



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. We'll happily add you to the list.

EVENTS

REGISTER NOW: DC DEMOCRATIC STATE CONVENTION - JUNE 12TH



**District of Columbia
Democratic State Committee**

★ ★ ★ 2010 DC DEMOCRATIC STATE CONVENTION

2010 STATE CONVENTION

“Engaging Neighbors, Empowering DC”

*****Includes Leadership Workshop on
Voter Protection with DNC Officials*****

SATURDAY, JUNE 12, 2010
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
HOWARD UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL
DUMBARTON CAMPUS - Van Ness UDC

Register Here:

<http://dcdsc.org/regconvention2010.htm>

CELEBRATE PRESIDENT OBAMA'S 1ST 500 DAYS - JUNE 2

Grassroots Celebration & Networking Night on Capitol Hill

6:00 - 9:00 p.m. Wednesday, June 2nd (7pm Program)

Top of the Hill (upstairs of Pour House)

319 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20003

<http://bit.ly/TopoftheHillMAP>

@ Capitol South orange/blue line metro

(walk across 2nd St. along C St. and make a Left at 3rd St.)

\$5.00 DONATION

with proceeds benefiting Organizing For America & "VOTE 2010"

(we went with this instead of charging \$500 to keep with the 500 theme!)

SPECIAL GUESTS TBA!

Raffle Prizes! Mixer Game! Obama Impersonators Welcome!

**ADVANCE RSVP NOW + LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR SPONSORS & SIGN UP FOR
UPDATES!**

<http://bit.ly/500daysRSVP>

VOTING RIGHTS NEWS

CONFLICT OF BILLS

Columbia, SC - In order to salvage the bill intended to change the voting procedures in South Carolina, Republicans and Democrats would have to reach an agreement in the remaining few weeks of the session. House Republicans told legislative negotiators Wednesday that they want to require state voters to bring a photo ID to the polls and drop the early-voting part of the plan. Sen. Chip Campsen, R-Isle of Palms, said it will be difficult to pass a bill in the Senate that does not include early voting. Including the voter ID and the early voting opportunities was a way to build enough of a consensus for the Senate to pass the bill. Republicans, using their old bogey man, argue that requiring picture IDs at the poll will stamp out voter fraud and instill confidence in the voting process. Democrats think that the GOP wants to discourage voters, particularly those who don't have photo IDs, typically the poor. Read more here:

<http://www.postandcourier.com/news/2010/may/20/voting-reform-bill-in-trouble/>

[DIEBOLD FINDS A HOME](#)

New York, NY - Dominion Voting Systems announced that 5/19/2010 it would acquire all of the intellectual property, software, and hardware for the systems ES&S acquired from Diebold in a \$5 million transaction last September.

Dominion said it would also receive an “irrevocable, perpetual license” for the AutoMark voting terminals, which are used by voters with disabilities, and said it had negotiated the right to recruit current and former employees of the Diebold unit, Premier Election Solutions, Inc. Read the press release here:

<http://www.mainjustice.com/2010/05/20/diebold-assets-find-a-new-home/>

[DELINQUENT TAXPAYERS](#)

Delaware City, DE - Rules forbidding delinquent taxpayers from voting in local elections violate the Constitution and should be eliminated, the Delaware City Board of Elections ruled last Tuesday night. But in spite of that acknowledgement, at a public hearing the board dismissed two complaints brought by residents seeking to overturn a controversial City Council election last month. Among other complaints, angry residents accused the city of disenfranchising voters by distributing a flier listing voter qualifications, which specified a voter must have “currently paid all City taxes, fees, charges, liens and debts that are due”. Delaware City population was 1,450 in 2000. Read more here:

<http://www.delawareonline.com/article/20100519/NEWS02/5190337/Delaware-City-ends-election-rule>

[VOTER VERIFICATION](#)

Albany, GA - Governor Sonny Perdue is working to strengthen voting verification in the state. He wants to make sure people who register to vote are eligible and are who they say they are. Any change in voting laws must be approved by the Department of Justice before they are implemented. States are required to verify the information provided by first time voter registration applicants with information already on file in state or federal databases. Georgia remains the only state not currently complying with that process. Read more here:

<http://www.walb.com/Global/story.asp?S=12523287>

[VOTER VERIFICATION](#)

McAllen, TX - It was the threat of jail time that finally convinced Maria Helena Belasquez to leave the business. Every election cycle, the 69-year-old prepared for the same routine, aligning herself with candidates, visiting a handful of elderly voters and helping them fill out and deliver their mail-in ballots. She saw it as a way to make

some money while performing a civic service. State and local prosecutors, however, called it a criminal act. In 2005, Belasquez and seven other *politiqueras* – operatives paid by campaigns to collect votes – were indicted on charges they mishandled ballots of elderly and disabled voters during their work on the McAllen mayoral race earlier that year. Read more here:

<http://www.themonitor.com/articles/mcallen-38930-apart-voter.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. 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 Supreme Court Justice ended up filling the seat the Robert Bork was nominated for?

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

Robert Bork was appointed Solicitor General by which President?
(Hint: Bork was later to do this President's dirty work too)

ANSWER

Robert Bork was appointed Solicitor General by Richard "I am not a crook" Nixon. On October 20, 1973 Solicitor General Bork was instrumental in the "*Saturday Night Massacre*", U.S. President *Richard Nixon's* firing of *Watergate Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox*, following Cox's request for tapes of his Oval Office conversations. Nixon initially ordered *U.S. Attorney General, Elliot Richardson*, to fire *Cox*. Richardson resigned rather than carry out the order. *Deputy Attorney General William Ruckelshaus* considered the order "fundamentally wrong" and also resigned, making Bork acting Attorney General. When Nixon reiterated his order, Bork complied and fired Cox. He remained acting Attorney General until the appointment of *William B. Saxbe* on December 17, 1973. Aside from his hatchet man role in the Nixon White House Bork was rejected for several of his opinions including the opinion that poll taxes (devices often used to keep poor blacks from voting in the South) were not necessarily unconstitutional. In addition, according to Bork, the *First Amendment* should protect only political speech. Bork also believed that the President has more power than the Congress and the Supreme Court. 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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