



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 23 June 29, 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.

VOTING RIGHTS NEWS

ONLINE VOTING

Washington, D.C. - DC will let overseas voters cast ballots online using open-source, standards-based software, not the closed, proprietary mechanisms that have dominated electronic voting throughout its troubled history in the United States. Open Source Digital Voting Foundation, a Palo Alto, Calif., developer of election software is providing the District's new system. Starting with September's primary election, D.C. citizens serving overseas in the military and others posted far out of town won't have to choose between voting secretly but slowly by mailing in a paper ballot or voting quickly, but with no guarantee of secrecy, by submitting a ballot by fax or e-mail. (Voters living in the District will continue to use closed-source, proprietary hardware, although the next batch of machines will generate a paper record, visible to the voter, confirming that that the machine registered the ballot accurately.) Read more here:

http://voices.washingtonpost.com/fasterforward/2010/06/dc_launches_test_of_open-sourc.html

NATIONAL POPULAR VOTING LAWS

Albany, NY - A *New York Times* editorial discusses the recent vote by the New York State Senate. The state senate has adopted, by a vote of 52 to 7, a measure requiring the state to assign all of its Electoral College delegates to the candidate who wins the national popular vote. In the Assembly, 79 of 150 members have signed on to the bill, but it remains stuck in committee. The Assembly speaker, Sheldon Silver, should bring it to the floor this week and press all members to vote for it. The Times editorial

urges the NY Assembly to pass the measure. Read the editorial here:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/22/opinion/22tue4.html?ref=opinion>

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

What year did Congress first make the Fourth of July a federal holiday?

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

The legal separation of the American Colonies from Great Britain occurred on what day?

ANSWER

The legal separation of the American colonies from Great Britain occurred on July 2, 1776, when the Second Continental Congress voted to approve a resolution of independence that had been proposed in June by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia. 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. The lesson learned from the recount debacle in 2000 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 in 2004. 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 to assure that every citizen who showed up to vote, was able to do so.

Since then, our members have been involved in priority federal and state and local elections across the nation. DC DLC members served in volunteer and leadership capacities in support of the election of President Obama and federal, state, and local Democratic candidates in 2008 and volunteered for the 2009 off-year elections. Now, we are gearing-up to protect the vote so that we can grow our majorities in the House and Senate during the 2010 mid-term elections

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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Democratic Law Briefs, E-Mail Edition, Volume 6 Number 23

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