



*Fighting for Voting Rights and a Democratic United States*

## **DEMOCRATIC LAW BRIEFS**

A Publication of the DC Chapter of the National Lawyers Council

*Volume 6 Issue 11 March 23, 2010*

**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**

### **RSVP: NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC LAWYERS COUNCIL 2010 MEETING**

<http://my.democrats.org/ndlc>

## **THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY**

The National Democratic Lawyers Council is holding its **2010 Meeting on Saturday, April 24th, in Washington, D.C.**, and I want to be sure you got the invitation. We have much work ahead of us in the 2010 Congressional elections, and we look forward to your continued involvement. More than ever, we are seeking to identify ways in which the NDLC can become further engaged with the Party -- including advocacy, volunteer recruitment, and fundraising.

We are very pleased to announce that the DNC Chairman, Governor Tim Kaine, will be joining us for our luncheon.

The conference will be held at the National Education Association, at 1201 16th Street, NW, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

RSVP here no later than Wednesday, April 7th, to secure your spot at the meeting:  
<http://my.democrats.org/ndlc>

We will send you additional information about the meeting, including an agenda, in the coming weeks, and we look forward to seeing you in Washington next month.

Thanks,  
Will Crossley  
Director and Counsel for Voter Protection

## "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

### FELON VOTING RIGHTS

**New York, NY** - In a *New York Times* editorial, the *Democracy Restoration Act* is discussed. The Act would restore the right to vote for released ex-felons in federal elections and would also require the states to provide notice of the restoration of the right to vote. The editorial states that there is no good reason to deny the right to vote to ex-felons. The editorial also notes that many of the laws disenfranchising former criminals date back to the post-Civil War era and were used to prevent freed slaves from voting. Read the editorial here:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/22/opinion/22mon3.html?ref=opinion>

### NEW YORK CITY VOTING MACHINES

**New York, NY** - Budget cuts could hobble the city's historic switch to electronic voting devices this year, officials warned Monday. Even after a recent infusion of \$13.5 million to pay for last fall's city runoff elections, the Board of Elections contends it will end this budget year with a \$32 million deficit. Read the details here:

[http://www.nydailynews.com/news/2010/03/16/2010-03-16\\_elections\\_board\\_says\\_budget\\_cuts\\_a\\_setback\\_for\\_evote\\_devices.html](http://www.nydailynews.com/news/2010/03/16/2010-03-16_elections_board_says_budget_cuts_a_setback_for_evote_devices.html)

### VOTER REGISTRATION

**Madison, WI** - The state would establish a first-in-the-nation system to automatically register voters when they sign up for driver's licenses or register their cars, under a draft bill previewed Thursday by Democrats. The draft expected to be introduced next week also would allow municipalities to set up satellite voting locations for absentee voters and implement a federal law that makes it easier for military voters,

including overseas troops, to cast absentee ballots. The Legislature wraps up its regular business April 22, giving the bill a tight timeline to pass. But lawmakers said the federal law for military voters must be implemented this year, adding pressure on their colleagues to act quickly. Read the story here:

<http://www.jsonline.com/news/statepolitics/88416717.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

The death of this President made the passage of this group of bills possible. What was the group of bills known as?

### LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

Which President made three unsuccessful bids for re-election?

### ANSWER

**Millard Fillmore** assumed the presidency upon the Zachary Taylor. Fillmore was never elected president; after serving out Taylor's term, he failed to gain the nomination of the Whigs for president in the 1852 Presidential election. Four years later, in the 1856 Presidential election he again failed to win election as the Know Nothing Party and Whig candidate.

## 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???**

To get your own copy of Democratic Law Briefs, please visit <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).

### **TO UNSUBSCRIBE**

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS ASK - If you want off the distribution list, just send a request, with all your possible e-mail addresses (a lot of you have your mail forwarded) to [editors@democraticlawyers.org](mailto:editors@democraticlawyers.org). Put "Unsubscribe" in the subject of the message.

## 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.

\* \* \*

Democratic Law Briefs, E-Mail Edition, Volume 6 Number 11

Copyright 2010 DC DLC, Paul Roath, Ph.D., Esq., Arielle Harry-Bess, Esq. and Erika Moritsugu, Esq.

This material is intended for personal use only. For other than personal use, it is illegal to make copies or faxes of the information or to store it in a database without permission. All material herein is copyrighted and is intended for the sole personal use of members of the Democratic Lawyers Council. While copies for personal use are permitted, the information otherwise may not be reproduced, republished or downloaded to a local area network without written permission. Violators risk penalties and \$100,000 in damages per offense.