



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

PRISONER CENSUS

Annapolis, MD - Last week Governor Martin O'Malley signed into law a bill ensuring that incarcerated persons will be counted as residents of their home addresses when new state and local legislative districts are drawn in Maryland. The new law will help Maryland correct past distortions in representation caused by counting incarcerated persons as residents of prisons such as occurs in District 28 near Hagerstown and Summerset County. Read more here:

<http://news.prisonpolicy.org/T/ViewEmail/r/7292A40A02CB4C84/B75A11057A29EDA F9A8E73400EDACAB4>

FELON VOTING RIGHTS

Richmond, VA - The McDonnell administration is adding to the process of voting-rights restoration for nonviolent felons. Those applicants will be asked to submit a letter providing information about their situation, including circumstances of their offense and subsequent changes in their life. Democrats reacted swiftly saying this comes on the heels of the governor's controversial Confederate History Month proclamation. "Virginia is one of only two states whose governors solely have the right to restore a felon's right to vote," said Sean Holihan, president of the Virginia Young Democrats, in a statement. "Gov. McDonnell and the Republican Party have time and again showed the public their disinterest in seeing those that have paid their dues welcomed back into society." Read the details here:

http://www2.timesdispatch.com/rtd/news/state_regional/state_regional_govtpolitics/article/MCDO11S1_20100410-221809/336443/

ELECTION LEGISLATION

Baton Rouge, LA - An attempt to shorten voting hours on Election Day failed in the House, which has repeatedly killed similar proposals over the years. The House voted 56-32 against House Bill 59 by Rep. Franklin Foil (R-Baton Rouge) amid concerns it would limit voting opportunities for some people. Read more here:

<http://www.houmatoday.com/article/20100413/HURBLOG/100419784?Title=Bill-to-shorten-La-voting-hours-fails>

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

Article I, § 8, Clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution grants to the Congress the power to impose taxes, but requires excise taxes to be geographically uniform. Where in the Constitution does Congress derive the power to levy an income tax?

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

FDR died 65 years ago on April 12, 1945. FDR, during his State of the Union speech to Congress on Jan. 6, 1941 named "the four liberties". What were these Four Liberties?

ANSWER

Editors Error: The Correct reference was to FDR's Four Freedoms from his State of the Union address of 1941. The Four Freedoms were (from the 1941 speech):

The first is freedom of speech and expression--everywhere in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way -- everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want -- which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants--everywhere in the world.

The fourth is freedom from fear--which, translated into world terms, means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor--anywhere in the world.

[from Wikipedia]

We had a correct answer from Jeff Wice. Congratulations Jeff! Good Luck to all 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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