



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>

"MEETAREP" WITH U.S. REP. DONNA EDWARDS - MAR. 24

Join Young Lawyers for Obama for drinks and discussion with Rep. Donna Edwards. Rep. Edwards was elected in 2008 to Maryland's Fourth Congressional District. Prior to her election, she co-founded and served as the first executive director of the National Network to End Domestic Violence. She also was the executive director of the Arca Foundation, working to ensure the independence of the federal judiciary, among other causes.

When: Wednesday, March 24, 6:30-8:00 pm

Where: Hawk N Dove, Upstairs Lounge (329 Pennsylvania Ave SE)

VOTING RIGHTS NEWS

VOTING MACHINES

Washington, DC – The Justice Department is poised to allow the merger of the U.S.'s two largest makers of voting machines, but the combined company will be required to divest a key electronic voting system, said people familiar with the matter. In September, closely held Election Systems & Software Inc. agreed to buy No. 2 voting-machine manufacturer Premier Election Solutions Inc., a money-losing unit of Diebold Inc. Read more here:

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703502804575102052993941436.html?mod=WSJ_WSJ_US_News_5

ABSENTEE BALLOTING

Richmond, VA - The last hope for no-excuse, early absentee voting was extinguished Tuesday in a House subcommittee. The State Senate had previously passed the bill but the Republicans in the House committee decided they did not want anyone to vote so easily. Details here:

<http://hamptonroads.com/2010/03/bill-allowing-noexcuse-absentee-voting-dies>

VOTER REGISTRATION LAWSUIT

Norfolk, VA - On February 16, 2010, leading voter protection groups Advancement Project and Project Vote, along with pro bono cooperating attorneys from the law firm of Ropes & Gray LLP, filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Norfolk against Elisa Long, general registrar of Norfolk and Nancy Rodrigues, secretary of the State Board of Elections, for denying access to certain voter registration records. After receiving reports from their local community partners regarding large numbers of rejected voter registration applications, particularly from students at the historically African-American Norfolk State University, Advancement Project and Project Vote sought to review Norfolk's rejected registration applications to ascertain if qualified persons were unlawfully kept off the voting rolls. Read more here:

<http://www.projectvote.org/newsreleases/470-virginia-election-officials-sued-for-unlawfully-denying-access-to-voter-files.html>

VOTER ID

Boise, ID - House Majority Leader Mike Moyle, R-Star, believes the right to vote is "sacred" and should be protected by the government of Idaho. Moyle's measure to protect that right, House Bill 496, passed the full House on a 64-6 vote Monday. It now goes to the Senate for consideration. The plan would require citizens to show some form of ID prior to voting in elections in the state. The bill outlines which forms of ID are acceptable for poll workers, a list which includes driver's licenses, tribal identification, passports, and student ID cards if the high school, college, or university is located in Idaho. Rep. Bob Schaefer, R-Nampa, said he believes voter fraud is rampant, even in Idaho. Prior to speaking in support of the legislation, Schaeffer said he entered the phrase "voter fraud" into an Internet search engine and received more than 900,000 results, which he cited as proof that voter fraud is occurring. (Eds note: an Internet search engine with the phrase intelligent life in ID return more than a million results proving that there is no intelligent life in ID). Read more here:

<http://www.idahoreporter.com/2010/voter-id-bill-approved-by-house/>

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

Which President was arrested for running over an old lady?

LAST 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?

ANSWER

There was an assassination attempt on Roosevelt in February, 1933. Roosevelt was unharmed, but Anton Cermak, mayor of Chicago, was killed. We had correct answers from Kevin Kingston and Chris Sautter. Congratulations Kevin and Chris. 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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