



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

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC LAW STUDENTS' COUNCIL 5TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

The George Washington University Law Dems will host NDLS's 5th annual convention with support from The Columbus School of Law at The Catholic University of America and the assistance of Young Lawyers for Obama (YLFO).

YES, lawyers are welcome!

When: Friday March 12, to Sunday March 14, 2010
7:30 PM Friday - 1:30 PM Sunday

What: 11 Panels & Multiple speakers at GW and Catholic University Law Schools

Where: George Washington University

To register visit: <http://www.lawschooldems.org/index.php/home/166-convention-2010>

Government / Non-profit lawyers: \$40 (early registration); \$60 otherwise
Private Firm lawyers: \$75 pre-registration; \$100 at the door

This Program will include the following panelists:

- Douglas F. Gansler, Maryland Attorney General; Co-Chair, Democratic Attorneys General Association

- Dahlia Lithwick, Senior Editor, Slate; Contributor, Newsweek
- Dean Alan Morrison, Public Interest Dean, GWU Law; Co-Founder with Ralph Nader and Former Director, Public Citizen Litigation Group
- Robby Mook, Political Director, DCCC
- Lawrence Noble, Adjunct Professor of Law, GWU Law; Former FEC General Counsel; Former Executive Director and General Counsel, Center for Responsive Politics
- Mary Cheh, DC Councilwoman
- David Waldman, DailyKos.com
- Joe Sandler, Principal, Sandler, Reiff & Young LLC; Former DNC General Counsel
- Gray Brooks, New Media Ombudsman, Obama for America; Federal Communications Commission New Media Project
- Tom Goldstein, Co-founder & Publisher, SCOTUSblog

For a complete working schedule, see:

<http://www.lawschooldems.org/images/convention2010/jan11draft.pdf>

VOTING RIGHTS NEWS

TEXAS PRIMARY

Texas - Texas voters head to the polls on March 2, to select the party's governor candidates. Read more here:

<http://www.cqpolitics.com/wmspage.cfm?docid=news-000003296637>

GEORGIA PLANS LAW SUIT

Atlanta, GA - Georgia plans to sue the Obama Administration after the Justice Department for the third time blocked the state's efforts to check the citizenship of newly registering voters. Georgia Secretary of State Brian Kemp accused the feds of "playing politics" with Georgia's election process. Kemp said Tuesday the state would ask the U.S. District Court in the District of Columbia to clear the state's system of using Social Security numbers and driver's license data to confirm whether prospective voters are U.S. citizens. Under the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, Georgia and other states with a history of discriminatory voting practices must preclear any changes to election rules with the Justice Department or through the federal courts. Read the details here:

http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2010/02/23/us/AP-US-Voting-Citizenship-Georgia.html?_r=1&scp=6&sq=georgia%20to%20sue%20over%20voter%20checks&st=Search

ALASKA TO OFFER BALLOT HELP

Anchorage, AK - Alaska has settled a lawsuit brought by Yup'ik-speaking elders and tribal councils demanding that the Division of Elections provide ballots and voter assistance in Yup'ik. Announced by the Attorney General Friday February 26, the agreement calls for Yup'ik language translations of election information to be posted on the state Web site and sent to Bethel-area village councils. The arguments for and against ballot measures -- which can be tough to understand even if you speak English -- will go to villages 30 days before Election Day. Read more here:

<http://www.adn.com/2010/02/19/1148117/yupik-elders-win-right-to-elections.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](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

An assassination attempt on this President resulted in the death of the mayor of Chicago. Who was unharmed President. Bonus: Who was the mayor?

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

The Secret Service was formed on July 5, 1865 just months after Lincoln's assassination. When did the Secret Service begin protecting the President full time?

ANSWER

Informal protection of the President on a part time basis began in 1894 with Glover Cleveland. In 1901 Congress informally requested presidential protection following the assassination of President McKinley. Full time presidential protection came in 1902 with the Secret Service protecting Teddy Roosevelt. We had a partially correct answer from Kevin Kingston. Congratulations 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).

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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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