of using Social Security numbers and driver's license data to check whether prospective voters are citizens, Secretary of State Karen Handel announced Wednesday. http://chronicle.augusta.com/stories/2009/08/13/met_544263.shtml

Illinois - H. 4077 was signed by the Governor. The bill specifies which forms of identification first-time voters are required to present. It was amended to "add a lease or contract for a residence to the acceptable forms of proof of a voter's residence. Where not already listed in the Code as acceptable proof of residence, adds a photo identification card issued by a university or college and mail addressed to the voter at the address of residence.

<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/BillStatus.asp?DocNum=4077&GAID=10&DocTypeID=HB&LegId=46926&SessionID=76&GA=96>

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 President acted as an executioner by personally pulling the hanging trap door?

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

What was the first federal building authorized by Congress?
(Hint: It was located in Philadelphia and it still exists in Philadelphia but not at its original location.)

ANSWER

The first federal building was the US Mint located in Philadelphia, PA and built in 1792. The Mint's largest facility is one of four active coin-producing mints. The current facility at Philadelphia, which opened in 1969, is the fourth Philadelphia Mint. We had a correct answer from Paul Richard. Congratulations Paul! 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).

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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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