

DEMOCRACY DEFENDED

Key Findings From
the 2024 Elections



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This Report was prepared by Rachel Carter, DeMetris Causer, Christina Das, Alec Giufurta, Kiersten Hash, Anne Houghtaling, Dillon Jules II, Chris Kang, Jin Hee Lee, Aly Leib, Karla McKanders, Kesha Moore, PhD, Terin Patel-Wilson, Larnee Satchell, Nia Warren, Victoria Wenger, and Leah Wong. We would also like to acknowledge significant contributions to this Report by Valerie Akinyoyenu, Marianne Blackburn, Jakiyah Bradley, Bernard Fraga, PhD, Michael Greene, Reed Jaeger, Kaye Lee Johnston, Sandhya Kajeepeta, PhD, Kaisha Oliver, Lauren O’Neil, Angie Shin, and Jacquelyn Simone.

(cover image) Voters stand in line at a poll site in Washington, D.C., on November 5, 2024. Photo by Paula Bronstein/Getty Images

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from Janai S. Nelson	2
Executive Summary	5
Summary of Top Voter Suppression Issues During the 2024 Election Cycle	8
Our Approach	12
LDF’s Three Recent Supreme Court Fights for the Future of Fair Maps	18
State Reports	26
Alabama	28
Florida	34
Georgia	44
Louisiana	58
Mississippi	68
South Carolina	78
Texas	92
Conclusion	105
Voting and Elections Dictionary	106



DEMOCRACY DEFENDED

Dear Reader,

For more than eight decades, the Legal Defense Fund (LDF) has fought to secure the right of Black Americans to participate fully in our democracy. From Thurgood Marshall's victory in *Smith v. Allwright* ending all-white primaries to *Louisiana v. Callais*'s defense of fair maps for Black voters, the struggle for the franchise has always required vigilance and sustained advocacy.

The 2024 election cycle exposed a troubling escalation in coordinated efforts to undermine free and fair elections. Across the country, and particularly in the South, longstanding voter suppression strategies have been repackaged, modernized, and deployed in ways that threaten the ability of Black voters to participate equally in the democratic process. This Report documents what LDF and our partners witnessed on the ground during the 2024 election cycle through our Black Voters on the Rise (BVOTR) initiative. It offers a clear-eyed look at the barriers voters faced and the

extraordinary efforts required to ensure that ballots could be cast and counted.

We would do well not to ignore the lessons of 2024. As the nation approaches the 2026 midterm elections, the same forces seeking to erode democratic participation remain active and emboldened. They will undoubtedly draw from the same familiar playbook of voter suppression tactics. We must be prepared for what lies ahead.

We invite you to read this Report and join us in the ongoing work to ensure that every voter can participate freely, safely, and without obstruction.

United in justice,

Janai S. Nelson

Janai S. Nelson

LDF President
and Director-Counsel



**JOIN US IN THE ONGOING
WORK TO ENSURE THAT
EVERY VOTER CAN
PARTICIPATE FREELY,
SAFELY, AND WITHOUT
OBSTRUCTION.**



Black voters line up to register to vote in Selma, Alabama, in 1965. Photo by Getty Images

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Last year marked the sixtieth anniversary of the 1965 Voting Rights Act (VRA) and eighty-one years since Thurgood Marshall, the founder of the Legal Defense Fund (LDF), argued *Smith v. Allwright* before the U.S. Supreme Court to end the racially discriminatory practice of all-white primaries in Texas. Even with these significant milestones, American democracy and voting rights are in a precarious state today.

The 2024 election cycle revealed a convergence of old and new voter suppression tactics rooted in white supremacist strategies that were modernized through the use of technology, a barrage of misinformation and disinformation, and mass voter challenges. In addition, throughout 2025, LDF and its coalition partners fought against multiple attempts to redraw congressional districts outside of the decennial redistricting cycle. Such suppression tactics undermine the Fifteenth Amendment’s promise of accessing voting rights free from racially discriminatory practices and are part of a centuries-long campaign to restrict access to the ballot for Black communities.

This Report details LDF’s work during 2024 election cycle with a focus on its Black Voters on Rise (BVOTR) team, which was on the ground as election protection volunteers and advocates.

LDF is publishing this Report at a pivotal time, as the nation enters the 2026 midterm election cycle. Unfortunately, anti-democratic forces have deliberately co-opted the language of election integrity and election security not to expand voter participation, but to justify restrictions that result in fewer Black voters being able to elect candidates of their choice. In 2024, BVOTR and its coalition partners directly observed voter suppression tactics, such as restrictive voting laws, mass voter challenges, voter intimidation, disinformation, and failing election infrastructure, that produced long lines, polling place confusion, and accessibility barriers. The cumulative effect of these voter suppression tactics fell most heavily on Black voters and other marginalized communities, especially in the Deep South, where LDF has engaged in sustained, year-round advocacy to protect access

to the ballot and build Black political power. These conditions did not arise overnight: following the U.S. Supreme Court’s 2013 decision in *Shelby County v. Holder*, which dismantled critical VRA protections, states enacted a wave of anti-voter legislation that revitalized and fortified historic voter suppression tactics.

This Report documents LDF’s multidisciplinary and coalition-based voter protection activities during the 2024 election cycle. LDF, along with its coalition partners, engaged in election protection strategies across seven key Southern states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Texas. LDF’s work combined litigation, policy advocacy, election monitoring, communications, and rapid-response interventions to protect voters in real time while strengthening long-term democratic infrastructure.

The Report also situates 2024 within the broader context of past and present voter suppression tactics and highlights LDF’s advocacy as a critical foundation for Black political power in the 2024 elections. LDF’s on-the-ground advocacy must be considered in connection with its three recent Supreme Court cases challenging racially discriminatory redistricting maps, as this litigation played a key role in shaping electoral conditions and outcomes for Black voters in 2024: *Allen v. Milligan* in Alabama, *Robinson v. Callais* in Louisiana, and *Alexander v. South Carolina State Conference of the NAACP* in South Carolina.

Looking ahead, the dynamics that defined the 2024 election cycle will directly impact the 2026 midterm elections. In an interview on February 2, 2026, President Donald Trump threatened to nationalize voting processes in at least fifteen unspecified

AMERICAN DEMOCRACY AND VOTING RIGHTS ARE IN A **PRECARIOUS** **STATE** TODAY.

Supporters gather outside the U.S. Supreme Court to hear re-arguments in *Louisiana v. Callais*. Photo by LDF Staff



localities.¹ His comments came days after the Federal Bureau of Investigation seized 2020 election ballots in Fulton County, Georgia.² The U.S. Department of Justice also recently sued roughly two dozen states in an attempt to gain access to statewide voter registration rolls.³ Furthermore, after former White House Chief Strategist Steve Bannon claimed that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents would “surround the polls” during the 2026 midterm elections, the Trump administration refused to rule out the possibility while denying formal plans to place agents at polling places in November.⁴ Voter intimidation and threats to people trying to lawfully cast a ballot were clearly not left behind in 2024—rather, these challenges will continue to impact the 2026 midterm elections.

Accordingly, this Report is designed to inform Black voters of the persistence of restrictive laws, the normalization of mass voter challenges, the increase in voter intimidation tactics, and the continued erosion of election infrastructure, all of which increase the likelihood that Black voters will face heightened barriers to participation in the 2026 midterm elections. Absent meaningful and sustained intervention efforts to combat these increasingly authoritarian, anti-democratic barriers to free and fair elections, Black voters likely will sustain disproportionate harms. This Report underscores how important LDF’s election protection activities were during the 2024 election cycle and likewise will be again in 2026, requiring sustained engagement—from church basements to the halls of Congress—to uphold the rule of law and counter voter suppression.

SUMMARY OF TOP VOTER SUPPRESSION ISSUES DURING THE 2024 ELECTION CYCLE

Anti-Voter Laws

Between 2021 and 2024, nearly eighty new restrictive voting laws were enacted across the United States. This was almost double the number enacted in the preceding two presidential election cycles combined.⁵

FIGURE 1.
Number of Restrictive State-Level Voting Laws Passed Between Presidential Elections

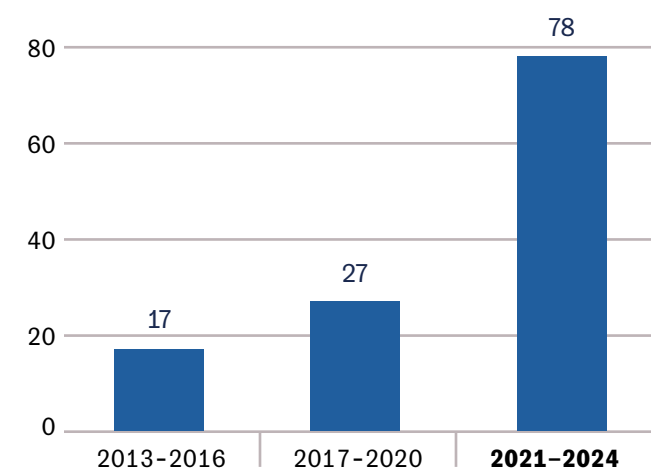


CHART: Thurgood Marshall Institute • SOURCE: Brennan Center for Justice • Created with Datawrapper

Frivolous Pre-Election Lawsuits

Anti-democracy groups argued, without reliable evidence, that significant numbers of people were voting illegally, fueling misinformation and disinformation about voter roll maintenance and xenophobia toward noncitizens, whom they claimed were voting illegally.⁶ For example:

- United Sovereign Americans used a uniform template to file lawsuits across Florida, Georgia, and Texas, alleging that voter rolls were improperly maintained.⁷
- In June 2024, the organization America First Legal sent letters pushing states to “submit requests for information to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) about an individual’s citizenship or immigration status” and encouraging them to sue if DHS failed to respond.⁸ At least fifteen states, including Florida and Texas, escalated last-minute demands to DHS to check the citizenship of voters on their state rolls.⁹

Mass Voter Challenges

Mass voter challenges occur when state or citizen actors initiate processes to challenge the voter registrations of large numbers of individuals.¹⁰ Organized challengers frequently target voters from historically disenfranchised communities to intimidate or deter them from voting.¹¹ By grouping the consideration of many challenged voters, mass challenges foreclose individualized consideration.¹² The challenges potentially remove voters from the voting rolls based on unverified, third-party information.¹³ This tactic disrupts election administration by forcing already-overworked election officials to adjudicate thousands of challenges in the lead-up to Election Day.¹⁴

In 2024, challengers began using software¹⁵ that automates the process of generating mass challenges based on disinformation and disaggregated data.¹⁶ This includes EagleAI, a list-matching database that relies exclusively on publicly available information.¹⁷ In recent years, the Election Integrity Network, a group known to push baseless narratives about voter fraud,¹⁸ has promoted EagleAI to replace the national Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC).¹⁹ Despite EagleAI’s vulnerabilities²⁰ and ERIC’s state-of-the-art data-matching technology²¹ built on widely accepted information security standards, several states and local municipalities engaged with EagleAI in the lead-up to the 2024 general election—at times flouting federal and state laws entirely.²²

Voter Intimidation and Threats

Although today’s instances of threats and intimidation may not mirror the Ku Klux Klan’s lynchings of Black voters or the murders of Black leaders in the 1960s,²³ the “mob mentality” of those opposed to Black political power nonetheless can take its own violent, threatening form. Voter intimidation and threats were pervasive throughout 2024, including bomb threats,²⁴ armed individuals harassing voters, law enforcement presence at poll sites, and the criminalization of voting.²⁵

Misinformation and Disinformation

Throughout the 2024 election cycle, misinformation (false information shared regardless of intent to mislead) and disinformation (information created to be deliberately deceptive) spread rampantly.²⁶ For example:

- In Georgia, a social media post stated: “Illegal Haitians flown into the US claim they received all necessary documents and driver’s licenses within just six months of arriving in the U.S. and are able to vote!! They show several Georgia driver’s licenses featuring the same photo and claim to have voted. . . .”²⁷
- False accusations of election fraud resulted in high attrition of election workers—including the resignation of an entire election department in Gillespie County, Texas, and widespread departures in Florida—weakening election administration capacity.²⁸

Throughout the 2024 election cycle, misinformation and disinformation spread rampantly.

Problems with Ballot Access and Delays

Across jurisdictions in the South, voters encountered a range of administrative failures and practices that impeded access to the ballot in 2024, including:

- Several instances of missing entire ballots on Election Day, which prevented hundreds of people from voting for several hours; and
- Anti-democracy groups consistently attacking absentee ballot policies due to the expansion of voting access through vote-by-mail,²⁹ including increased access for historically disenfranchised communities.³⁰

Long Lines

Voters encountered long lines in 2024, as states failed to adequately prepare for Election Day or lacked supporters encouraging voters to stay in line.³¹ Research indicates that Black and Latino voters are more likely to experience long lines at poll sites.³²

Insufficient Accessibility of Poll Sites

Voters often encountered inaccessible poll sites in 2024, even though the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other state and federal laws require voting accessibility.³³ These requirements include ensuring physical accessibility for in-person voters (e.g., polling places with safe walkways, visible doors, and signage) and creating accessible websites, social media, online forums, and other electronic communications.³⁴ Congress also passed the Help America Vote Act in 2002 to make sweeping reforms to the nation’s voting processes, including enhancing the accessibility of polling locations for voters.³⁵ Despite these protections, accessibility issues were common in 2024.



A worker at the Orange County Supervisor of Elections office processes mail-in ballots in Orlando, Florida, on October 28, 2024. Photo by Paul Hennesy/Anadolu via Getty Images



BVOTR Program Associate Nia Warren presenting the Election Protection Hotline. Photo by LDF Staff



Voters wait in line during the last day of early voting in Gwinnett County, Georgia, on November 1, 2024. Photo by Nathan Posner/Anadolu via Getty Images

Attacks on Third-Party Organizations with False Allegations of Electioneering

Recent election cycles have also seen an increase in attacks on third-party, nonprofit organizations trying to assist voters with basic, nonpartisan, election-related information.³⁶ When the election infrastructure suffers from certain administrative failures, third-party organizations can help voters get their ballots cast and counted.³⁷ However, in 2024 and in other recent elections, many poll monitors faced threats from election officials even when monitors were operating within the appropriate legal boundaries.³⁸

Post-Election Issues

Election certification—once a routine part of the democratic process when officials count the ballots cast by voters—has recently become a cornerstone of the false narrative that Americans cannot trust the nation’s voting system. In the aftermath of the 2020 election and the January 6, 2021, insurrection, threats to the election certification process have escalated, with an increasing focus on county-level certification. Since 2020, the group Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington has identified at least thirty-five rogue election officials across the country who refused to certify clear election results, as well as at least eight states where county officials unlawfully refused to certify elections.³⁹

Ahead of 2024, anti-democracy activists aimed to sow as much distrust in the certification process as possible—from running for office to trying to pass last-minute rules that would restrict the speed of tabulating results. The certification process has become so controversial that election denial groups connected with the Election Integrity Network, including election officials from at least five counties, were preparing to question the election results before a single vote had been cast in the 2024 elections.⁴⁰

OUR APPROACH

Black Voters on the Rise

Recognizing that public education and voter engagement are key tools to enable voters to successfully cast their ballots, LDF began the Prepared to Vote (PTV) voter education and mobilization initiative almost twenty years ago.⁴¹ More recently, in late 2019, LDF launched the Voting Rights Defender (VRD) project to complement its PTV activities.⁴² VRD enhanced LDF’s voter protection work by providing increased volunteer poll monitor recruitment and trainings, expanding the locations in which LDF had monitors available to assist voters in real time during elections, extending advocacy to a year-round effort to identify and solve election management issues ahead of primary and general elections, and creating a robust post-election response to problems and concerns identified by monitors.⁴³

In 2024, LDF adapted to an ever-changing landscape by expanding its team and rebranding the PTV/VRD projects as Black Voters on the Rise (BVOTR). BVOTR focuses on seven core states for its advocacy, monitoring, and voter engagement programs: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Texas. LDF has deep ties to each of these states, which have large numbers of Black voters and continue to enact policies that adversely impact Black voters.

The 2024 election season, from states’ presidential primaries in early March to Election Day on November 5, marked LDF’s most comprehensive election protection operation to date. While the mission of BVOTR was simple—to protect and promote Black voters’ access to the political process—the approach was complex and thorough. To optimize BVOTR’s extensive staff



Black Voters on the Rise staff. Photo by LDF Staff



Voter education materials distributed by Black Voters on the Rise. Photo by LDF Staff



LDF staff march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, in March 2024 during the annual Selma Jubilee commemorating the anniversary of Bloody Sunday. Photo by Roberto Hernandez for LDF

and organizational resources, teams connected with local, state, and national partners to identify critical threats to voting rights, from mass voter challenges and gerrymandering to misinformation and intimidation. From there, BVOTR employed a variety of advocacy and community engagement tactics to combat these threats and identify solutions. Some of these activities included advocacy letters to election officials, meetings with local and state leaders, and, when necessary, referrals to LDF’s Litigation Department to take legal action.

BVOTR was on the ground in all seven states for primaries, early voting, and Election Day. During this entire period, BVOTR tapped into its vast partnership networks to recruit volunteers in each priority state to serve alongside staff as nonpartisan poll monitors. The monitors were trained to identify and mitigate instances of inaccessibility, suppression, or intimidation at polling locations,

particularly in priority counties with large Black, voting-age populations. BVOTR also collaborated with local, state, and national partners on nonpartisan voter education and mobilization. Meanwhile, LDF partnered with the nonpartisan initiative Power the Polls to help educate and recruit new poll workers.⁴⁴

Throughout 2024, BVOTR enhanced its use of technology, including an expansion of its voting rights microsite. BVOTR also used database platforms to facilitate the collection and analysis of incoming data to better triage responsive actions, and coordinated a remote monitoring program that included active monitoring of social media.

Thanks to the dedication and resilience of the BVOTR team and broader network, LDF successfully coordinated an effective, streamlined, and multifaceted election protection operation in 2024.

Partnerships

Building on LDF’s work during past federal, state, and local elections, BVOTR collaborated with more than 200 state and local partners in the focus states.

LDF is also a founding partner of the Election Protection Coalition, which includes dozens of national, state, and local partners.⁴⁵ LDF worked with other civil rights organizations to launch the nonpartisan Election Protection network and the 866-OUR-VOTE hotline, following the 2000 elections. The Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law currently administers the national election hotline, which is staffed by partner organizations and volunteer attorneys from around the country. Other Election Protection partner organizations, such as the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund and Asian Americans Advancing Justice (AAJC), oversee national election hotlines in languages other than English.

In addition, BVOTR expanded its work in 2024 by partnering closely with Delta Sigma Theta, which invited BVOTR to participate in their regional conferences around the country. Members of the sorority were invaluable additions to BVOTR’s volunteer poll monitoring program. Other members of the Divine Nine⁴⁶ also joined BVOTR in national training events, and its state and local chapters partnered with BVOTR throughout the focus states.

BVOTR’s advocacy efforts were further aided by lawyers participating in its Lawyers for Justice training program, with assistance from the American Bar Association’s Perfecting Democracy initiative, the National Bar Association, and Delta Sigma Theta. BVOTR also partnered with the Young Black Lawyers’ Organizing Coalition (YBLOC) to enlist young lawyers and law students to participate in on-the-ground election monitoring.

Nonpartisan Voter Outreach and Get Out the Vote

Engagement with Colleges and Universities

Partnering with The Team, a nonpartisan nonprofit that mobilizes college athletes, coaches, and athletic departments to advance civic participation,⁴⁷ LDF’s Communications Department and BVOTR spearheaded a digital ad campaign to inform targeted demographic groups about voting in the focus states. The Team and LDF engaged student athletes to create content specific to their state in order to effectively reach young voters, utilizing Name, Image, and Likeness platforms created under new rules from the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) that allow student athletes to benefit from their brand. These posts reached millions of follower accounts and garnered millions of views on social media. LDF’s Communications team also partnered with influencers to lift up LDF’s voting-related content, including countdown videos created by LDF President and Director-Counsel Janai Nelson. These campaigns reached tens of millions of social media users.

LDF also co-hosted civic engagement watch parties with The Team at campuses throughout the country. The first event, on October 8, 2024, included celebrities such as WNBA stars Natasha Cloud and Nneka Ogwumike and NCAA President Charlie Baker. This hybrid event was attended in person by 7,000 individuals, who enjoyed more than 1,000 pizzas delivered by Pizza to the Polls. The next event, on October 21, 2024, was co-hosted by The Team, LDF, and Social Change Fund United (SCFU) and included SCFU co-founder Carmelo Anthony, reaching another 1,000 student athletes at historically Black colleges and universities. To further enhance young voter outreach, BVOTR created a “Student Voting Road Map” to walk students through their options to vote.⁴⁸

Collaborations
with more than
200
state and local
partners in the
focus states

Voter Outreach and Live Events

In addition to national messaging and events, BVOTR hosted hundreds of live events in the focus states that reached tens of thousands of voters. BVOTR conducted further outreach by mailing state-specific voter information to 1.3 million Black voter households in these priority states ahead of Election Day. BVOTR also sent SMS messages to voters, including to over 77,000 Black voters in Alabama's newly constituted Congressional District Two ahead of the March primary and April run-off elections. BVOTR then utilized text messaging to alert voters in states like Mississippi about incorrect polling location information on the state's look-up tool, providing these voters with the correct location of their polling place.



BVOTR sent nonpartisan voting information SMS messages to 77,000+ Black voters in Alabama's Congressional District Two

Pre-Election, Nonpartisan, Remote Monitoring

BVOTR's pre-election advocacy, which has operated continuously since 2020, successfully identified and resolved a number of potential barriers facing Black voters. The BVOTR team engaged in remote election monitoring from the primaries through the general elections with the support of law firms, including Cooley LLP. BVOTR trained staff from the firms to remotely monitor traditional and social media sources to identify election-related concerns, such as misinformation, disinformation, voter intimidation activity, and voter suppression tactics in the target states. Volunteers were trained to report and correct misinformation and disinformation on social media platforms. They served as critical eyes in counties and parishes throughout the country, including in local election board meetings, and helped flag problems for the BVOTR team to address.

The BVOTR team spent considerable time before the elections advocating for, and educating voters about, early voting locations, vote-by-mail best practices (such as using ballots with Intelligent Mail Barcodes), and tracking and curing ballots. Utilizing data and volunteer reports from past elections, BVOTR also advocated with local election officials to ensure accessibility for voters with disabilities. Furthermore, BVOTR helped reverse improper changes to voting rules and continued its advocacy in several jurisdictions to provide jail-based polling locations so that people who were detained but eligible to vote could cast their ballots.



Nonpartisan election volunteers. Photo by LDF Staff

LDF on the Ground

Nonpartisan Poll Monitors: LDF's partnerships with Delta Sigma Theta, the Poor People's Campaign, and state and local organizations were essential to recruiting more than 1,700 nonpartisan, volunteer poll monitors in the target states. These volunteers, trained in state-specific voting rules and provisions, were able to assist registered voters during early voting and on Election Day. Volunteers used BVOTR's web-based reporting tool to upload more than 5,000 reports into the database, allowing real-time tracking of voting problems and their quick resolution.

Poll Worker Recruitment: In 2020, LDF helped recruit more than 42,000 people to become poll workers. Many of those who worked during the elections in 2020 and 2022 also served as poll workers in 2024.⁴⁹ LDF continued its partnership with Power the Polls to recruit these vital poll workers, particularly in jurisdictions with urgent needs, and recruited 787 poll workers in 2024.

Election Day Advocacy: More than sixty-five LDF staff participated in Election Day, voter education, and election protection activities in the seven focus states. They directly responded to thousands of issues on Election Day, and they uploaded reports of voter intimidation during early voting and on Election Day.

LDF Online

Throughout 2024, LDF continued to use technology to enhance program efficiencies. For example, BVOTR directed voters to [LDF.vote](https://ldf.vote), building on the comprehensive, multi-feature, voting rights microsite that was launched in 2020 as the central reference for LDF's voting rights work (voting.naacpldf.org). The team then partnered with Vote.org to monitor actions taken through LDF.vote and its state pages. In 2024, more than 9,000 potential voters took over 16,000 actions through the website, such as verifying their registration, registering to vote, checking what was on their ballot, or requesting an absentee ballot. BVOTR helped more than 1,300 U.S. citizens register to vote, including nearly 1,200 people in the seven focus states.

BVOTR also utilized several software vendors to create branded, technological tools that enabled the team to conduct unprecedented levels of data collection, processing, and analysis in real time. These tools allowed BVOTR to communicate and coordinate with volunteers, as well as national, state, and local partners.

→ voting.naacpldf.org



LDF'S THREE RECENT SUPREME COURT FIGHTS FOR THE FUTURE OF FAIR MAPS

LDF's recent congressional redistricting cases in Alabama, Louisiana, and South Carolina had tangible impacts on voting patterns and Black political power in the 2024 elections, while also playing a direct role in framing the future of redistricting processes and efforts to ensure fair maps nationwide.

1

Alabama: *Allen v. Milligan* and the Fight for the Future of Section 2 of the VRA

In November 2021, the Alabama Legislature passed a new congressional map that included only one majority-Black district among the state's seven congressional districts. At the same time, census data revealed that the state's white majority had declined in the prior decade, while the Black population increased.⁵⁰ Moreover, much of that increase in the Black population was centered in the state's historic Black Belt region,⁵¹ where Black voters reasonably could be configured into an additional compact, majority-Black district.⁵² LDF, along with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the ACLU of Alabama, and the law firms Wiggins, Childs, Pantazis, Fisher, & Goldfarb, LLC and Hogan Lovells, filed a lawsuit under the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and Section 2 of the VRA on behalf of individual Black voters Evan Milligan, Khadidah Stone, Letetia Jackson, and Shalela Dowdy, as well as Greater Birmingham Ministries and the Alabama State



Remedial Map Three proposed by court-appointed special master Richard Allen.



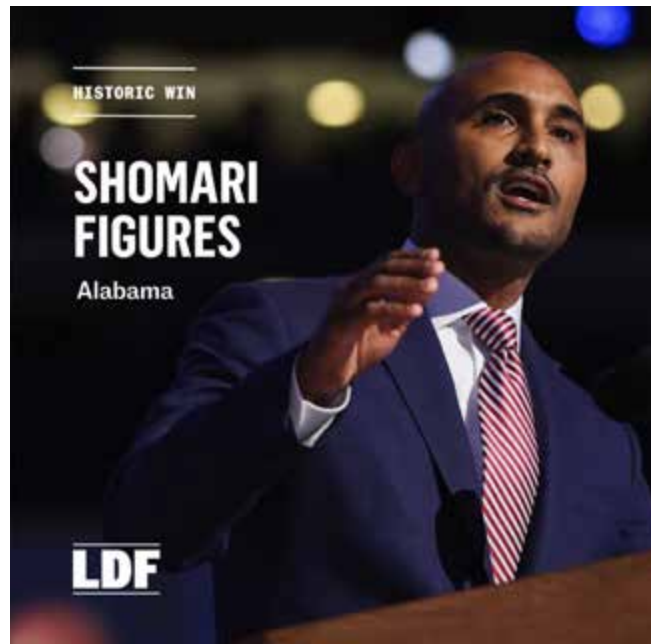
Allen v. Milligan plaintiffs stand with U.S. Rep. Terri Sewell (fourth from left) and LDF President and Director-Counsel Janai Nelson (fifth from left) outside the U.S. Supreme Court. Photo by Allison Shelley for LDF

Conference of the NAACP.⁵³ The complaint alleged that Alabama unlawfully diluted the voting power of Black voters by enacting a map with only one district where Black voters could elect a candidate of their choice, in violation of the VRA, and intentionally discriminated against Black voters by sorting them by race, in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment.

In January 2022, a unanimous three-judge panel of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Alabama struck down Alabama's map and ordered the Alabama Legislature to draw a new congressional map that complied with the VRA by including two districts where Black voters would have an opportunity to elect candidates of their choice.⁵⁴ Alabama appealed the ruling, and the U.S. Supreme Court granted a motion, blocking enforcement of the preliminary injunction and

allowing the enacted map to remain in effect for the 2022 federal elections.⁵⁵

The U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments on October 4, 2022, and issued a historic decision on June 8, 2023, upholding the protections of Section 2 and requiring Alabama to enact a new map.⁵⁶ The Alabama Legislature, however, refused to create a map with two Black opportunity districts and instead passed a map that again failed to comply with the VRA, thus forfeiting the final selection of a lawful map to the District Court.⁵⁷ On October 5, 2023, the federal District Court panel approved a new map with two Black opportunity districts.⁵⁸ As a result, the 2024 elections proceeded under a map that finally reflected the promise of the VRA and included two districts where Black voters had hope of fair representation.



U.S. Rep. Shomari Figures, elected to represent the new Black opportunity district in Alabama.

That hope was realized in the 2024 election cycle. In November 2024, Shomari Figures was elected to serve as the U.S. Representative for Alabama’s Second Congressional District, joining Rep. Terri Sewell of Alabama’s Seventh Congressional District to make history as the first two Black members of Congress to represent Alabama simultaneously.⁵⁹

The future of Alabama’s congressional map continues to be litigated. The preliminary findings that advanced to the U.S. Supreme Court in *Allen v. Milligan* were tested in a full trial in February 2025. On May 8, 2025, the District Court ruled that the Alabama Legislature’s 2023 map violated both Section 2 of the VRA and the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. On June 6, 2025, Alabama appealed the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court.⁶⁰ Regardless of the ultimate litigation results, the outcome of the 2024 elections cannot be undone, as voters in Alabama were able to exercise their right to vote and elect a candidate of their choice.

2 Louisiana: *Robinson v. Callais* and Advances in Black Voter Participation and Representation

The 2020 census revealed that the number of Black people in Louisiana had risen to roughly one-third of the state’s population.⁶¹ Upon analyzing the census data and the concentration of populations across the state, LDF confirmed multiple ways for Louisiana to enact a new map that included two geographically compact, majority-Black congressional districts, out of Louisiana’s six total districts. These two districts would be an increase from the single district with a majority of Black voters that had elected candidates of their choice in recent decades.⁶²

During the special legislative session on redistricting, an interdisciplinary group of LDF staff—across the Policy, Litigation, and BVOTR teams—joined partner organizations and hundreds of Louisianians to testify in support of a fair map. Despite the overwhelming choir of community voices urging lawmakers to pass a map that reflected Louisiana’s diverse population and fairly represented Black Louisianians, the Louisiana Legislature ultimately passed a congressional map with only one majority-Black district out of six total.

LDF and its partners quickly pivoted to demand that Governor John Bel Edwards veto the map, which he did on March 9, 2022.⁶³ However, in a move unprecedented in recent decades, the Louisiana Legislature reconvened to override the governor’s veto with a supermajority of votes, ensuring passage of the map.⁶⁴

Immediately, LDF and other legal organizations, such as the ACLU and its Louisiana affiliate, filed a lawsuit under Section 2 of the VRA,



LDF Attorney Victoria Wenger testifies before the Louisiana Legislature. Photo courtesy of Power Coalition for Equity and Justice



Robinson v. Callais plaintiffs. Photo by LDF Staff

Robinson v. Ardoin, on behalf of the Power Coalition for Equity and Justice, the Louisiana State Conference of the NAACP, and individual voters Dr. Press Robinson, Edgar Cage, Dr. Dorothy Nairne, Bishop Edwin René Soulé, Dr. Alice Washington, Rev. Clee Earnest Lowe, Davante Lewis, Martha Davis, and Ambrose Sims.⁶⁵

Although LDF won a preliminary injunction in spring 2022⁶⁶ and successfully defended that decision at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit,⁶⁷ the U.S. Supreme Court suspended proceedings in the case pending the outcome of *Allen v. Milligan* in Alabama.⁶⁸ This allowed Louisiana to use a map with only one majority-Black district during the 2022 congressional elections.

The Supreme Court lifted its stay after its *Allen v. Milligan* decision in 2023. The Fifth Circuit then affirmed that the Louisiana Legislature likely violated the VRA and gave the state until the end of January 2024 to enact a map that complied with the VRA on legislators’ own terms.⁶⁹ LDF and its partners were soon on the ground again in support of a fair map, emphasizing the importance of the federal courts’ findings and compliance with Section 2 of the VRA.

On January 19, 2024, the Louisiana Legislature finally passed a map that included a second majority-Black district, and newly elected Governor Jeff Landry signed it into law on January 22, 2024.⁷⁰ However, unlike the maps proposed by the *Robinson* plaintiffs, the enacted map did not create a compact majority-Black district; instead, legislators cited political priorities—namely, protecting the political futures of favored incumbents—in choosing its map.⁷¹

Shortly after the new map became law, a group of self-described “non-African American voters” filed *Callais v. Landry* to challenge the new majority-Black district as an unconstitutional racial

gerrymander.⁷² The *Robinson* litigants quickly intervened to defend the rights of Black voters to have a fair and representative map in 2024.⁷³ After a rushed, three-day trial, a divided panel of three federal judges overturned the enacted map.⁷⁴ The majority held that legislators improperly prioritized race when creating the map, which also was not narrowly tailored to comply with the VRA.⁷⁵

LDF filed an emergency appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court to ensure that the map could go into effect for the 2024 elections.⁷⁶ On May 15, 2024, the U.S. Supreme Court granted an emergency stay,⁷⁷ and Louisiana voters were able to cast their ballots in 2024 under the new map with two majority-Black districts. LDF and its partners then immediately pivoted to a voter education and mobilization campaign across the new districts. LDF created educational materials for mail and direct distribution, reaching tens of thousands of voters across the Sixth Congressional District. Of the multiple candidates who sought to represent this new opportunity district, Cleo Fields, who also



U.S. Rep. Cleo Fields, elected to represent the new majority-Black district in Louisiana.

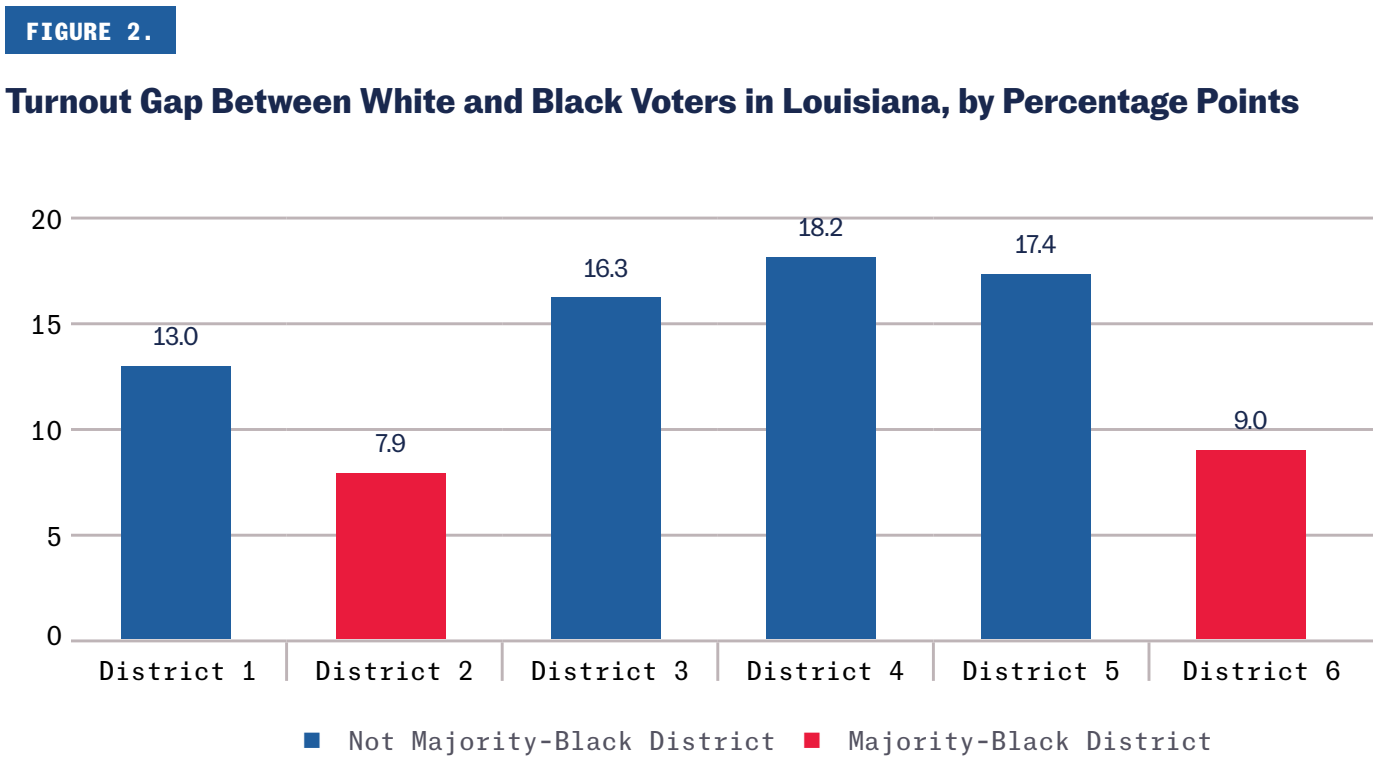


CHART: Legal Defense Fund Thurgood Marshall Institute • **SOURCE:** Legal Defense Fund • Created with Datawrapper

was elected by a majority of the district’s Black voters, ultimately prevailed.⁷⁸ This meant that, for the first time since the 1990s, two Black members of Congress would represent Louisiana simultaneously: Fields and U.S. Rep. Troy Carter of the Second Congressional District.

According to election returns, these opportunity districts had a noticeable impact on Black political participation in 2024. The relative percentage of Black voter turnout, as calculated by dividing the

number of Black people who voted in the general election by the number of Black U.S. citizens ages eighteen or older in the district,ⁱ was higher in each of the two majority-Black districts than in the four majority-white districts.ⁱⁱ Furthermore, the voter turnout gap (the difference in the turnout rate between white and non-white voters⁷⁹) was notably smallest in the districts where Black voters felt they had a real opportunity to elect the candidate of their choice.

i Throughout this Report, voter turnout is presented as the percentage of the citizen voting-age population, rather than the percentage of registered voters, who participated in an election. This is because some state laws make voter registration a costly, time-consuming, and difficult process—especially for low-income voters and voters of color. Since registration is one of the most significant barriers to voting, this Report’s measure of voter turnout, utilizing the citizen voting-age population, is a more accurate reflection of civic participation and is more sensitive to voter suppression tactics. For more information, see https://fairvote.org/voter_turnout_behind_the_numbers/.

ii These calculations are based on data derived from the voter file and the U.S. Census Bureau (mostly from the Redistricting Data Hub), which are not subject to over-reporting, sampling issues, or other problems associated with survey or exit poll data.

The question remains whether these tangible advances in Black voter participation and representation will carry over to future elections in Louisiana. On November 4, 2024, the U.S. Supreme Court noted probable jurisdiction and consolidated the appeals filed by Louisiana and the *Robinson* intervenors (*Louisiana v. Callais* and *Robinson v. Callais*, respectively). The Court heard oral arguments on March 24, 2025, but did not issue a decision during the 2024-2025 term.⁸⁰ Re-argument before the Supreme Court took place on October 15, 2025, with LDF's President and Director-Counsel Janai Nelson arguing on behalf of the appellees to persuade the Court to affirm Louisiana's new map.⁸¹ Unfortunately, on April 29, 2026, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down Louisiana's congressional map and issued a ruling that eviscerates Section 2 of the VRA and opens the door for states to enact discriminatory maps with impunity.

THE QUESTION REMAINS WHETHER THESE TANGIBLE ADVANCES IN BLACK VOTER PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION WILL CARRY OVER TO FUTURE ELECTIONS IN LOUISIANA.

3

South Carolina: *Alexander v. South Carolina State Conference of the NAACP* and Shifting Standards for Racial Gerrymandering Claims

As South Carolina began its redistricting process in 2021, LDF sent letters to the South Carolina Senate Judiciary Committee and House Redistricting Committee to remind them of their duty to comply with federal law when enacting new district maps, including congressional district maps.⁸² By the end of the map-drawing process, state legislators had failed to comply with federal law. In response, LDF, along with co-counsel at the ACLU, the ACLU of South Carolina, and Boroughs Bryant LLC, filed a federal lawsuit in December 2021, challenging South Carolina's congressional map on behalf of the South Carolina State Conference of the NAACP and an individual Black voter, Taiwan Scott.⁸³ The suit claimed that South Carolina's First, Second, and Fifth Congressional Districts were racially gerrymandered in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and were designed with an intent to dilute Black voting power in violation of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments.⁸⁴

After an eight-day trial, in January 2023, a unanimous panel of federal judges found that the First Congressional District was an unconstitutional racial gerrymander and designed with the purpose of minimizing Black political power.⁸⁵ In May 2023, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear the case, then titled *Alexander v. South Carolina State Conference of the NAACP*, and oral arguments were presented on October 11, 2023.⁸⁶



LDF Senior Counsel Leah Aden (right), who argued *Alexander v. South Carolina State Conference of the NAACP* before the Supreme Court, stands with plaintiff Taiwan Scott (front center). Photo by Allison Shelley for LDF

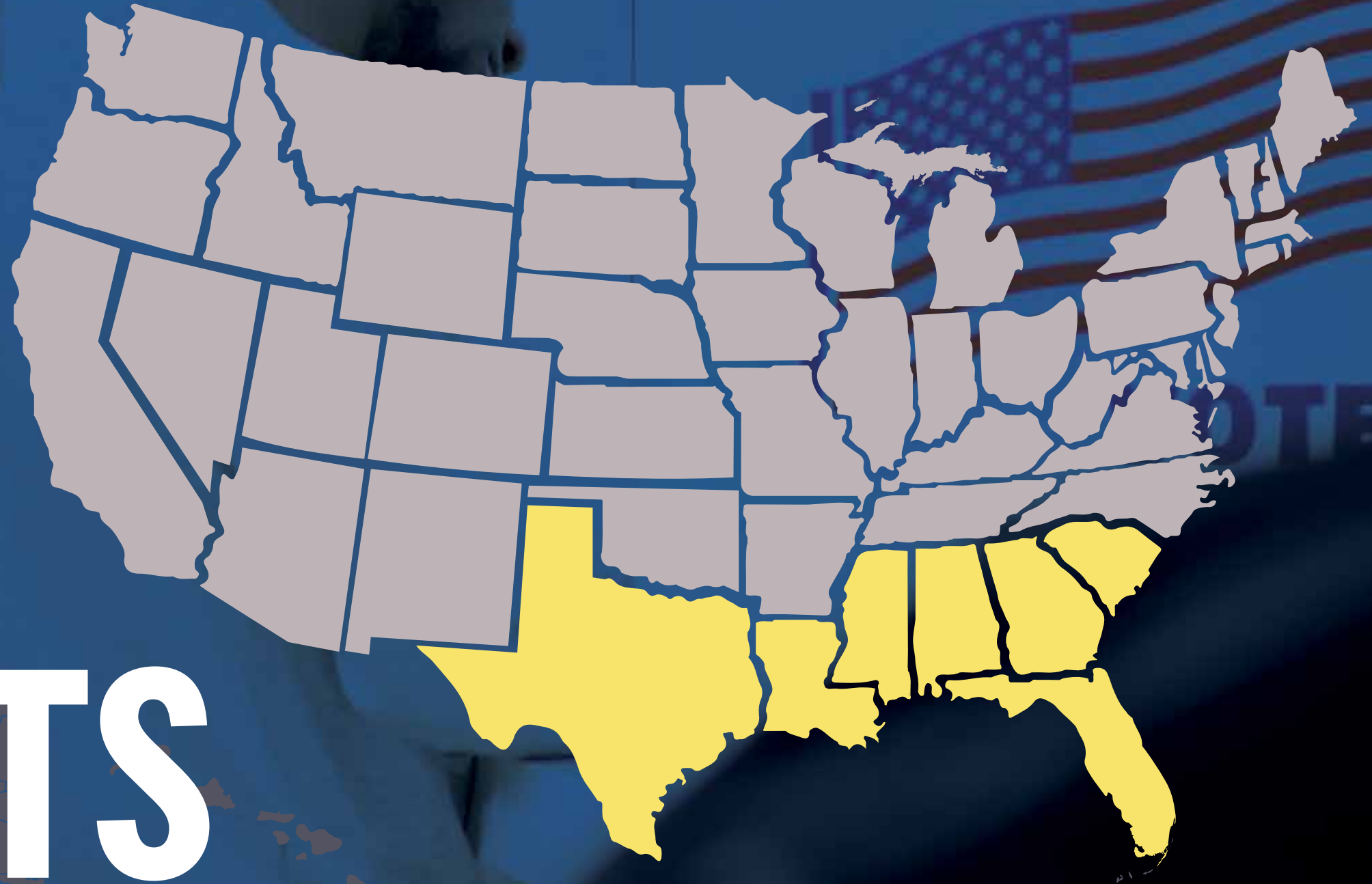
On May 23, 2024, the Supreme Court reversed the District Court's unanimous finding that the First Congressional District was racially gerrymandered and rejected the historical deference given to a trial court's factual findings, adding to the already difficult evidentiary burden that plaintiffs must demonstrate to prove racial gerrymandering claims.⁸⁷

Black residents in South Carolina and civil rights organizations have tirelessly advocated for fair congressional maps. Although the Supreme Court's decision presents a hurdle for voting rights under the VRA, LDF and its partners remain committed to fair representation and voting rights protections in South Carolina, to ensure that the voices of all citizens are heard and respected.

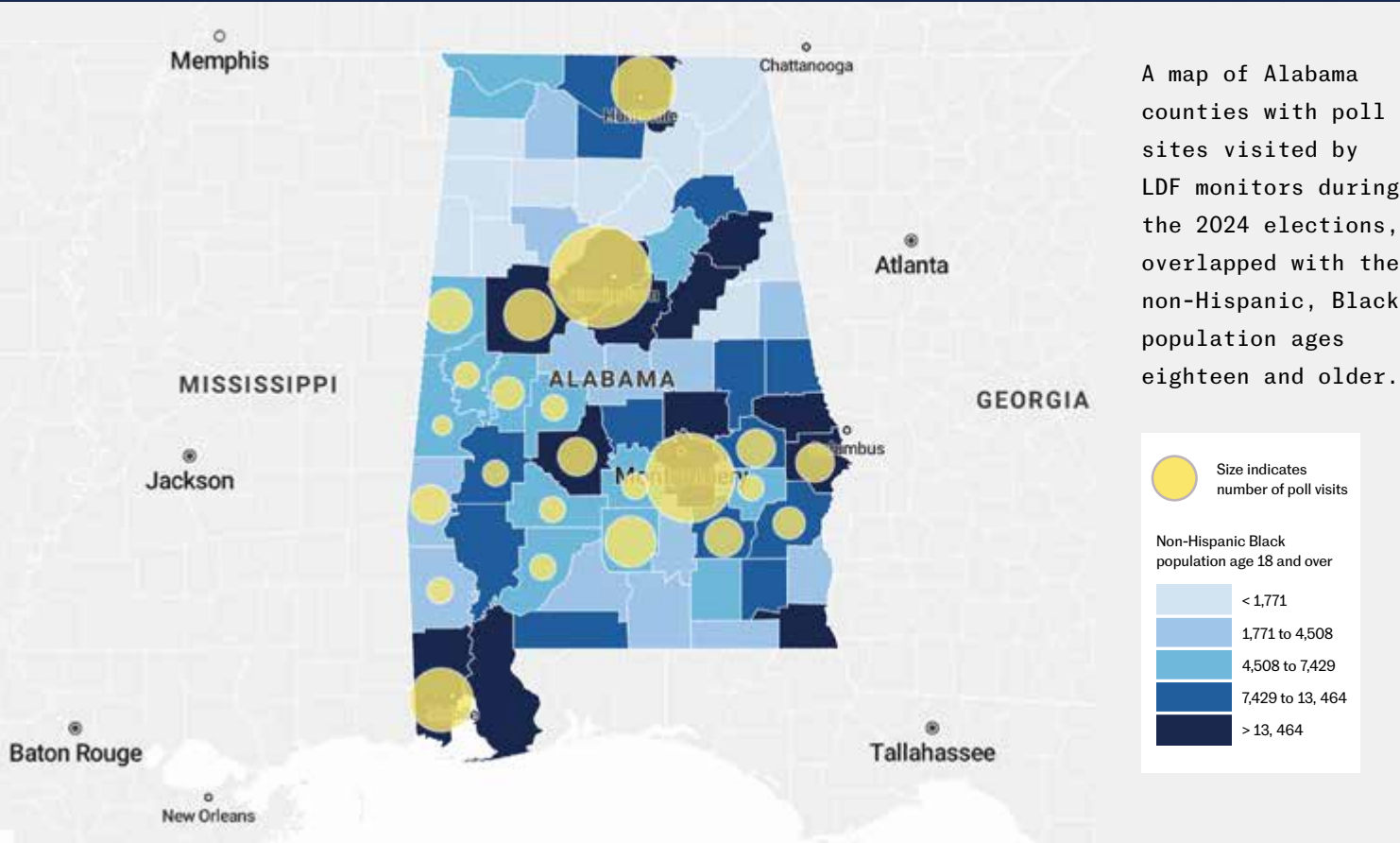
This section provides reports on the states that LDF targeted for the 2024 election season.

- Alabama
- Florida
- Georgia
- Louisiana
- Mississippi
- South Carolina
- Texas

STATE REPORTS



ALABAMA



A map of Alabama counties with poll sites visited by LDF monitors during the 2024 elections, overlapped with the non-Hispanic, Black population ages eighteen and older.

LDF ON THE GROUND

10

LDF staff members

13

volunteer trainings

119

volunteers

462

poll sites
monitored across
26 counties

5

organizations working in coalition:
LDF, ACLU of Alabama, the League of
Women Voters of Alabama, Rollin to
the Polls, and the Southern Poverty
Law Center

Declining Voter Turnout and Growing Racial Turnout Disparity

According to the Alabama Secretary of State, 3,861,929 Alabamians were registered to vote in the 2024 general election, and 2,272,911 people cast a ballot.⁸⁸ Thus, fifty-nine percent of all registered voters in Alabama voted in the 2024 general election.⁸⁹

The suppression of Black political power is evident in the lower Black voter turnout in Alabama. U.S. Census Bureau data show that nearly sixty-two percent of white non-Hispanic voters in Alabama cast a ballot in the 2024 general election, compared to fifty-one percent of Black voters.⁹⁰ This racial turnout gap of 10.6 percentage points is Alabama's highest disparity in at least sixteen years.⁹¹ By comparison, in 2020, it was 7.8 percentage points.⁹² This turnout gap mirrors the racial disparities that plagued voter registration rates in Alabama: seventy percent of white non-Hispanic people in Alabama registered to vote in 2024, compared to sixty-seven percent of Black people.⁹³

As a result of the racial gap in both voter registration and turnout, fifty-one percent of the eligible Black voting-age population in Alabama cast a ballot, compared to sixty-five percent of their white non-Hispanic counterparts. Thus, inequitable structural barriers continue to affect Black voters in Alabama, as demonstrated by the drop in Black voter turnout from fifty-eight percent in the 2020 election to fifty-one percent in 2024.⁹⁴

51%

of the eligible Black voting-age
population in Alabama cast a ballot

LDF Nonpartisan Voter Outreach and Get Out the Vote

Impact by the numbers:

- LDF **SENT 202,323 INDIVIDUAL MAILERS** to Black voters in Alabama's newly created Second Congressional District.
- LDF **SENT 808,223 TEXT MESSAGES** to Black Alabama voters about the April run-off election in the Second Congressional District and also did a specific voter education mailing in the same district ahead of Election Day in November.
- The monitors **MADE 758 REPORTS FROM THE FIELD** that alerted staff in the local command center to problems with poll site conditions and election administration. This was the highest number of poll monitor reports that LDF has ever received from Alabama monitors.

Identifying and Addressing Barriers to Voting

LDF observed barriers to voting:

- Voter intimidation and threats
- Problems with ballot access and delays
- Long lines, exacerbated by lack of early voting
- Insufficient accessibility of poll sites

BARRIERS TO VOTING

VOTER INTIMIDATION AND THREATS

In 2024, LDF monitors observed voter intimidation in Alabama by both public and private individuals. Throughout Election Day, the monitors submitted eleven reports of voter intimidation.

In a predominantly Black neighborhood in Birmingham, local police set up a checkpoint just outside the Faith Chapel Christian Center poll site an hour before voting closed.⁹⁵ Several voters informed LDF’s field volunteers that police stopped them on their way to vote. This checkpoint naturally increased the travel time for voters in the last hour before polls closed. LDF and its coalition partners worked quickly to shut down the checkpoint.

There were also problems with poll site locations. Generally, a county’s governing body (such as a county commission) designates poll sites.⁹⁶ In Tuscaloosa County, the governing body decided to place a poll site at the Sheriff’s Office Firing Range.⁹⁷ During voting hours, large groups of police officers were actively shooting in tactical gear. A county probate judge assured LDF that shooting would be paused after LDF requested that police stop shooting during voting hours.

Other instances involved private individuals engaging in voter intimidation. At the Minor Fire Station poll site in Birmingham, a resident of a neighboring home stood in his front yard with what appeared to be a large gun. At this same site, another man blared loud music while waving a flag in support of Trump and holding homemade signs styling then-President Joe Biden as a shooting target. LDF reported these issues to the Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office, which sent an officer to the site.



Election-related signage at an Alabama poll site. Photo by LDF Staff

Anti-Voter Law: Senate Bill 1’s Weaponization of Claims of Voter Fraud and Ballot Harvesting

Following record-high turnout in the 2020 election, the highest since 1988, the Alabama Legislature moved to further limit voting access.⁹⁸ Legislators placed burdensome restrictions on the absentee ballot process⁹⁹ and passed Senate Bill 1 during the 2024 session.¹⁰⁰ S.B. 1 weaponizes claims of voter fraud and “ballot harvesting” to target civil rights organizations and makes voting more difficult for voters who need assistance—despite minimal evidence of fraud.¹⁰¹ Third-party ballot collection,

called “ballot harvesting” by its opponents, allows voters to designate a trusted individual to return their absentee ballot or application.¹⁰² Civic engagement organizations seeking to increase voter turnout often assist voters by collecting and delivering applications and ballots on their behalf. Alabama already had one of the strictest absentee voting laws in the country and made absentee voting available only for a limited category of voters,¹⁰³ but S.B. 1 went even further to restrict assistance to would-be absentee voters.

On April 4, 2024, the Alabama State Conference of the NAACP, the League of Women Voters of Alabama, Greater Birmingham Ministries, and the Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program (ADAP) challenged S.B. 1 and its criminalization of most forms of voter assistance for absentee ballot applications.¹⁰⁴ Represented by LDF, the ACLU of

Alabama, the Campaign Legal Center, the Southern Poverty Law Center, and ADAP, the plaintiffs brought challenges under the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, the Help America Vote Act, and Section 208 of the VRA.¹⁰⁵ On September 24, 2024, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Alabama ruled that S.B. 1’s restrictions likely violated key protections of the VRA and issued a preliminary injunction, preventing the enforcement of criminal sanctions against voters who are blind, who have disabilities, or who have low literacy and the individuals they choose to assist them.¹⁰⁶ Alabama appealed this ruling, but on December 15, 2025, a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit upheld the injunction, issuing several questions to the Alabama State Supreme Court that would clarify the scope of the law.¹⁰⁷

PROBLEMS WITH BALLOT ACCESS AND DELAYS

LDF’s volunteer monitors in Alabama reported that numerous poll sites serving predominantly Black voters had serious machine malfunctions and/or understaffing that added to delays and voter confusion. On Election Day, LDF’s volunteers submitted 101 reports of poll site mismanagement in Alabama. LDF and its partners worked diligently to mitigate the impacts of election mismanagement in St. Clair County, where 28,000 incorrect ballots were supplied to poll sites even though they were missing a vote field on a local amendment.¹⁰⁸ Poll sites in St. Clair County also ran low on ballots by the afternoon, even as election officials tried to print more. LDF received reports from field volunteers that voters waited for as long as two hours during the afternoon.

101

reports of poll site mismanagement in Alabama on Election Day

LONG LINES

Alabama has no early voting,¹¹⁰ and absentee voting is by excuse only (i.e., absentee ballots are only provided to voters attesting that they qualify under one of several listed reasons).¹¹¹ Alabama also has some of the shortest Election Day voting hours in the nation: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.¹¹² These constraints disproportionately harm Alabamians with limited financial resources and workplace flexibility. For example, voters with day jobs have only a few

hours in the early morning or at dusk to vote. Combined with Alabama’s failure to have designated election officials administering elections at the county level, it is unsurprising that long lines were common throughout the state. In Birmingham and Montgomery, LDF’s poll monitors reported multiple instances of long lines that caused voting delays of up to ninety minutes.



Joyce Vance, the former U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Alabama, posted a photo on social media of lines that she said contributed to a two-hour wait time at around 3 p.m., noting that she personally waited 1.25 hours to vote at 7 a.m.¹⁰⁹

INSUFFICIENT ACCESSIBILITY OF POLL SITES

LDF’s field volunteers reported 420 problems with the design and physical features of poll sites that impeded accessibility, most prominently in Alabama’s Black Belt. Problems included improper signage, inaccessible or unmarked parking, gravel parking lots or pedestrian pathways, and poll site entrances that were obstructed or lacked a ramp. LDF staff contacted several probate judges,

requesting temporary modifications at the voting locations with those accessibility issues. In some cases, LDF’s advocacy on Election Day was a success. For instance, in response to requests in Hale County, Probate Judge Arthur Crawford added missing accessibility signs, indicating where people could find accessible parking at a poll site.

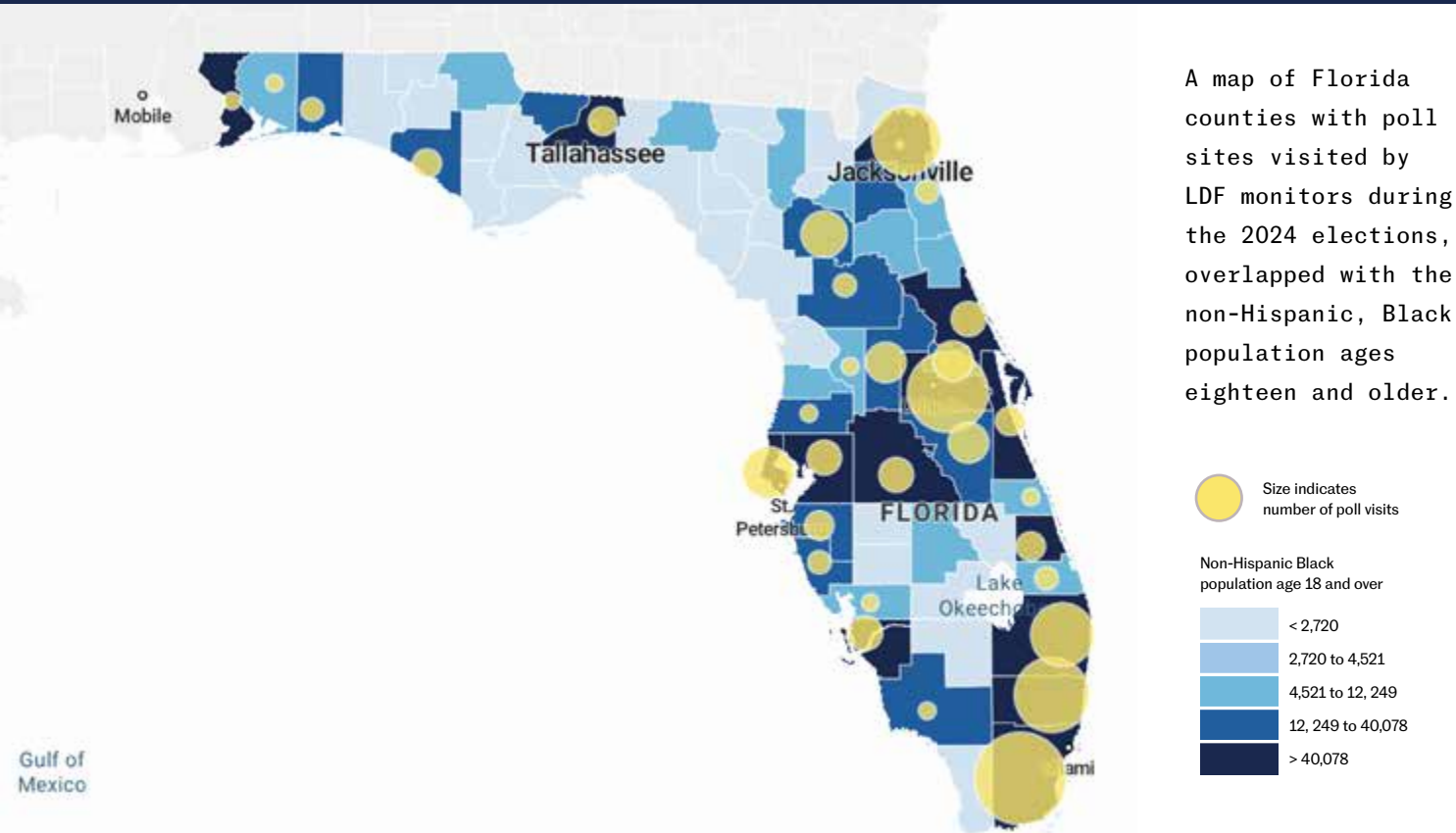
420

problems with the design and physical features of poll sites that impeded accessibility, most prominently in Alabama’s Black Belt, reported by LDF field volunteers

FUTURE ADVOCACY AND NEXT STEPS

LDF is considering several areas for future voting rights advocacy in Alabama, including creating an advocacy toolkit that would inform residents about how to monitor poll site changes.

FLORIDA



Racial Turnout Gap, Despite Record Turnout

According to the Florida Division of Elections, nearly fourteen million (13,949,168) Floridians were registered to vote, and more than eleven million (11,004,209) Floridians cast a ballot in the 2024 general election.¹¹³ This seventy-nine percent turnout rate among registered voters was Florida's highest for any gubernatorial or presidential election since 1954.¹¹⁴

However, data also show a racial disparity between Black and white Floridians in voter turnout and registration. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in the 2024 general election, voter registration was sixty-two percent for Black Floridians, compared to seventy-two percent for their white non-Hispanic counterparts. As a result of the racial gap in registration as well as a racial turnout gap, fifty-five percent of the eligible Black voting-age population in Florida cast a ballot, compared to nearly sixty-six percent of their white non-Hispanic counterparts.¹¹⁵ This is a difference of eleven percentage points.

55%

of the eligible Black voting-age population in Florida cast a ballot

LDF Nonpartisan Voter Outreach and Get Out the Vote

Impact by the numbers:

- LDF **SENT NONPARTISAN VOTER EDUCATION MAILERS** ahead of Election Day **TO 90,721 BLACK VOTER HOUSEHOLDS** in Florida.
- During the primary, LDF **SENT MAILERS WITH VOTING INFORMATION TO ALMOST 30,000 BLACK FLORIDA VOTERS**, alerting them to changes in Florida's vote-by-mail requirements and explaining how to request a new ballot.
- LDF is part of the Florida Election Protection Coalition (FLEPC), whose **437 TRAINED POLL MONITORS WORKED 1,189 SHIFTS** during early voting and/or Election Day, **FILLING OUT 1,632 CHECKLISTS AT MORE THAN 500 POLL SITES**.
- The FLEPC **FIELDIED MORE THAN 3,800 HOTLINE CALLS** during early voting and on Election Day.
- LDF's BVOTR team **RECRUITED VOLUNTEERS AT MULTIPLE DELTA SIGMA THETA REGIONAL, IN-PERSON CONFERENCES** and at virtual sessions with lawyers and advocates in Florida.
- LDF **CO-LED A CANVASSING BOARD PROGRAM WITH ALL VOTING IS LOCAL (AVIL)** to ensure that the post-election process, including the ballot certification, would be monitored and transparent.
- LDF **PROVIDED EXTRA SUPPORT, INCLUDING ELEVEN LDF STAFF MEMBERS** on Election Day, in the Florida Panhandle—a region with high numbers of Black voters.

LDF ON THE GROUND

11

LDF staff members

29

volunteer trainings

437

volunteers

534

poll sites monitored across 32 counties

35+

members of the Florida Election Protection Coalition, including: LDF, All Voting is Local, Common Cause Florida, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, and State Voices Florida

- The BVOTR team **HOSTED TWENTY-FIVE VIRTUAL TRAINING SESSIONS** for both poll monitors and canvassing board legal monitors and **FOUR IN-PERSON SESSIONS FOR MORE THAN FIFTY VOLUNTEERS** in majority-Black communities.
- LDF staff were **PRESENT IN THE FLEPC COMMAND CENTER, KNOWN AS THE “BOILER ROOM,”** throughout early voting, Election Day, and the post-election process until votes were certified, providing real-time guidance to monitors on the ground and legal support for the coalition to help respond to voting issues.

Identifying and Addressing Barriers to Voting

LDF observed barriers to voting:

- Voter intimidation and threats
- Problems with ballot access and delays
- Long lines
- Technology malfunctions
- Insufficient accessibility of poll sites
- Mass challenges
- Post-election issues

BARRIERS TO VOTING

VOTER INTIMIDATION AND THREATS

Perhaps the most significant voting barrier in Florida in 2024 was the intimidation of voters, monitors, and election officials. Ahead of the 2024 elections, Governor Ron DeSantis’s “election police” visited the homes of citizens who had signed a petition to get abortion on the ballot.¹¹⁶ This intimidation came after the Florida Supreme Court ruled that the abortion amendment could remain on the November ballot.¹¹⁷

Election Day intimidation and threats reached a high point with a suspected bomb threat at Beaver Street Enterprise Center in Duval County, where poll workers called the police to investigate a suspicious package. Police later confirmed that the package was harmless, and the polling location reopened after a twenty-minute delay, but eighty cars had been turned away during the evacuation.¹¹⁸

80

cars were turned away from a poll site in Duval County due to a suspicious package

Poll monitors also reported isolated incidents of intimidation by electioneers and multiple instances of aggressive behavior by poll workers toward voters, including:

- Harassment of voters, who were told to leave polling sites, particularly in Manatee, Orange, and Seminole counties;
- The arrest of an eighteen-year-old for wielding a machete at a polling location and harassing voters based on their political affiliation during early voting in Duval County;¹¹⁹
- Intimidating conduct in Broward County, by a person in a white Hummer with a fake military missile and partisan flags that drove through multiple early voting sites, and by campaign materials thrown into a voter’s car; and
- Aggressive anti-abortion protesters shouting at voters near no-electioneering zones at several poll sites across the state.



During early voting, at Alafaya Branch Library in Orlando, electioneers with gruesome anti-abortion signs were reported to be arguing with voters waiting in line by a volunteer. A police officer on site told the electioneers and another man in a devil mask to stop the harassment. *Photo by LDF Staff*



BVOTR volunteers reported a teenage man brandishing a machete while yelling, “Kill Kamala!” The teenager used the machete to intimidate women supporting Harris at an early voting site in Neptune Beach, Florida. *Photo by LDF Staff*



Women supporting Harris who encountered the teenage man brandishing a machete were terrified and called the police. Multiple police officers appeared at the polling site in Neptune Beach, Florida, during early voting. *Photo by LDF Staff*

PROBLEMS WITH BALLOT ACCESS AND DELAYS

Anti-Voter Law: Challenging Senate Bill 90

Despite the lack of evidence of fraud or irregularities in the 2020 Florida elections, the Florida Legislature enacted Senate Bill 90¹²⁰ mere months after Election Day in 2020.¹²¹ Notably, Black voter participation in Florida surged in 2020, with mail-in voting more than doubling from 2016 and 2018.¹²² In direct response, S.B. 90 imposed new restrictions on voter drop boxes, vote-by-mail ballot requests, third-party voter registration groups, and third-party ballot collection, and it curtailed efforts to provide food, water, and encouragement to voters waiting in line.¹²³ Historically, Black voters are less able to take time off from work to vote,¹²⁴ are more

likely to be asked to vote by provisional ballot,¹²⁵ and are more likely to have those provisional ballots rejected.¹²⁶ LDF soon filed a lawsuit challenging S.B. 90. In 2022, a federal District Court judge struck down several provisions, ruling that they violated Section 2 of the VRA and the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution.¹²⁷ However, in April 2023, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit reversed the lower court's decision in substantial part.¹²⁸ Thus, in the 2024 election cycle, voters were left to navigate the challenges associated with more restricted access to the ballot, including long lines and confusion about how to vote.

LONG LINES

Throughout Florida's early voting period, there were long lines, especially in Orange, Pinellas, Hillsborough, and Broward counties. One evening, monitors reported that twenty-one of twenty-two locations across Orange County had wait times of over one hour, and that voters at Valencia College's Lake Nona campus waited in line for roughly three to four hours. Voters in some locations were observed in line until about 11 p.m. The FLEPC met with election officials in Orange County about measures to help voters stay in line and sent a follow-up letter reiterating this request.

21
locations across
Orange County had wait
times of over one hour



A long line at Florida Atlantic University Jupiter Campus in Palm Beach County during early voting. Photo by LDF Staff



A long line during early voting at Lee County Public Library. Photo by LDF Staff

TECHNOLOGY MALFUNCTIONS

During early voting, Florida voters reported challenges using ExpressVote touchscreens for marking ballots in Duval, Palm Beach, and Lee counties. The problem stemmed from the finger sensitivity of touchscreens and was solved by using stylus pens. However, disinformation spread about vote-switching and machine malfunctions, leading to demands for “paper ballots” (actually meaning “hand-marked” ballots, since all ballots in Florida are paper ballots), in addition to ongoing disinformation about machine malfunctions in Palm Beach. Because the BVOTR team and local partners had fostered year-round relationships with election officials, they were able to work with Duval County’s

officials to order stylus pens for the rest of the early voting period and to remedy disinformation about voting machines. In addition, the FLEPC developed voter-facing education materials in both English and Spanish, explaining how to use the ExpressVote touchscreens.

Problems with technology also occurred on Election Day. Florida’s online “Where do I vote?” locator tool was unavailable when the polls opened at 7 a.m. It finally started working around 2 p.m., which likely prevented hundreds of voters throughout the state from finding their polling locations.¹²⁹ Multiple county websites were also down, leaving few options for voters to obtain pertinent voting information.

INSUFFICIENT ACCESSIBILITY OF POLL SITES

LDF received a variety of reports expressing concerns about the accessibility of Florida polling locations. The lack of accessible parking was reported throughout several counties, and many voters with disabilities had to park on the street. In at least three early voting sites in Leon County, LDF received reports of voters resorting to paid parking when accessible parking was unavailable. In Broward County, much of the general parking was taken up by campaigners. Some voters reportedly left Lakeside Community Center in Volusia County due to a lack of accessible parking. Additionally, the route that voters traversed to reach the entrance of an Orange County polling location was not accessible and had no visible accessibility signs. LDF worked to improve parking accessibility as well as signs directing voters to appropriate parking and routes, when necessary.

3+

early voting sites in
Leon County reported voters
resorting to paid parking
when accessible parking
was unavailable

MASS CHALLENGES

Mass voter challenges are typically orchestrated by third parties. In Florida, however, the very officials administering elections—Supervisors of Elections (SOEs)—challenged voters’ eligibility in the final weeks before Election Day in 2024, prompted by late-breaking allegations of voting irregularities from the Florida Office of Election Crimes and Security. In 2024, there was a rise in baseless claims that private systems and tools could supposedly help election officials conduct voter list maintenance by identifying inaccuracies. Private systems like EagleAI claimed to perform data matches using public voter information that is amassed by a web scraper, although these tools have limitations that affect their efficacy.¹³⁰ Amid this rising epidemic of mass challenges, LDF intervened via advocacy letters with detailed guidance on adhering to state and federal law to assess and weed out frivolous challenges and avoid disenfranchising eligible voters.¹³¹

In May 2024, Maria Matthews, the Director of the Florida Division of Elections, forwarded a list of 10,000 Florida voters allegedly compiled by EagleAI to all SOEs across the state and asked them to remove those voters, although the tool itself was not credible and Matthews’s instructions subverted state and federal laws on list maintenance.¹³² In

response, voting rights advocates, including the BVOTR team, sent a National Voter Registration Act notice letter and requested information to determine whether any county had improperly acted on this questionable list. The BVOTR team and its Florida partners also issued a guidance letter regarding state and federal regulations around mass challenges and list maintenance to all SOEs ahead of the general election, referring to the attempt to purge the 10,000 Florida voters as an improper way to conduct list maintenance.

Furthermore, many voters across Florida were unnecessarily asked to vote by provisional ballot because poll workers had incorrectly informed students that they could use their student identification to vote. At the University of Miami in Miami-Dade County, student voters were told that they could not vote because of the confusion around student identification.¹³³ LDF and the boiler room made repeated communications with the SOE to confirm that students would no longer be asked to vote by provisional ballots if they had lawful and adequate alternative forms of identification. There were also multiple reports that poll workers and voters did not know that Florida state law allowed voters to change their address at polling locations on Election Day.

Amid this rising epidemic of mass challenges, LDF intervened via advocacy letters with detailed guidance on adhering to state and federal law to assess and weed out frivolous challenges and avoid disenfranchising eligible voters.

POST-ELECTION ISSUES

Although the post-election process had fewer disruptions than voting rights advocates had expected, Florida's canvassing boards still encountered some issues. In Palm Beach County, LDF received reports of election deniers at canvassing boards for several days, who falsely stated that the county did not count the votes correctly, that "illegal immigrants" had voted, and that more votes should have been allotted to one presidential candidate. The BVOTR and

AVIL canvassing board monitors also noted a lack of written material for canvassing boards about the approval of vote-by-mail or provisional ballots. This led to problems with transparency and inconsistencies between counties. Lastly, LDF monitors observed that the required period for public comment was not provided in Hillsborough, Jefferson, Marion, Osceola, Palm Beach, Pinellas, Polk, and Volusia counties.

LDF received reports of election deniers at canvassing boards for several days, who falsely stated that the county did not count the votes correctly, that "illegal immigrants" had voted, and that more votes should have been allotted to one presidential candidate.



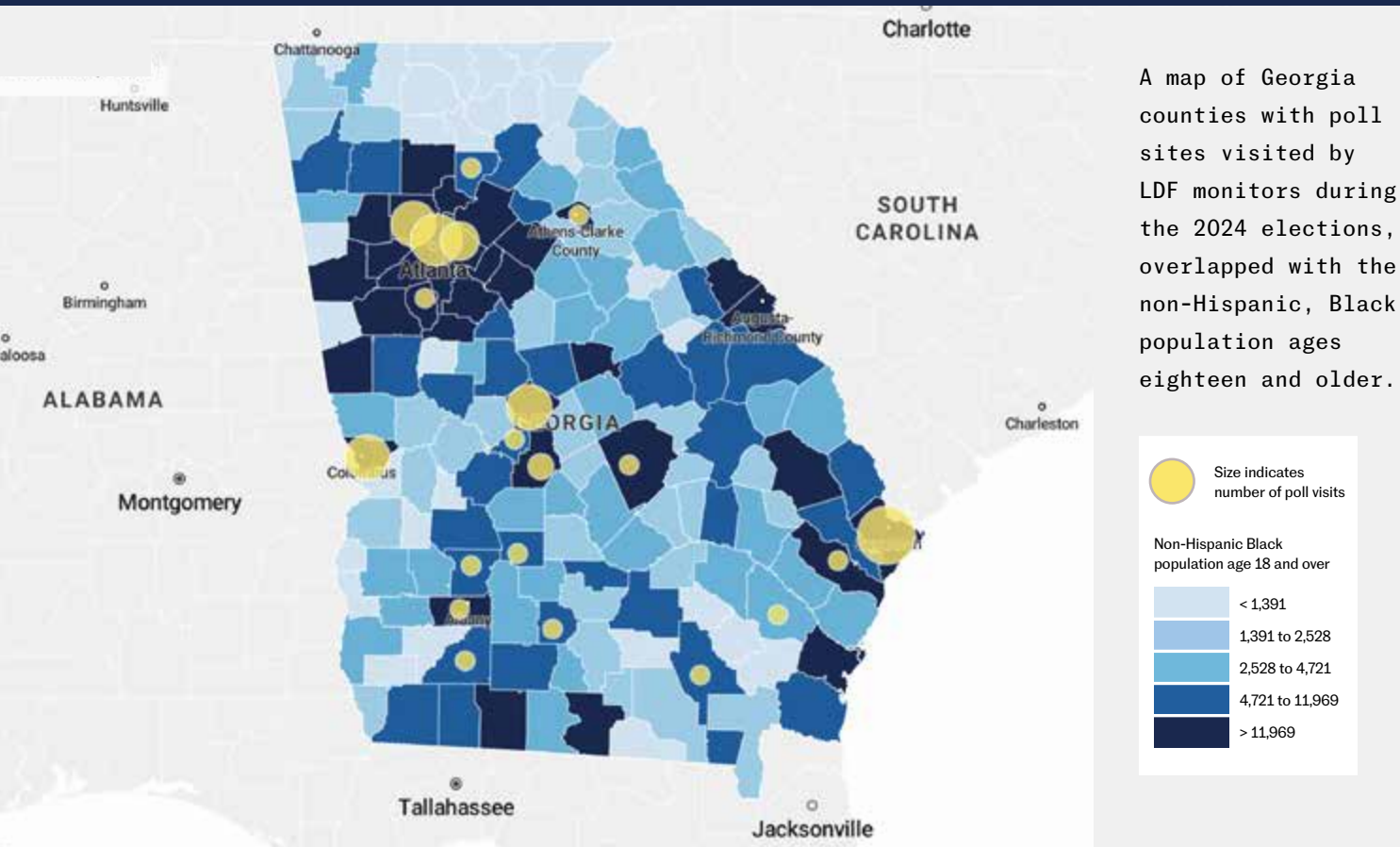
Voters leave an early voting site in Orlando, Florida, on October 21, 2024. Photo by Paul Hennessy/Anadolu via Getty Images

FUTURE ADVOCACY AND NEXT STEPS

The BVOTR team will use multiple strategies to reduce voting barriers and pave the way for greater access to the ballot in Florida, including:

- Creating an advocacy toolkit to inform residents about how to monitor poll site changes.
- Urging Florida to pass the Harry T. and Harriette V. Moore Florida State Voting Rights Act.¹³⁴
- Fighting against restrictive voting laws that have recently passed in Florida (for example, House Bill 1205,¹³⁵ which passed at the end of Florida's 2025 legislative session and imposes stricter rules and deadlines on the submission of petition forms).
- Increasing the number of early voting poll sites across various counties by providing local officials with maps showing where voting gaps exist in communities of color that would benefit from targeted additions.

GEORGIA



A map of Georgia counties with poll sites visited by LDF monitors during the 2024 elections, overlapped with the non-Hispanic, Black population ages eighteen and older.

High Overall Turnout, But Growing Racial Turnout Disparity

Overall turnout in Georgia in 2024 was seventy-three percent of registered voters, up from the sixty-six percent in 2020.¹³⁶ However, this higher level of turnout obscures the stark reality that the racial turnout gap widened in Georgia, growing by three percentage points between 2020 and 2024, and the overall Black turnout actually declined by 0.6 percentage points from 2020 to 2024.¹³⁷ A December 2024 report by the Brennan Center for Justice concluded that “Black Georgians would have cast an additional 400,000 ballots if their turnout rate matched that of white Georgians.”¹³⁸

As a result of the racial gap in both registration and turnout, fifty-nine percent of the eligible Black voting-age population in Georgia cast a ballot, compared to nearly seventy-five percent of their white non-Hispanic counterparts.¹³⁹

LDF Nonpartisan Voter Outreach and Get Out the Vote

Impact by the numbers:

- The BVOTR team **DISTRIBUTED 98,151 NONPARTISAN VOTING RIGHTS PALM CARDS** in Georgia in preparation for the 2024 elections.
- BVOTR **MAILED VOTING RIGHTS INFORMATION TO 176,625 BLACK HOUSEHOLDS ACROSS THE STATE** and proactively employed an integrated advocacy initiative to address barriers to the ballot box, in partnership with local and state voting rights coalitions.
- In total, LDF and its volunteers **ADDRESSED PROBLEMS DOCUMENTED IN 348 INDIVIDUAL POLL SITE MONITOR REPORTS**, from voter intimidation and incorrect signage to lack of poll site entrance accessibility and electioneering.

Identifying and Addressing Barriers to Voting

LDF observed barriers to voting:

- Voter intimidation and threats
- Problems with ballot access and delays
- Insufficient accessibility of poll sites
- Mass challenges
- Post-election issues

59%

of the eligible Black voting-age population in Georgia cast a ballot

LDF ON THE GROUND

13

LDF staff members

12

volunteer trainings

57

volunteers

199

poll sites monitored across 24 counties

10

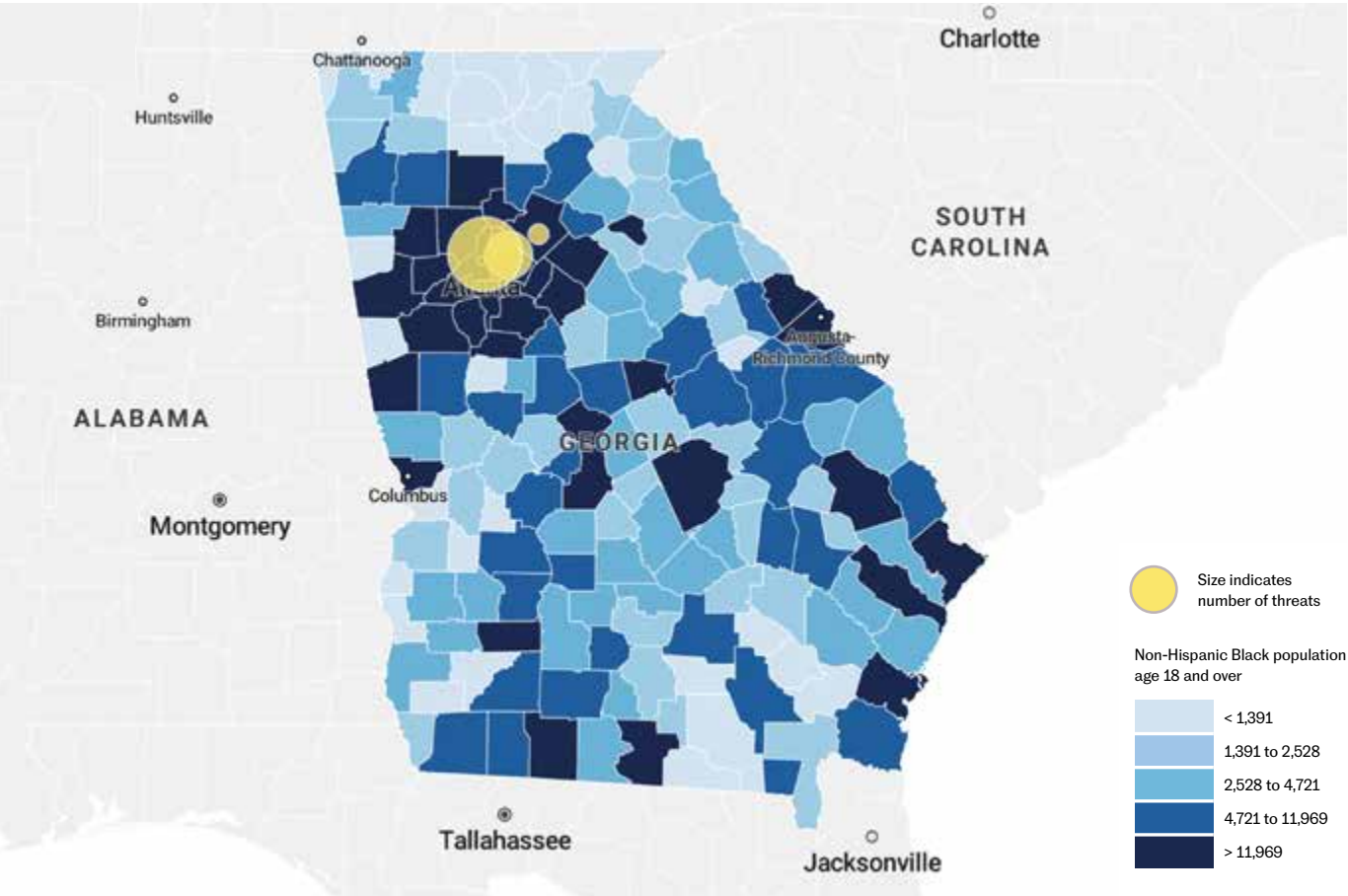
organizations working in coalition: LDF, ACLU of Georgia, All Voting is Local, Black Voters Matter, Common Cause Georgia, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, the People's Agenda, ProGeorgia, South Georgia Voters' League, and SOWEGA Rising

BARRIERS TO VOTING

VOTER INTIMIDATION AND THREATS

On Election Day, several bomb threats were called in to Georgia poll sites in areas with a high percentage of Black voters.¹⁴⁰ The Federal Bureau of Investigation linked many of these threats to foreign email accounts and found none of the threats to be credible.¹⁴¹ One poll worker serving at the Jones County Elections Office was charged with mailing a bomb threat, conveying false information about a bomb threat, and mailing a threatening letter.¹⁴²

These bomb threats were mostly concentrated in areas where large numbers of Black people live and vote, including sites that had to be temporarily closed in Union City (just outside of Atlanta) in a ninety-percent Black neighborhood.¹⁴³ Likewise, five poll sites in Fulton County had to be evacuated.¹⁴⁴ LDF quickly prepared to bring litigation to extend the hours of impacted poll sites, but those counties independently recognized the importance of making up the time lost during the temporary closures by extending their voting hours.



A map of Georgia counties that received bomb threats during the 2024 elections, overlapped with Georgia's non-Hispanic, Black population ages eighteen and older.



A police vehicle running with its lights on near the poll site entrance at the Boys & Girls Club in Bibb County. Photo by LDF Staff

LDF also received reports that some voters had firearms near poll sites during early voting. On October 29, LDF staff volunteers were monitoring early voting at the Peach County Government Center when they witnessed an individual enter a polling precinct with two firearms holstered on his person. An armed, private individual entering a polling location expressly violates Georgia law, which prohibits anyone—except law enforcement officers—from carrying firearms within a poll site.¹⁴⁵ In addition, law enforcement presence was reported at multiple poll sites, causing possible voter intimidation—particularly for Black voters due to longstanding concerns in Black communities about law enforcement violence.¹⁴⁶ During early voting,

LDF’s field volunteers noted a sheriff’s car parked nearby with its lights flashing when they arrived at a poll site in Macon County. LDF continued receiving reports of law enforcement presence at poll sites in Macon County and Forsyth County throughout the early voting period. On Election Day, undercover law enforcement officers were reported in Macon County polling locations, and visible law enforcement officers were reported at polling locations in Savannah, Macon, Cobb, and Muscogee counties. Several volunteers also encountered a large police presence at the MLK precinct in Savannah toward the closing time of poll sites.¹⁴⁷

Electioneering

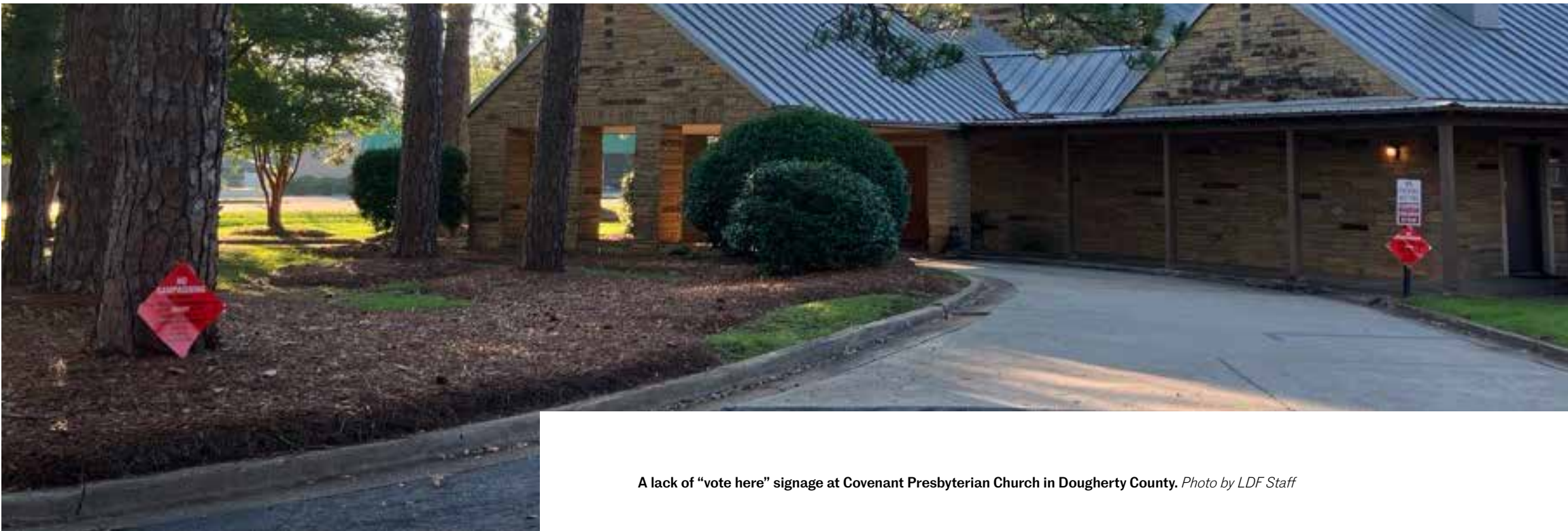
Throughout early voting, LDF received a number of reports of electioneering, which occurs when political groups attempt to convince voters to cast ballots for a particular candidate or party or when there are other improper partisan activities. BVOTR field monitors also reported a lack of signage about the electioneering boundary at several sites on Election Day. On October 29, a monitor in Peach County reported, “There was a man [a voter] wearing a shirt with one of the presidential candidates on it.”¹⁴⁸ On November 1 in Wayne County, an LDF attorney documented: “Noticed impermissible electioneering right inside of 150-foot sign. Spoke with poll workers and probate judge. Probate judge brought measuring tool and determined the signs were inside of 150 feet. She informed those electioneering they had to move the signs.”¹⁴⁹



Several campaign signs posted close to the electioneering boundary at the Elections and Voter Registration Office in Wayne County. After a conversation with the poll workers and probate judge, workers measured the distance and moved the signs that were within the boundary. *Photo by LDF Staff*



An improperly placed and obstructed electioneering boundary sign at Mikado Baptist Church in Bibb County. *Photo by LDF Staff*



A lack of “vote here” signage at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Dougherty County. *Photo by LDF Staff*

PROBLEMS WITH BALLOT ACCESS AND DELAYS

Anti-Voter Law: Challenging Senate Bill 202

Like many other states across the South, Georgia saw historic turnout in the 2020 presidential election cycle, particularly among Black voters. In response, the Georgia General Assembly passed Senate Bill 202 in 2021.¹⁵⁰ This bill placed a ban on line relief (a common occurrence at precincts with a large population of voters of color), created additional and onerous identification requirements for requesting and casting an absentee ballot, and created a compressed period for requesting absentee ballots.¹⁵¹

In response, LDF and co-counsel filed *Sixth District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church v. Kemp* in March 2021. The U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia blocked portions¹⁵² of the bill that banned Georgians from providing food and water to voters waiting in lines located more than 150 feet from the polls and that required voters to unnecessarily include their date of birth on absentee ballot envelopes. LDF is currently fighting the state's appeal of these partial wins in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit.¹⁵³

Furthermore, multiple Georgia officials, including Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger and Georgia Elections Director Blake Evans, told

voters on October 30 to put absentee ballots in drop boxes at designated locations in their counties rather than by U.S. mail when approaching the voting deadline.¹⁵⁴ However, Georgia law had “vastly reduced” the number of drop boxes across the state and moved drop boxes inside voting precincts.¹⁵⁵ After the passage of S.B. 202, voters reported having trouble accessing the boxes. Rebecca Flynn, a Georgia voter who lost her local ballot drop box in 2024, told a news station, “It needs to be more accessible. To have it completely gone was very frustrating.”¹⁵⁶

In Cobb County, where approximately 3,240 people did not receive their absentee ballots on time, voters and the Democratic Party sued the county Board of Elections to ensure that those residents could vote.¹⁵⁷ A lower state court decided that voters should be sent express delivery absentee ballots—with prepaid, express return envelopes—and that the Board of Elections should publicly announce that voters who had not yet received ballots could vote in person.¹⁵⁸ The Georgia Supreme Court, however, disagreed and stayed the lower court's decision, instructing the Board of Elections to count only absentee ballots that were received by the statutory deadline.¹⁵⁹

placed a ban on line relief, created additional and onerous identification requirements for requesting and casting an absentee ballot, and created a compressed period for requesting absentee ballots



The aftermath of Hurricane Helene in Augusta, Georgia, on October 5, 2024. Photo by Joe Raedle/Getty Images

Responding to Hurricane Helene

Hurricane Helene caused widespread damage in Georgia in late September 2024, causing disruptions in government operations, including the closures of post offices and county election board offices¹⁶⁰ in the final days before the state's voter registration deadline. LDF responded to these closures in several ways. LDF and Progress Georgia issued a letter to Governor Brian Kemp and Secretary of State Raffensperger, requesting an extension to the state's October 7 voter registration deadline due to the unprecedented damage from Hurricane Helene. When Kemp did not

respond, LDF filed a lawsuit on October 7, seeking emergency relief to extend the deadline.¹⁶¹ LDF argued that failing to extend the deadline risked “disenfranchising eligible voters across Georgia who would have registered absent the impacts of the storm.”¹⁶² A federal judge denied the request—forcing people who were unable to register in the final days before the voter registration deadline to forego participating in the 2024 election—and the parties subsequently moved to dismiss the complaint.¹⁶³

S.B. 202

~3,240
people in Cobb County did not receive
their absentee ballots on time

INSUFFICIENT ACCESSIBILITY OF POLL SITES

LDF received a variety of reports expressing concerns about accessibility of Georgia polling locations, suggesting that some voters with disabilities were in need of assistance. BVOTR monitors reported that some poll sites had no accessible entrance, such as the Cooper Center in Chatham County, while some sites had a separate accessible entrance without clear signage about its accessibility. Accessible parking was also often inadequate. On Election Day, BVOTR received fifty reports of inaccessible parking at poll sites across

its target counties in Georgia (Bibb, Chatham, Cobb, Dougherty, Lowndes, Muscogee, Sumter, and Ware counties). At multiple precincts, election officials failed to provide any signage altogether, which may have deterred people from voting. In one case, election officials at a poll site in Chatham County removed their “vote here” signs before the end of voting. When BVOTR field volunteers requested that the poll workers put the signs back, they gave the signs to the volunteers to place outside.



An inaccessible poll site entrance at the Cooper Center in Chatham County. *Photo by LDF Staff*



Law enforcement presence at Mikado Baptist Church in Bibb County. *Photo by LDF Staff*

50

reports of inaccessible parking at poll sites across target counties in Georgia on Election Day

some poll sites had

NO

ACCESSIBLE ENTRANCES

MASS CHALLENGES

In Georgia, any registered voter can file an unlimited number of challenges with their local elections board with allegations that voter rolls include ineligible voters. Activists have filed around half a million challenges going back to Georgia’s January 2021 Senate run-off election.¹⁶⁴

Prior to the 2024 general election, Kemp signed Senate Bill 189 into law, which makes it easier to challenge the registration status of voters in nursing homes, university dorms, and military facilities.¹⁶⁵ In anticipation of frivolous challenges, LDF sent advocacy letters to several counties with detailed guidance on how to properly assess mass challenges in accordance with the law.¹⁶⁶ LDF’s letters further explained why local boards should reject challenges

derived from sources like EagleAI,¹⁶⁷ which, like other improper challenges, may violate federal law.¹⁶⁸ For example, the National Voter Registration Act prohibits the use of systematic voter removal processes fewer than ninety days before federal elections.¹⁶⁹

When an individual submitted two lists of 34,000 voters, who were challenged only for allegedly having a new address, LDF stepped in to educate county elections supervisors about reviewing mass challenges, to monitor the county’s notification to those voters about the challenges, and to ensure that the supervisors did not improperly remove voters for not responding.

POST-ELECTION ISSUES

Anticipating challenges to election certification in Georgia, LDF co-developed a post-election monitoring program—spanning more than 100 counties across Georgia—with coalition partners to ensure that the vote tabulation (i.e., counting) and certification processes were not disrupted. This coalition effort involved observations of the post-election processes, both in person and virtually, to identify any intimidating or unlawful activities. BVOTR assisted in training and deploying volunteers in Metro Atlanta and across its target counties: Bibb, Chatham, Cobb, Dougherty, Lowndes, Muscogee, Sumter, and Ware counties.

100+

counties across Georgia had a post-election monitoring program to ensure that vote tabulation and certification processes were not disrupted



BVOTR’s Georgia team and members of the Georgia Voting Rights Coalition attend a State Election Board meeting to provide public comment against several proposed rules that would delay the election certification process. *Photo by LDF Staff*

New State Election Board Rules

The Georgia State Election Board (SEB) has authority to make rules about elections, but not in contravention of state or federal law, and the SEB does not have lawmaking authority. In the months before Election Day in 2024, the newly composed SEB passed several rules that presented major challenges to Black voters.¹⁷⁰ For example, in August 2024, the SEB passed a rule that authorized county election boards to question the legitimacy of an election. LDF, in close partnership

with Progress Georgia, responded with a letter to Kemp, Raffensperger, and SEB Chair John Fervier, explaining that the SEB’s new rules were illegal under Georgia law. The letter argued that Georgia law considered certifying elections to be a ministerial, rather than a discretionary, task. The letter further explained that the new rules could “be used to delay or deny certifying election results in ways that would disproportionately affect—and perhaps even intentionally target—Black voters.”¹⁷¹

In September 2024, the SEB passed a measure requiring poll workers to hand count the number of all paper ballots after voting takes place,¹⁷² despite county officials, the State Attorney General, and the Secretary of State all urging otherwise.¹⁷³ LDF submitted several public comments¹⁷⁴ and provided verbal testimony in opposition to the rules requiring hand counts, as well as rules imposing reasonable inquiries and document examination prior to certifying elections. LDF also filed an amicus (or “friend of the court”) brief in *Eternal Vigilance Action, Inc., et al. v. State of Georgia*, a state court lawsuit that challenged the SEB’s inquiry and hand-count rules.¹⁷⁵ On October 16, 2024, the Fulton County Superior Court agreed with the plaintiffs and issued a preliminary injunction, halting the SEB’s inquiry and hand-count rules from going into effect.¹⁷⁶ The Georgia Supreme Court ultimately ruled, unanimously, that the SEB exceeded its rulemaking authority in issuing those rules.¹⁷⁷



Protect the Vote GA and The Aware Brand host a civic engagement panel with support from the BVOTR Georgia team in advance of the voter registration deadline. Photo by LDF Staff

LDF’s letter explained that the new rules could “be used to delay or deny certifying election results in ways that would disproportionately affect—and perhaps even intentionally target—Black voters.”



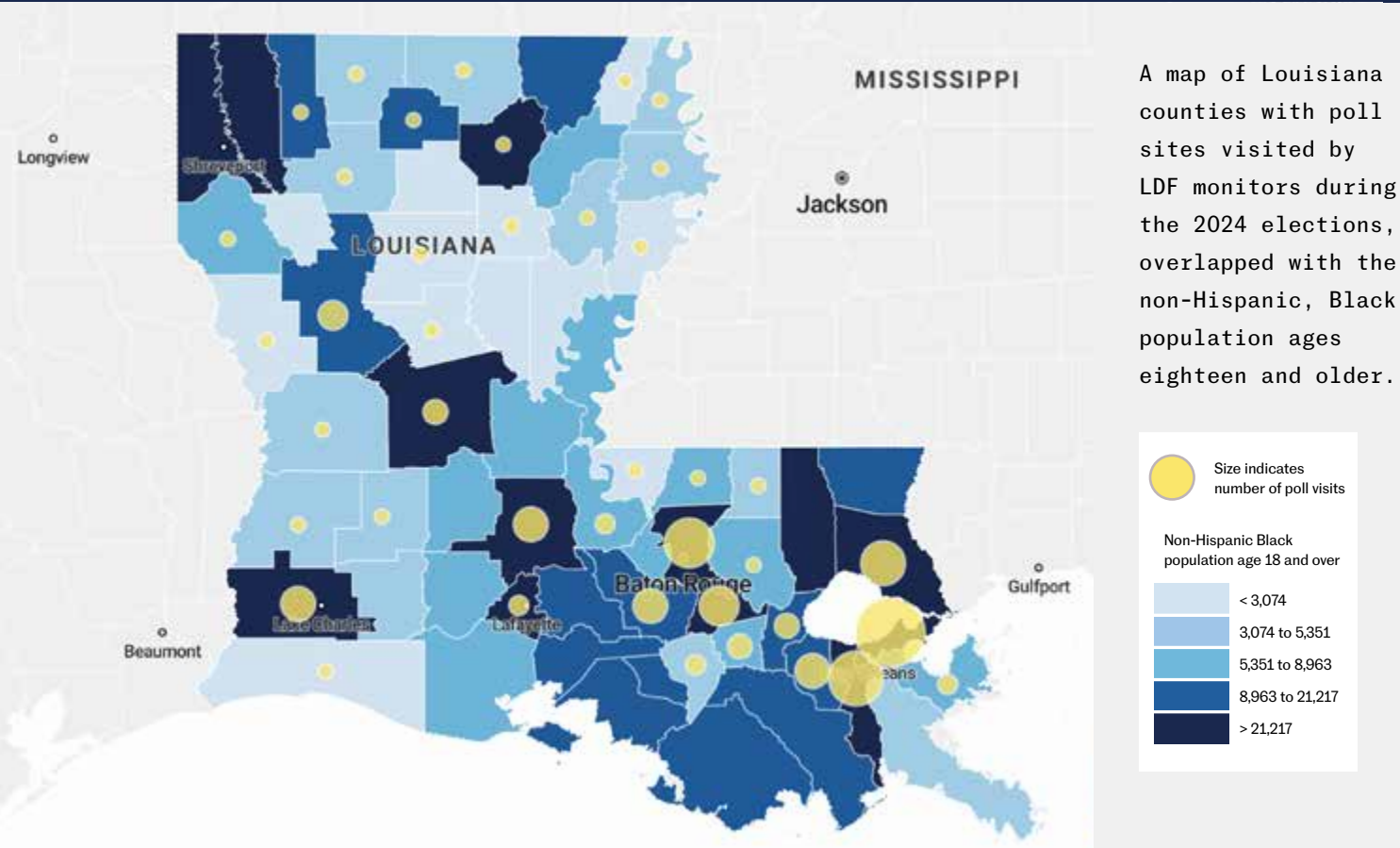
Voters wait outside a polling location in Atlanta, Georgia, on November 1, 2024, the last day of early voting. Photo by Megan Varner/Getty Images

FUTURE ADVOCACY AND NEXT STEPS

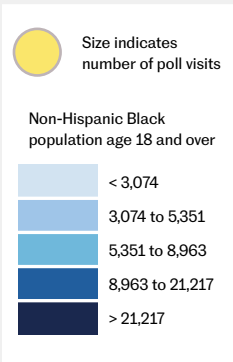
LDF and partner organizations will continue to take the necessary strides to remove barriers that unfairly impede political participation for Black voters in Georgia, including:

- Continuing to advocate directly with county officials by providing guidance on how to handle unlawful mass voter challenges and how to improve accessibility at poll sites so they comply with federal law and serve all voters.
- Protecting Black voters against voter intimidation by non-state actors by flagging any issues with appropriate federal or state prosecutors, and urging state officials to announce their commitment to prosecuting voter intimidation cases.
- Continuing to advocate for better poll site management, monitor poll site changes, and call for compliance with election certification procedures to prevent disruptions to election results.

LOUISIANA



A map of Louisiana counties with poll sites visited by LDF monitors during the 2024 elections, overlapped with the non-Hispanic, Black population ages eighteen and older.



LDF ON THE GROUND

11

LDF staff members

11

volunteer trainings

95

volunteers

535

poll sites monitored across 41 parishes

25

organizations working in coalition: LDF, A Bella LaFemme Society, All Streets All People, Bike-N-Vote, Black Voters Matter, Crescent City Media Group for Civic Action, Delta Sigma Theta (New Orleans Alumnae Chapter), Grambling State University NAACP, Greater New Orleans Martinet Society, I.M.P.A.C.T., the Jeremiah Group, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, League of Women Voters Louisiana, Louisiana Fair Housing Action Center, Louisiana NAACP, Louisiana Progress, Lower 9th Ward Voter's Coalition, Maternal and Child Health Coalition, Our Voice New Orleans, Power Coalition for Equity and Justice, the Southern Poverty Law Center, Southern University Law Center, Louis A. Berry Institute for Civil Rights and Justice, Together Louisiana, Voices of the Experienced (VOTE), and Westside Sponsoring Committee

Voter Turnout and Racial Gap in Louisiana

Of all fifty states, Louisiana has the second-highest percentage of Black people in the overall state population, at thirty-three percent.¹⁷⁸ The Black population is clustered in the state's boot and along the Mississippi River.¹⁷⁹ Louisiana's turnout rate for the 2024 general election was sixty-six percent of registered voters, with more than two million people casting a ballot.¹⁸⁰ Yet, there was a substantial racial turnout gap, including during early voting.¹⁸¹

In terms of voter registration, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that seventy percent of white, non-Hispanic citizens of voting age in Louisiana were registered to vote in the 2024 general election, compared to a Black registration rate of only sixty-two percent.¹⁸²

As a result of the racial gap in registration as well as a racial turnout gap, fifty-one percent of the eligible Black voting-age population in Louisiana cast a ballot, compared to nearly sixty-five percent of their white non-Hispanic counterparts.¹⁸³

51%

of the eligible Black voting-age population in Louisiana cast a ballot

LDF Nonpartisan Voter Outreach and Get Out the Vote

Impact by the numbers:

- LDF **SENT 244,556 NONPARTISAN VOTER EDUCATION MAILERS** ahead of Election Day to Black voter households in Louisiana.
- LDF **DISTRIBUTED MORE THAN 134,650 MATERIALS** to community and state-based partners.
- LDF **DISPATCHED 184,654 TEXTS** to Black Louisiana voters, informing them of important election information and encouraging them to cast their ballot.
- LDF **SENT LETTERS BEFORE THE 2024 ELECTION CYCLE TO ELECTION OFFICIALS IN ALL SIXTY-FOUR PARISHES**, providing resources to proactively plan for, deter, and respond to voter intimidation and suppression efforts.

Identifying and Addressing Barriers to Voting

LDF observed barriers to voting:

- Voter intimidation and threats
- Problems with ballot access and delays
- Inadequate signage
- Insufficient accessibility of poll sites
- Attacks on third-party organizations

BARRIERS TO VOTING

VOTER INTIMIDATION AND THREATS

During early voting in Louisiana, multiple voters reported concerns to news outlets about the privacy of their ballots, saying that election workers were standing near them or looking over their shoulders as they cast their ballots. The Registrar of Voters in Orleans Parish responded to media, largely dismissing the concerns as poll workers looking to see whether voters needed assistance.¹⁸⁴ In response, LDF shared relevant state law with partners and voters, explaining that voters have a right to vote privately, confidentially,

and independently in an area that is free from any campaign materials.¹⁸⁵

The Louisiana state government also actively engaged in voter intimidation tactics. In 2024, Governor Jeff Landry repeatedly posited that there were numerous noncitizens attempting to vote.¹⁸⁶ Although his claims were not supported by any real data, they nevertheless placed a target on voters of color who might be perceived as noncitizens.



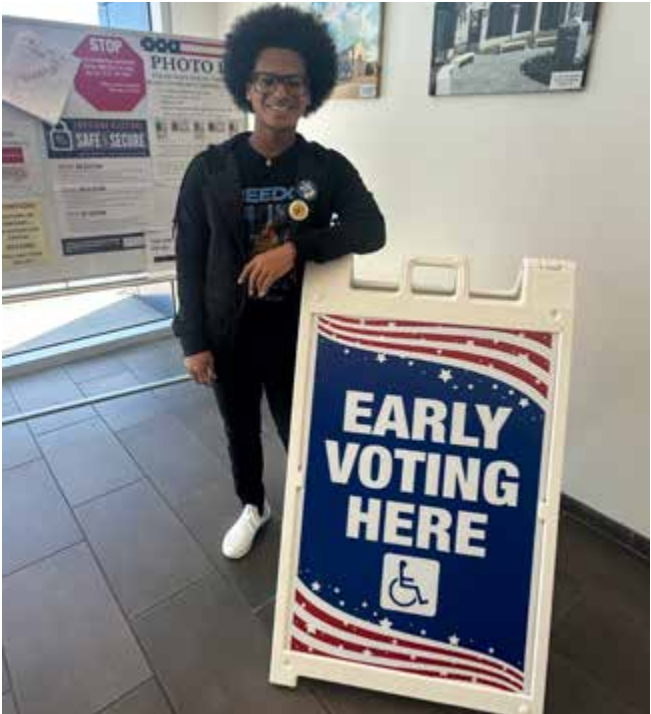
Early voting at Treme Recreation Community Center in Orleans Parish. Photo by LDF Staff

PROBLEMS WITH BALLOT ACCESS AND DELAYS

Expanding Early Voting Access

In advance of the 2024 election cycle, LDF engaged in advocacy to ensure adequate early voting access across Louisiana by filing *Harding v. Edwards*, in which the District Court ruled that three days must be added to the early voting period during presidential election cycles.¹⁸⁷ LDF and partners then advocated for the Louisiana Legislature to codify the District Court’s decision expanding early voting, and, in 2021, Louisiana enacted a law

permanently extending the early voting period throughout the state.¹⁸⁸ The 2024 election cycle was the first with these extended early voting days, and LDF’s BVOTR team engaged in outreach to ensure that Louisiana voters knew about the extension. BVOTR staff also monitored gaps in voter turnout and developed strategies to increase turnout among Black voters.



LDF volunteer Carlos Pollard standing outside a Louisiana poll site. Photo by LDF Staff



An early voting location in Louisiana. Photo by LDF Staff

Despite these improvements, access to early voting sites varied greatly throughout the state. There is no requirement that the number of locations for early voting in a parish correspond to that parish’s population, and some parishes had only one location. In 2021, LDF advocated for additional early voting sites at both the parish level and the statewide level, with varying degrees of success.¹⁸⁹ For example, in 2020, Caddo Parish saw a substantial increase of in-person early voting, and voters in Shreveport (in Caddo Parish) subsequently waited in multi-hour lines for early voting because the parish operated only a single poll site. In 2022, the Caddo Parish Commission opened a second poll site at the Shreve Memorial Library (Hamilton/South Caddo Branch) to address these challenges.¹⁹⁰

Improving Transparency in Poll Site Changes

LDF monitored Election Day poll site changes in Louisiana, with a particular focus on changes to poll sites that were likely to go unnoticed by voters until they attempted to vote. LDF also pushed for multiple bills in the state legislature to increase transparency around changes to poll sites—most notably House Bill 1065, which LDF helped draft with the Power Coalition for Equity and Justice in Louisiana,¹⁹¹ and House Bill 319. In June 2022, Louisiana passed H.B. 1065 to inform the public of both the number of poll site changes and the addresses of old and new poll sites.¹⁹² After this law passed, LDF observed comparably lower rates of poll site changes in 2024 compared to prior elections.¹⁹³ On June 3, 2024, the Louisiana

Legislature passed H.B. 319 to require parishes to disclose the reason for poll site changes.¹⁹⁴ This law went into effect on July 1, 2025.¹⁹⁵

Monitoring Other Ballot Access Issues

On Election Day in 2024, several callers to the Election Protection Hotline (866-OUR-VOTE) reported that they were not on the voter rolls even though they had registered to vote at the Office of Motor Vehicles. Likewise, there were several reports through local news outlets and on social media of voters who had been wrongfully denied access to polls due to supposedly missing voter registration deadlines.¹⁹⁶ News reports also warned of the potential impacts to more than 13,000 voters in Lafayette Parish who had changed their residential addresses close to the election.¹⁹⁷ Louisiana law permits voters who moved across parish lines within the past ninety days to cast a ballot in their prior parish, but not their current one.¹⁹⁸

Additionally, a voter reported to Disability Rights Louisiana that poll workers at one location (Salmen High School in Slidell, St. Tammany Parish) were unaware of the option to vote by affidavit. The poll workers also resisted permitting individuals to vote even if they had a voter registration card, Social Security card, and school photo ID. Louisiana law allows a person to vote with a “generally recognized picture ID that contains your name and signature,” and if a voter does not have ID, they may vote by signature on a voter affidavit.¹⁹⁹

H.B. 1065

informs the public of both the number of poll site changes and the addresses of old and new poll sites

H.B. 319

requires parishes to disclose the reason for poll site changes

INADEQUATE SIGNAGE

BVOTR field volunteers frequently reported that general signage was either inadequate or ambiguous. For example, during the December 7 run-off election, one poll site placed an “early vote” sign outside, and the arrow pointed in the opposite direction from the entrance. On Election Day, BVOTR field monitors found that some poll sites had street addresses that were not close to their entrance locations and sometimes were not even on perpendicular streets, and occasionally had handwritten signage—or none at all—to direct voters around corners toward entrances. This appeared as a pattern across parishes, many of which used back doors for parking and front doors for the voter entrance, or vice versa.

Langston Hughes Elementary in New Orleans claimed that they never received signage to post. At Bethany United in New Orleans, only people walking or driving slowly would have identified the poll site. At both Lawtell Elementary in Opelousas (St. Landry Parish) and St. Rose Elementary (St. Charles Parish), there was no signage visible from the road. At the Fire Station in East Baton Rouge Parish, the signage was behind the fire station and not visible from the road.

The problems with signage could unnecessarily disenfranchise voters who may be new to a voting location or who may not remember where they have voted in the past.



A lack of visible signage at Lawtell Elementary in Opelousas (St. Landry Parish). Photo by LDF Staff

INSUFFICIENT ACCESSIBILITY OF POLL SITES

Despite clear guidelines from the U.S. Department of Justice on the legal requirements for accessibility of polling locations,²⁰⁰ as well as LDF’s pre-election advocacy, poll monitors and voters in Louisiana reported numerous problems with accessibility on Election Day. In fact, most of the reports from Louisiana that BVOTR received on Election Day involved issues of accessibility. At Sarah T. Reed High School in New Orleans, an “accessibility” sticker was the only evidence of accessibility efforts. Other reported problems included a lack of signage on accessibility, a lack of accessible entrances or ramps, and a lack of accessible parking. LDF received reports of unpaved parking lots, creating problems for voters who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices and voters who have difficulty walking on uneven surfaces to reach their poll sites. Some voters at Ward One Community Building in Goodbee (St. Tammany Parish) had

difficulty navigating an unpaved parking lot without sidewalks, causing LDF’s partners to contact the Clerk of Court, who agreed that voters could use alternative poll sites if necessary.

LDF also sent letters to local officials, advocating for accessibility improvements to poll sites to ensure that voters with mobility impairments, including seniors with limited mobility, could access voting locations. These letters requested that parishes remedy potential ADA violations, such as a lack of directional signage and accessible parking. The letters included targeted recommendations for improvements, based on the observed problems with ADA compliance at particular poll sites. In Orleans Parish, for example, LDF recommended that parish leadership address accessibility concerns resulting from Super Bowl construction projects.

Most of the reports from Louisiana that BVOTR received on Election Day involved issues of accessibility.



Temporary accessible parking signs outside a poll site. Photo by LDF Staff



A voter with a disability attempts to access a poll site despite the lack of a curbside ramp. Photo by LDF Staff

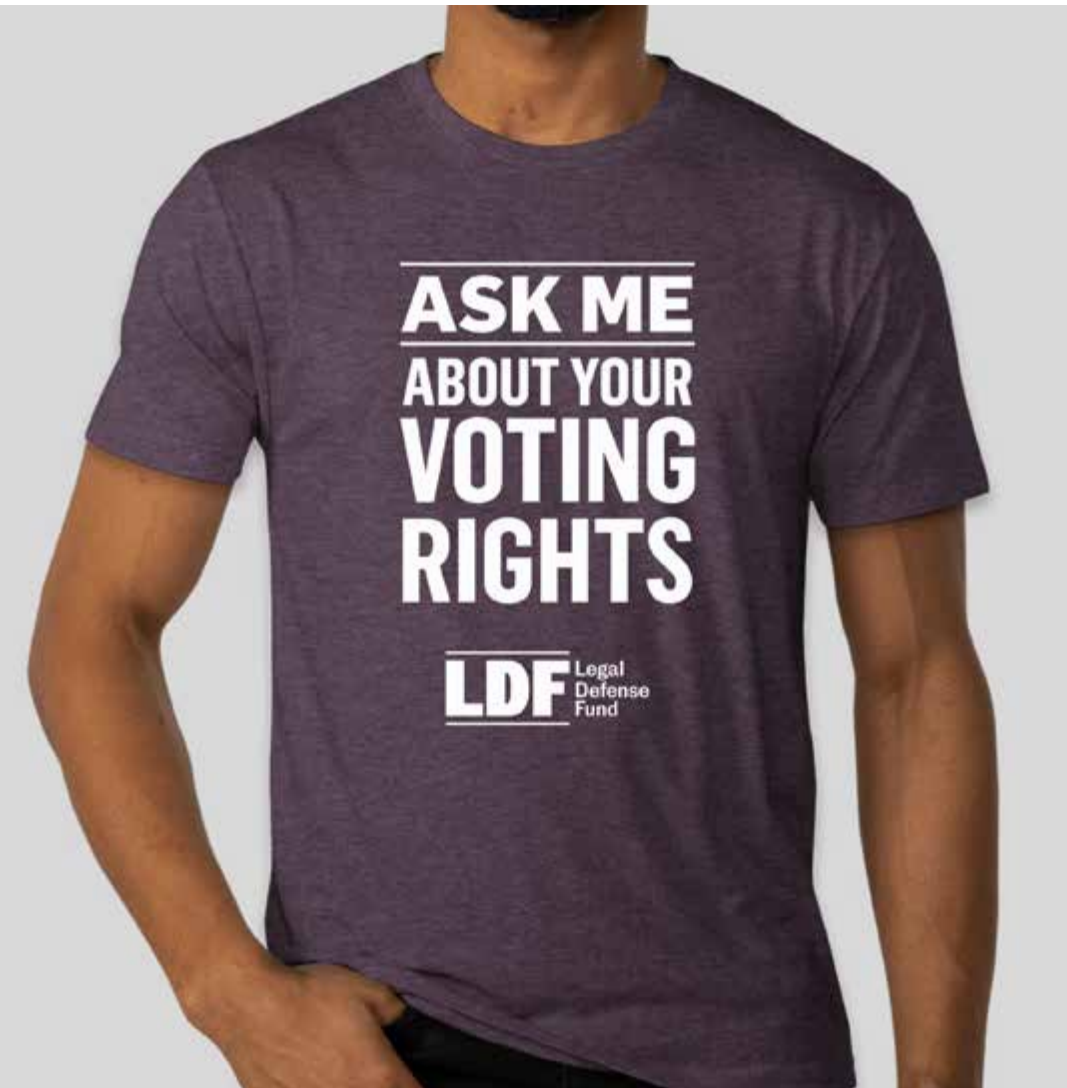


Uneven pavement outside a poll site presents an accessibility challenge for voters with disabilities. Photo by LDF Staff

ATTACKS ON THIRD-PARTY ORGANIZATIONS

Some poll workers in Louisiana improperly assumed that LDF’s volunteer monitors were engaging in partisan activities. Across the state, volunteer monitors reported being questioned or asked for credentials. One volunteer at Carroll High School in Monroe (Ouachita Parish) was asked to turn her T-shirt inside out to hide the text, even though the text clearly stated “Nonpartisan Voter

Support.” The BVOTR team called the Clerk of Court, who sent staff to inform poll workers about the proper enforcement of the state’s electioneering statute. The statute prohibits political solicitation within 600 feet of a poll site entrance but does not prohibit nonpartisan activities. Therefore, nonpartisan poll monitors are not subject to the electioneering boundary.



BVOTR T-shirts worn by nonpartisan monitors.



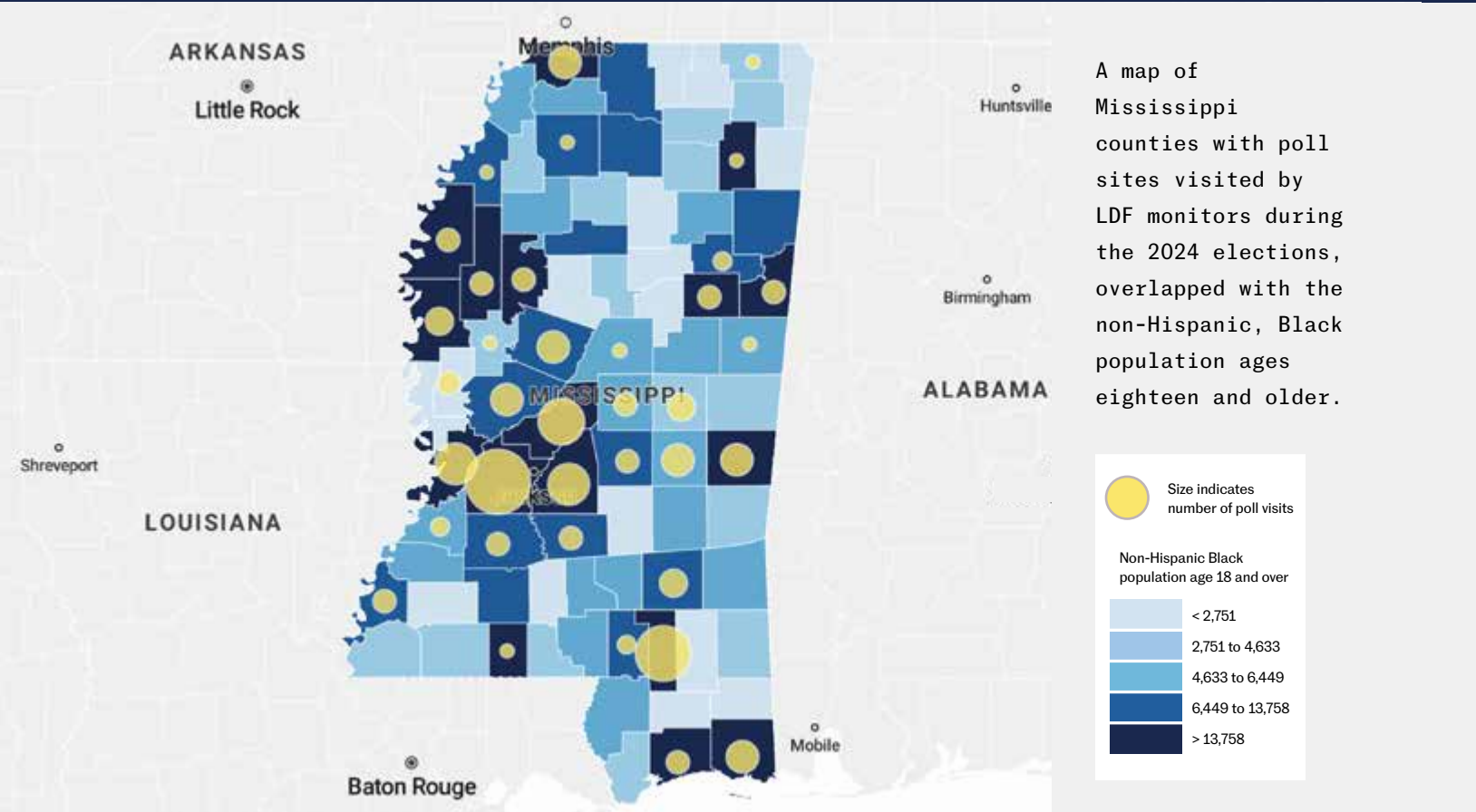
Members of the Louisiana state team. Photo by LDF Staff

FUTURE ADVOCACY AND NEXT STEPS

LDF will continue its advocacy to protect voting rights in Louisiana in future elections, including:

- Fighting for fair maps in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court case *Louisiana v. Callais*,²⁰¹ as well as pending litigation around the future of state legislative maps.
- Advocating for commissioner training and poll site best practices, such as the use of privacy dividers.
- Engaging in outreach and accountability efforts around ADA compliance and enforcement.
- Monitoring the procurement process for new voting machines.
- Analyzing the impact of absentee ballot rejections, using data to be publicly available following the implementation of new data transparency legislation.
- Monitoring poll site changes and the reasons for such changes, following the implementation of the new transparency law requiring disclosure of this information.

MISSISSIPPI



LDF ON THE GROUND

9

LDF staff members

12

volunteer trainings

204

volunteers

650

poll sites
monitored across
37 counties

25

members of the Mississippi Voting Rights Coalition: LDF, ACLU of Mississippi, Ballot.org, Black Voters Matter, Campaign Legal Center, Disability Rights MS, Fair Fight Action, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, League of Women Voters of Mississippi, Love Black Girls, Mississippi Black Women's Roundtable, Mississippi Center for Justice, Mississippi Engaged, Mississippi Poor People's Campaign, Mississippi Votes, NAACP, One Voice, PLAN, Secure Democracy, Southern Echo, Southern Poverty Law Center, Southern Poverty Law Center Mississippi, Stand Up America, Urban League, and We Must Vote

Steady Voter Turnout and No Racial Turnout Gap

Nearly 1.5 million people voted in Mississippi in the 2024 general election,²⁰² with comparable rates of turnout and voter registration between Black and white Mississippians. Mississippi's voter turnout, as calculated by the percentage of citizens of voting age who cast ballots, was sixty-nine percent,²⁰³ similar to the seventy percent turnout for the 2020 general election.²⁰⁴ Approximately seventy percent of both Mississippi's Black and white, non-Hispanic citizen populations of voting age cast a ballot.²⁰⁵

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in the 2024 general election, approximately eighty-two percent of Black citizens of voting age in Mississippi were registered to vote, a similar registration rate to that of white non-Hispanic citizens of voting age in the state.²⁰⁶

70%

of the eligible Black
voting-age population in
Mississippi cast a ballot

LDF Nonpartisan Voter Outreach and Get Out the Vote

Impact by the numbers:

- LDF **SENT 28,690 TEXT MESSAGES TO BLACK VOTERS** across Mississippi, informing them of relevant deadlines and additional voter education resources.
- LDF **PROVIDED 241,623 VOTER EDUCATION MATERIALS** to its local partners for distribution.
- In August 2024, LDF staff **PARTICIPATED IN A PANEL DISCUSSION AT THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER'S FREEDOM SUMMER ORGANIZING AND TRAINING SUMMIT**, where original Freedom Fighters shared their stories from the 1960s and taught the youth of today how to continue their legacy.
- In September 2024, LDF **SUPPORTED MISSISSIPPI VOTES AT THEIR FREEDOM SUMMER "DEMOCRACY IN ACTION"** convening and participated in a panel discussion about election protection.
- In October 2024, LDF **TOOK PART IN THE MISSISSIPPI CENTER FOR JUSTICE'S "BREAK DOWN THE BALLOT" EVENT**, engaging the public on pressing local issues about the upcoming election.

Identifying and Addressing Barriers to Voting

LDF observed barriers to voting:

- Voter intimidation and threats
- Problems with ballot access and delays
- Inadequate signage
- Long lines
- Insufficient accessibility of poll sites
- Attacks on third-party organizations
- Post-election issues

BARRIERS TO VOTING

VOTER INTIMIDATION AND THREATS

Law enforcement was reportedly present in at least thirteen poll sites in Mississippi. While their presence appeared non-threatening to monitors, such presence can be intimidating for some voters, especially those with prior negative interactions with the criminal legal system. Poll monitors also

reported incidents of voter intimidation on Election Day. For example, in Leflore County, election campaign workers stood near a poll site with a bullhorn and yelled at voters. BVOTR poll monitors contacted local partners, and police officers were dispatched to stop this intimidation.

PROBLEMS WITH BALLOT ACCESS AND DELAYS

Pushing for Early Voting

Mississippi is one of only three states that do not allow no-excuse early voting (the others are Alabama and New Hampshire).²⁰⁷ This is a barrier for many Mississippians, especially those with disabilities, those who work long hours, and those who lack reliable transportation. The majority of Mississippians support early voting, and, in the 2023 legislative session, the state Senate passed an early voting bill that was not advanced by the House.²⁰⁸

During the 2024 legislative session, LDF, Secure Democracy, and the Mississippi Voting Rights Coalition supported Senate Bill 2580, the Early Voting Act. The state legislature held a public hearing on early voting on August 28, 2024, which LDF and Mississippi Votes used as an opportunity to call circuit clerks across the state to gauge their support for early voting. LDF again supported an early voting bill in 2025 by providing local partners with information, materials, and lessons learned from other states where LDF had supported successful early voting legislation. While the 2025 early voting bill did not advance to a vote, LDF's advocacy on this important issue will continue.

Monitoring Problems with Ballot Access and Poll Site Information

Monitors reported broad concerns about voter access due to problems with election administration. Mississippi lacks a comprehensive, up-to-date public list of polling places, and communication to voters about precinct changes has been inadequate. This can lead to voter disenfranchisement if voters are unable to locate their correct voting location. Upon arrival at some poll sites, poll monitors discovered that they were at the wrong address or that the poll site's name differed from the poll site listed on the Mississippi Secretary of State website. Several listed poll sites for the 2024 elections were empty fields or closed facilities, with the actual poll site at an entirely different location.

A few weeks before the 2024 primary elections, the Board of Supervisors consolidated two large, majority-Black precincts in Jackson without public notice or discussion. The supervisors stated that the consolidation was intended to help resolve accessibility issues at the previous locations. However, voters reported that the newly combined polling location had uneven floors and limited parking, and several elderly voters tripped on their way to the voting booth.

Following the March 2024 primary elections, local election officials changed at least fifty-four precincts across twenty-four counties, affecting thousands of Mississippi voters.²⁰⁹ Not all changes were accurately updated in the Statewide Election Management System. As of October 30, the state's My Election Day tool directed voters to the wrong location in twenty precincts.²¹⁰ In response, LDF created a targeted text campaign to provide voters with accurate information about polling locations. This effort involved calling polling places, circuit clerks, elected officials, and coalition partners in every affected county to verify the accuracy of polling location information. LDF then prepared precinct-specific text messages, which were sent to all Black voters in the affected counties to notify them of their new, verified poll site name and address.

On Election Day, a number of voters at seven different poll sites reportedly learned that their names were missing from the voter rolls. In these situations, it is critical to have poll workers who are well-trained on any necessary troubleshooting methods and the affidavit ballot process. Unfortunately, a monitor reported that a voter at one poll site was told that she could not vote because her name did not appear on the voter rolls, and she was not offered a provisional ballot.

~200,000

Mississippians voted by absentee ballot
in the 2024 general election

Finally, with nearly 200,000 Mississippians voting by absentee ballot in the 2024 general election,²¹¹ and with the increased use of provisional ballots during presidential election years, it is critical to design a ballot curing process (which allows voters to verify rejected absentee and provisional ballots) so that as many eligible votes as possible are counted.²¹² Instead, in the November 2024 run-off election, the Mississippi Secretary of State made it even harder for voters to cure their ballots by undermining existing safeguards. The Secretary of State first posted the wrong deadline on the official state website for voters to return mail-in absentee ballots and to cure photo identification affidavit ballots. The Secretary of State next decided

to move the deadline up one day by counting November 29 as a “business day,” even though it was a state-declared legal holiday. Thus, voters not only received incorrect information through official state channels, but also were deprived of the full five business days required to cure affidavit ballots. LDF, along with Disability Rights MS and the Mississippi State Conference of the NAACP, wrote a letter to the Secretary of State’s office, urging them to reinstate the original deadline.²¹³ Despite this advocacy, the Secretary of State continued with the shortened timeline, preventing voters from curing their ballots on what would have been the fifth business day.

INADEQUATE SIGNAGE

A pervasive issue across Mississippi on Election Day was insufficient signage directing voters to poll site locations and entrances. Many monitors flagged that only one or two signs were located throughout entire poll sites, making it difficult for voters unfamiliar with those sites to find an entrance. Additionally, a few poll sites in Hinds and Jackson counties reportedly did not receive any signage at all. LDF also fielded several complaints from voters and poll monitors about inadequate lighting at poll sites, causing some parking lots to be too dark to safely navigate and some poll sites to appear as if they had closed early. These issues were reported in DeSoto, Hinds, Jones, Leake, Lowndes, and Neshoba counties.



A poll site in Hinds County with no signage at the entrance. Photo by LDF Staff

LONG LINES

Poll monitors working with LDF, the Mississippi Poor People’s Campaign, and Mississippi Votes identified thirty-three poll sites with long lines on Election Day, including some with voters waiting over an hour. Many voters throughout the state experienced long lines in the morning, including voters in DeSoto, Forrest, Hinds, and Rankin counties—all of which have large Black voting-age populations.

The lack of widespread early voting and absentee voting in Mississippi contributed to long lines on Election Day. Mississippi law allows for absentee

voting under only a limited set of circumstances.²¹⁴ Yet, even those eligible for in-person absentee voting endured long lines because they had to report to their local circuit clerk’s office on one of the two Saturdays before Election Day. LDF learned that, on Saturday, November 2, lines in Hinds County—the largest county in Mississippi, which also has the most Black voters—were over three hours long. It was reported that one line extended so far that voters had to wait on the sidewalk outside the circuit clerk’s office in high temperatures, causing two voters to faint.



Long lines at Gautier First United Methodist Church in Jackson County. Photo by LDF Staff



Long lines at Boulevard Baptist Church in DeSoto County. Photo by LDF Staff



Long lines at Southpoint Church in DeSoto County. Photo by LDF Staff

3-hour+

wait times in Hinds County—the largest county in Mississippi, which has the most Black voters

INSUFFICIENT ACCESSIBILITY OF POLL SITES

Poll monitors reported that more than 200 poll sites in the coverage area—nearly one in three of visited poll sites—had at least one major problem with accessibility. Most of those sites had insufficient signage directing voters to an accessible entrance, and many sites lacked entrances that were accessible for voters with mobility limitations. For example, one poll site in Jackson County had only a grassy path from the parking lot and had two sets of stairs leading up to the entrance. A poll monitor confirmed that the ramp at this location did not extend to the poll site entrance, so any voters with mobility limitations were unable to reach the door.



Insufficient signage, a gravel parking lot, a narrow door for wheelchair access, and a small curb up to the door at a poll site in Newton County. *Photo by LDF Staff*



A Jackson County poll site with stairs. *Photo by LDF Staff*



No designated accessible parking spots, a dirt road, and no signage at a poll site in Yazoo County. *Photo by LDF Staff*

ATTACKS ON THIRD-PARTY ORGANIZATIONS

The understaffing of poll sites and undertraining of poll workers not only contributed to long lines, but also led to reports of hostile interactions with monitors and voters at thirteen poll sites. Poll workers who were not trained about

nonpartisan poll monitors often accused monitors of “electioneering”—that is, being partisan campaigners who are not permitted near polling places. Workers at one site even threatened a monitor with arrest.

POST-ELECTION ISSUES

Following Election Day on November 5, the Hinds County Election Commission did not expect to meet its November 15 certification deadline due to hundreds of affidavit ballots that the election commissioners had not yet adjudicated. Election commissioners are part-time employees in Mississippi, and some commissioners could not work past the hours for which they were paid due to other obligations. Failing to certify would not only violate state law,²¹⁵ but it would also cause problems for the run-off election for a Mississippi Supreme Court seat that was slated for November 26, with absentee voting to begin on November 16.

The BVOTR team, along with the Mississippi Center for Justice and the Mississippi Poor People’s Campaign, made repeated calls to the election commissioners, circuit clerk, and the Secretary of State’s office in an effort to ensure that Hinds County would certify the election. The BVOTR team also sent a letter to Hinds County, outlining the county’s mandatory duty to meet the certification deadline. The team mobilized local partners to

attend the affidavit canvassing in person so they could provide live updates on whether the election commissioners would finish the ballot count and ensure that the commissioners still counted every vote despite rushing to meet the deadline. Following these advocacy efforts, the Hinds County Election Commission certified the election by the afternoon of November 15.

Meanwhile, the BVOTR team also called election officials to determine which counties were prepared to print absentee ballots in office on November 16. Some election officials in the Mississippi Delta region’s majority-Black counties responded that they were unable to have absentee ballots by the required deadline. LDF informed all counties that, based on state law, in-person absentee voting must be available on one of the two Saturdays prior to any election.²¹⁶ LDF urged the counties to have a plan to print ballots despite the potential certification delay. Local partners went to relevant county offices and reported that in-person absentee voting opened on time.

The BVOTR team also learned that several large, predominantly white counties had started providing absentee voting for the run-off election before Hinds County certified the election. Those counties allowed voters to cast in-person absentee ballots as early as the Wednesday before the Saturday they were supposed to start. The Secretary of State confirmed that counties should not have begun providing in-person absentee voting if Hinds County, and thus the state, had not yet certified the general election results. The state's inability to ensure that all counties had consistent practices for printing run-off ballots and beginning the run-off voting process was deeply concerning.²¹⁷

Mississippi Supreme Court Run-off Election

Given the importance of state courts, LDF put together an election protection program to monitor the closely contested Mississippi Supreme Court run-off election. In just one week, BVOTR partnered with Mississippi Votes, the Mississippi Poor People's Campaign, and the Mississippi Center for Justice to recruit, train, and assign roughly fifty monitors covering twelve priority counties with large numbers of Black voters. In total, the coalition monitored 300 precincts.

Due to the close run-off election results, the race was ultimately decided by the count of absentee and affidavit ballots.²¹⁸ The BVOTR team worked with local partners to establish a post-election monitoring program to observe the counting of the absentee and affidavit ballots during Thanksgiving weekend. LDF developed a training on the two different adjudication processes: in Mississippi, absentee ballots are adjudicated by a Resolution Board of civilians, while affidavit ballots are adjudicated by a mix of election officials. BVOTR recruited, trained, and assigned roughly thirty monitors and, during the week of December 2, conducted daily debrief calls with each monitor providing read-outs of the number of rejected ballots and the reasons for their rejection. LDF also filed a public records request with the Secretary of State for information about rejected affidavit ballots, including the total number and underlying reasons. The monitors also filed county records requests to ascertain why certain ballots were rejected. Information about why affidavit ballots were used and rejected helps inform LDF's future advocacy.

**During the run-off election,
~50 monitors covered
12 priority counties with large
numbers of Black voters**



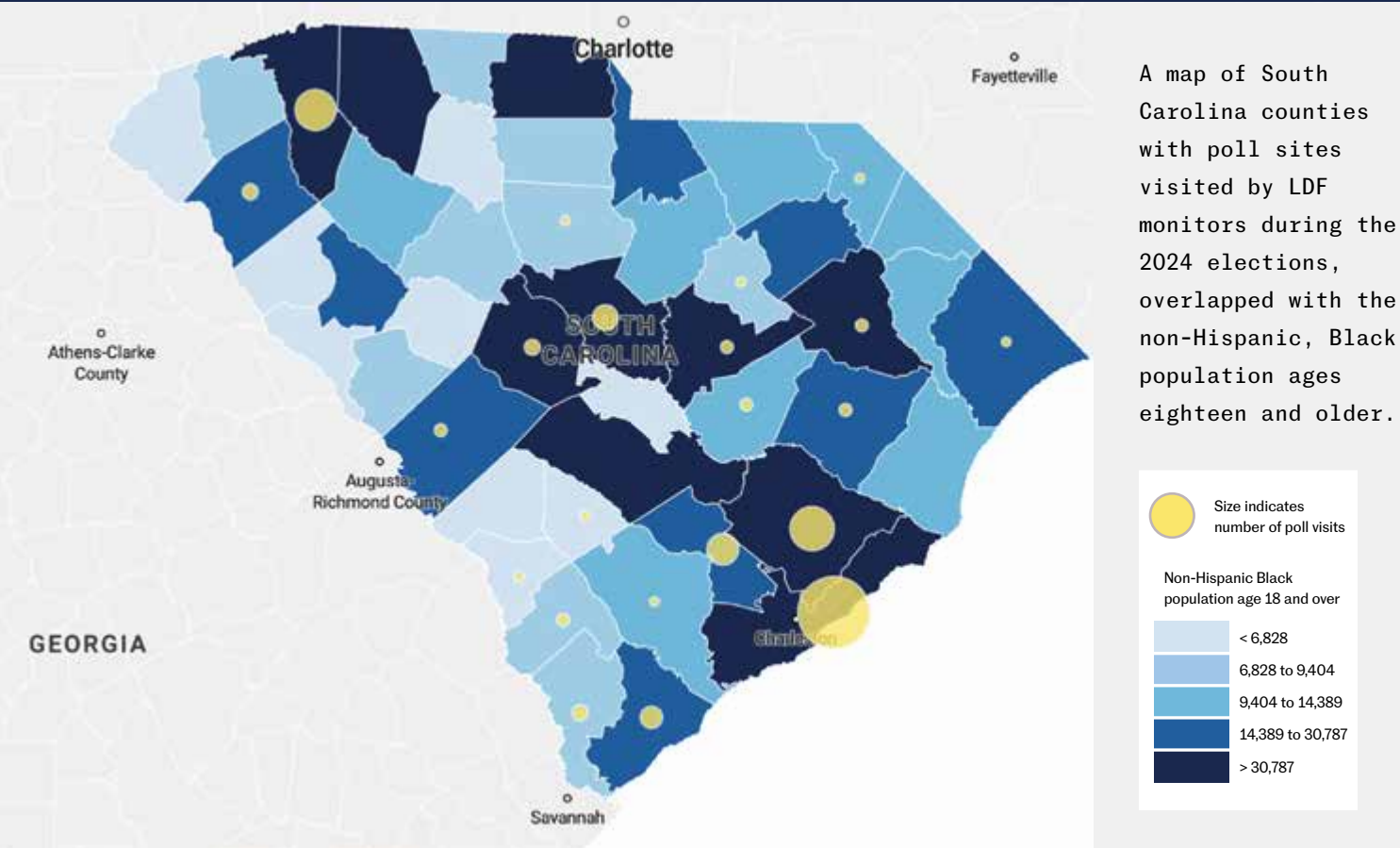
Students attend Election Day activities at Jackson State University to encourage student participation in national and local elections. Photo by Aron Smith/Jackson State University via Getty Images

FUTURE ADVOCACY AND NEXT STEPS

LDF will continue its advocacy to protect voting rights in Mississippi in future elections, including:

- Engaging with Mississippi officials, as well as with local residents, to improve the training of poll workers.
- Advocating with Mississippi officials to take proactive steps to confirm accurate information about poll site locations and ensure they are accessible.
- Launching a new program that will civically engage local residents in three pilot counties: DeSoto, Harrison, and Hinds counties. The program will train cohorts of advocates in each county on the local and state ecosystem of election administration. These advocates will attend election commissioner meetings, gather information from officials, and provide public comment when possible.
- Collaborating with local partners to bring early voting to Mississippi.
- Urging the Mississippi Legislature to pass a voting rights restoration bill and a constitutional amendment that would remove disenfranchising crimes from the Mississippi State Constitution.
- Extending election protection coverage to municipal elections across Mississippi to combat misinformation and defend the right to vote in those elections.

SOUTH CAROLINA



Racial Turnout Gap Despite Record Turnout

The South Carolina Election Commission’s report on certified election results for the 2024 general election indicates that South Carolina had a record turnout, with a total of 2,553,186 South Carolinians voting.²¹⁹ This represents sixty-six percent of the total 3,851,932 registered voters.²²⁰

However, data from the U.S. Census Bureau reveal persistent racial turnout gaps in South Carolina. Over seventy-five percent of voting-age white, non-Hispanic South Carolinians registered for the election, compared to sixty-eight percent of voting-age Black South Carolinians.²²¹ As a result of the racial gap in registration as well as a racial turnout gap, only fifty-four percent of the eligible Black voting-age population in South Carolina cast a ballot, compared to nearly seventy percent of their white, non-Hispanic counterparts.²²²

LDF Nonpartisan Voter Outreach and Get Out the Vote

Impact by the numbers:

- In collaboration with the South Carolina Voting Rights Coalition, the BVOTR team **DISTRIBUTED MORE THAN 34,750 VOTING RIGHTS PALM CARDS** to potential voters.
- BVOTR and its partners **MAILED VOTING RIGHTS INFORMATION TO MORE THAN 346,850 BLACK HOUSEHOLDS** across South Carolina in 2024.
- During early voting and on Election Day, the coalition **FIELDLED MORE THAN 1,440 POLL SITE CHECKLIST REPORTS, 127 REMOTE MONITORING REPORTS, AND 325 TICKETS FROM CALLS TO THE 866-OUR-VOTE HOTLINE**, along with additional issues that were escalated through other informal channels.
- BVOTR **RECRUITED AND TRAINED FIFTY NONPARTISAN POLL OBSERVERS** to volunteer during South Carolina’s 2024 primary elections in February and June, and these volunteers **RECORDED OVER 570 POLL SITE CHECK-INS ACROSS THIRTEEN COUNTIES**.
- BVOTR led an in-person training session at Charleston School of Law and **RECRUITED FIFTY-EIGHT LAW STUDENTS TO BE POLL OBSERVERS**. These students could receive pro bono credits toward graduation for volunteering.
- On October 5, 2024, the BVOTR team and the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law **HOSTED THE SECOND ANNUAL SOUTH CAROLINA VOTING RIGHTS CONVENING**, where organizations across the state met in Columbia to discuss issues ahead of Election Day.

54%

of the eligible Black voting-age population in South Carolina cast a ballot

LDF ON THE GROUND

8

LDF staff members

6

volunteer trainings

158

volunteers

285

poll sites monitored across 22 counties

15+

members of the South Carolina Voting Rights Coalition, including: LDF, ACLU of South Carolina, Be The Ones, Black Voters Matter, Campaign Legal Center, Columbia NOW, Delta Sigma Theta, Disability Rights South Carolina, Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, League of Women Voters South Carolina, Root & Rebound, the South Carolina State Conference of the NAACP, and Upstate Action Alliance, in addition to local chapters of Divine Nine organizations and the NAACP

→ BVOTR collaborated with its partners to **HOST SEVERAL “GET OUT THE VOTE” EVENTS** across South Carolina and to urge South Carolinians to create a concrete voting plan, especially since this was the first presidential election in South Carolina with no-excuse early voting. These plans, outlined in BVOTR’s voting rights palm cards, prepared voters whether they cast their ballot by mail, during early voting, or on Election Day.

→ Alongside Black Voters Matter, the BVOTR team also **EMBARKED ON THE “WE FIGHT BACK SOUTH CAROLINA COLLEGE TOUR”** to provide voting resources for students and get them engaged in the electoral process.

→ BVOTR worked to expand the South Carolina Voting Rights Coalition’s presence in the Lowcountry, a series of counties in the southeastern part of the state that have high concentrations of Black voters and have traditionally been underserved by voting rights advocacy.²²³ To reach the Lowcountry, BVOTR drew on a newly launched partnership with the Young Black Lawyers’ Organizing Coalition (YBLOC), a network of young Black lawyers and law students dedicated to protecting Black voting rights. During the final three days of South Carolina’s early voting in November 2024, eight students from Howard University School of Law traveled to South Carolina and visited all early voting locations in Allendale, Bamberg, Beaufort, Berkeley, Colleton, Dorchester, Hampton, and Jasper counties. Through their poll observing, **YBLOC VOLUNTEERS HELPED REMEDY ISSUES RELATED TO ACCESSIBILITY, SIGNAGE, AND POLL WORKER TRAINING IN ADVANCE OF ELECTION DAY.**



BVOTR’s South Carolina team prepares for early voting monitoring with volunteers from YBLOC. Photo by LDF Staff

Identifying and Addressing Barriers to Voting

LDF observed barriers to voting:

- Voter intimidation and threats
- Problems with ballot access and delays
- Inadequate signage
- Long lines
- Insufficient accessibility of poll sites
- Attacks on third-party organizations

BARRIERS TO VOTING

VOTER INTIMIDATION AND THREATS

In advance of early voting, the BVOTR team sent a letter urging the South Carolina Attorney General to issue a public statement reiterating that voter intimidation violates state and federal law.²²⁴ BVOTR’s letter cited multiple reports of voter intimidation from past elections in South Carolina and expressed concerns about South Carolinians’ ability to safely exercise their right to vote.²²⁵ The Attorney General did not reply to the letter or issue any statement condemning voter intimidation.

During early voting, BVOTR received multiple calls reporting intimidation. In one case, a caller reported being videotaped inside a poll site by a white man who claimed to be an uncredentialed, “private media” representative. The threatening individual left only after poll workers called the police, and he was gone before police officers arrived. BVOTR flagged the issue with the appropriate election law official in the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of South Carolina.

In other cases, intimidation was used to target poll workers. In Orangeburg, a voter entered a poll site wearing a “Let’s Go Brandon” hat—a phrase popularized as an anti-Biden slogan.²²⁶ When a poll worker asked the man to remove his hat because it constituted prohibited electioneering, he refused and used profane language, eventually escalating to physical violence. The poll workers contacted local police. BVOTR reported the incident to the U.S. Attorney’s Office, which was already investigating the incident, as was the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division.²²⁷

In Charleston County, officials gave all election workers panic buttons in preparation for the elections.²²⁸ The very need for such precautions illustrates the tense environment for voters and poll workers in 2024.

LDF Legal Defense Fund

ACLU South Carolina





Advancing racial justice since 1940

Sent Via Email

September 13, 2024

The Honorable Alan Wilson
South Carolina Attorney General
P.O. Box 11549
Columbia, S.C. 29211

Re: Request for South Carolina Attorney General Statement Warning Against Voter Intimidation

Dear Hon. Alan Wilson:

On behalf of the Legal Defense Fund, we urge you to issue a statement condemning voter intimidation and affirming your commitment to ensure that voters will be free to vote without fear this November. In light of evidence of intimidation in recent elections, and reports indicating organized efforts to intimidate and harass South Carolina voters during this November’s election, it is critically important that your office issue a statement to warn bad actors that voter intimidation will not be tolerated.

1. Voter Intimidation is a Serious Crime.

Voter intimidation is a serious crime under both federal law and South Carolina law. Federal law provides that:

Whoever intimidates, threatens, coerces, or attempts to intimidate, threaten, or coerce, any other person for the purpose of interfering with the right of such other person to vote or to vote as he may choose, or of causing such other person to vote for, or not to vote for, any candidate for [federal office] . . . shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than one year, or both.

See 18 U.S.C. § 594. Similarly, South Carolina law provides that:

A person who, at any of the elections, general, special, or primary, in any city, town, ward, or polling precinct, threatens, mistreats, or abuses a voter with a view to control or intimidate him in the free exercise of his right of suffrage, is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be fined in the discretion of the court or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both.

See S.C. Code Ann. § 7-25-80.

In addition, any individuals or organizations engaging in voter intimidation are subject to civil liability under numerous federal statutes. *First*, Section 11(b) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 provides that “no person, whether acting under color of law or otherwise, shall intimidate, threaten, or coerce, or attempt to intimidate, threaten, or coerce any person

PROBLEMS WITH BALLOT ACCESS AND DELAYS

Early Voting for All South Carolinians

In 2022, LDF joined successful advocacy efforts to pass legislation that made no-excuse early voting uniformly available to all South Carolinians.²²⁹ Previously, South Carolina had administered an in-person early voting system, which required voters to attest to a reason that prevented them from voting on Election Day. Similar requirements applied to absentee voting by mail. Act 150 removed the excuse requirement for early voting, leading to record-breaking early voting turnout:²³⁰ in the fall of 2024, forty-three percent of all registered voters in South Carolina voted early.²³¹

Despite the overall success in early voting turnout, the implementation of early voting varied significantly across counties. Less than twenty-eight percent of counties had more than one early voting site.²³² To ensure that Black voters across the

state had equal access to early voting opportunities, the BVOTR team consistently advocated with local election directors to place early voting sites in locations that would be most accessible for voters. In the months before Election Day, BVOTR sent advocacy letters urging three county election directors—in Aiken, Beaufort, and Richland counties—to add more early voting sites. LDF’s South Carolina partners, as well as internal poll observer data from the 2020 elections, indicated that Black voters in those counties faced longer lines and more voting issues than elsewhere in the state.²³³ BVOTR’s letters highlighted the racialized inequities with existing early voting locations and proposed new sites that would help remedy those inequities. Election officials asserted that it was too close to the election to make any changes.

FIGURE 3. Early and Absentee Ballots as a Percentage of Total Ballots Cast, South Carolina

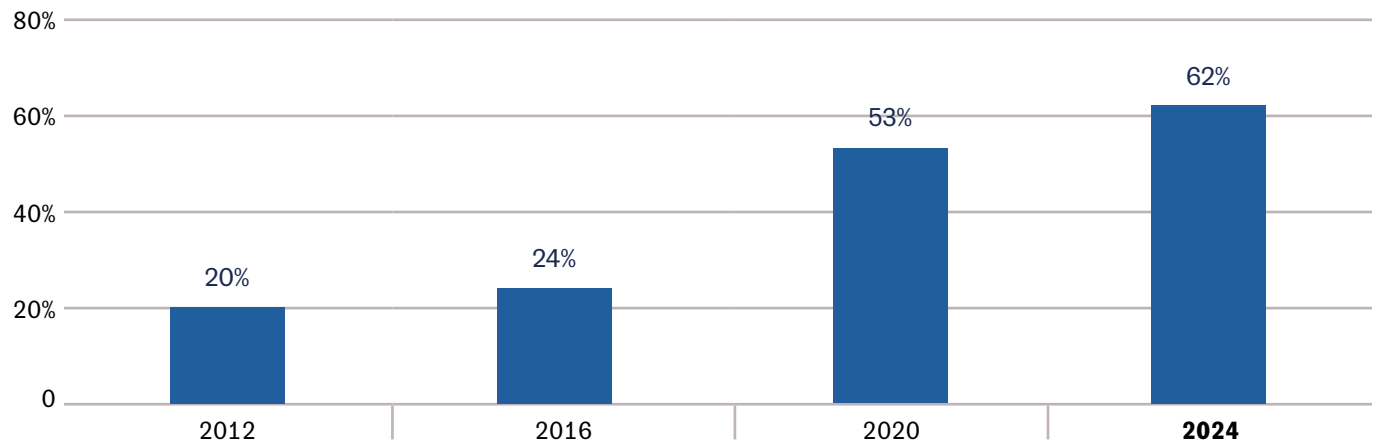


CHART: Thurgood Marshall Institute • SOURCE: South Carolina Election Commission • Created with Datawrapper



A voter casts a ballot in the primary election during early voting on January 31, 2024, in Moncks Corner, South Carolina. Photo by Brandon Bell/Getty Images

Hurricane Helene

In late September 2024, Hurricane Helene left a path of devastation across the Southeast.²³⁴ In South Carolina, the upstate area received between eight and twenty-four inches of rain, causing floods and power outages.²³⁵ In the first week of October, around 440,000 people in South Carolina did not have power.²³⁶ A month after the hurricane landed, recovery efforts were still ongoing across South Carolina, and, as of October 31, the Federal Emergency Management Agency was providing assistance to over 204,000 households in the state.²³⁷

Hurricane Helene severely impacted the November 2024 elections in South Carolina, with respect to both election administration and voters' ability to access voter registration offices. South Carolina's in-person voter registration deadline was October

4, and online and mail-in deadlines were just a few days later.²³⁸ Yet many state government offices in the upstate region, including voter registration offices, were closed due to Hurricane Helene. The sheer number of people without power as a result of the hurricane was a clear impediment to online registration.

In response, the BVOTR team and several civil rights organizations sent a letter to the South Carolina Attorney General, the governor, and the head of the South Carolina State Election Commission, requesting an extension of all registration deadlines to October 14. Ultimately, a South Carolina court extended the voter registration deadline due to the impacts from Hurricane Helene.²³⁹

Other Problems with Voter Registration

South Carolina voters faced widespread problems with voter registration in 2024. The ACLU and its South Carolina affiliate branch sued the South Carolina State Election Commission and the South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles (SCDMV) in state court, alleging that the SCDMV denied more than 17,000 young people the opportunity to vote in the 2024 elections.²⁴⁰ The lawsuit alleged that seventeen-year-olds who would turn eighteen on or before Election Day—and thus would be eligible to vote—were left off the state's voter rolls despite having registered to vote at the SCDMV. The lawsuit also alleged that, for the past twenty-two years, the SCDMV had failed to

include voters whose eighteenth birthday was on or before Election Day, in violation of the National Voter Registration Act and other laws.²⁴¹ Due to the proximity to the election, the judge denied the proposed relief, which left many young people off the state's voter rolls in 2024.²⁴²

The SCDMV was the primary source of voter registration complaints that BVOTR received during the 2024 election cycle. Many people complained that they were not on the voter rolls even though they had registered at the SCDMV.²⁴³ These reports came from both young voters and residents who had moved from out of state.

INADEQUATE SIGNAGE

Another common issue in South Carolina was insufficient signage indicating the entrance to a poll site. During early voting and on Election Day, BVOTR received more than 100 reports of insufficient directional signage or insufficient multi-language signage. Some facilities had no signs at all to indicate that the location was a poll site. Some field volunteers reported hearing from poll workers that their county election office failed to provide sufficient signage. In future election cycles, BVOTR may be able to remedy more inadequate signage at poll sites through advocacy and communication with county election officials, emphasizing the importance of clearly marked poll sites.

100+

reports of insufficient directional signage or insufficient multi-language signage



A lack of signage at Marcia O'Brien Conference Center in Dorchester County, which created confusion regarding where people should vote.
Photo by LDF Staff

LONG LINES

High turnout in South Carolina meant there were long lines across the state, especially during early voting. South Carolina law allows counties to have up to seven early voting sites,²⁴⁴ but many counties opened fewer than seven. Some sites were also poorly placed—like the early voting locations with the longest lines in Richland County, which BVOTR had urged officials to change in the pre-election advocacy letter discussed above.

Generally, high turnout during the early voting period resulted in shorter wait times on Election Day across South Carolina. However, long lines and delayed openings did occur on Election Day in several counties due to temporary problems with voting machines at some sites. In many cases, it was reported that the machines were jammed or voters caused problems by improperly inserting their ballots into the machines. For each poll site with a delayed opening, the coalition’s rapid response team contacted county officials to ensure that the sites were using provisional ballots and communicating with impacted voters. Unlike other states, South Carolina law does not explicitly give counties the ability to extend polling hours when a polling site has a delayed opening or an interruption in voting.ⁱⁱⁱ LDF and the South Carolina Voting Rights Coalition plan to advocate for legislative changes to address this issue for future elections.

ⁱⁱⁱ South Carolina law clearly outlines the hours during which polling places should be open for voting for all elections and states that for general elections, polls should be open “without intermission or adjournment.” S.C. Code Ann. § 7-13-60; *see also* S.C. Code Ann. § 7-13-25(F).



Voters wait in a long line at Hanahan Library in Berkeley County during early voting. *Photo by LDF Staff*



Voters wait in a long line during early voting at Seacoast Church in Charleston County. *Photo by LDF Staff*

INSUFFICIENT ACCESSIBILITY OF POLL SITES

In spring 2024, BVOTR and Disability Rights South Carolina worked with the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of South Carolina to host a listening session concerning problems with accessibility at poll sites that were identified during the past several election cycles. For this listening session, BVOTR compiled all reports from poll observers concerning accessibility during the 2022 midterm and 2023 local elections, highlighting problems such as entrances with limited accessibility, inconsistent implementation of curbside voting, and insufficient signage. After the listening session, the U.S. Attorney’s Office agreed to alert federal poll observers in upcoming elections about the accessibility concerns shared by BVOTR.

The BVOTR team continued its accessibility advocacy throughout 2024. Due to the accessibility problems reported by poll observers during the June 2024 state-level primaries, the team sent

advocacy letters to Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester, and Greenville counties, explaining these problems and proposing solutions in advance of the November elections. BVOTR also sent letters to faith leaders across the state whose places of worship would be used as poll sites. These letters identified simple steps that faith leaders could take to ensure their places of worship would be accessible for the November elections.

Despite this advocacy, South Carolina voters still encountered problems with accessibility. The most common problem across South Carolina during early voting was a lack of either clearly marked accessible parking or any accessible parking at all at poll sites. BVOTR contacted county election officials to provide temporary solutions that would address the accessibility problems that field volunteers raised.

FIGURE 4. Poll Monitor Reports of Parking or Accessibility Issues, South Carolina

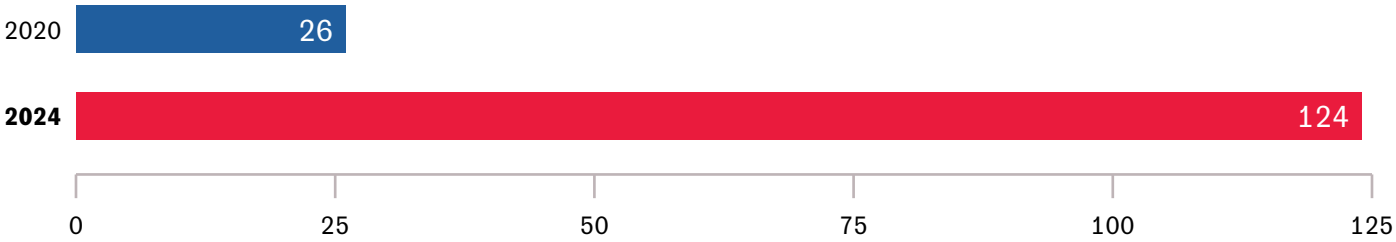


CHART: Thurgood Marshall Institute • **SOURCE:** Legal Defense Fund internal poll monitor reports 2020-2024 • Created with Datawrapper



An inaccessible entrance at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, forcing voters with disabilities to utilize curbside voting instead. Photo by LDF Staff

ATTACKS ON THIRD-PARTY ORGANIZATIONS

The nonpartisan election protection work of BVOTR and the South Carolina Voting Rights Coalition depends on the efforts of trained, nonpartisan poll observer volunteers, who travel to poll sites to support voters and report any issues impeding voters’ ability to cast a ballot.²⁴⁵ As part of this work, poll observers in 2024 wore BVOTR T-shirts stating, “Ask me about your voting rights” and “Nonpartisan Voter Support” to indicate that they were a nonpartisan source of voter support working with LDF’s “Black Voters on the Rise.” Despite the shirts’ nonpartisan text, poll workers in several counties asserted that the shirts were partisan in nature and, therefore, that volunteers wearing them near or inside poll sites were in violation of the state’s electioneering laws. Poll workers reprimanded BVOTR volunteers several times during early voting for wearing the shirts because both poll workers and county election administrators said that, taken together, the words “Black” and “vote” were partisan.

The BVOTR team responded with a letter to the executive director of the South Carolina State Election Commission, explaining that the T-shirts were nonpartisan and complied with state law and the U.S. Constitution. The letter asked that the executive director “issue guidance to all county election officials and in particular, Jasper County, that our volunteers cannot be excluded on the basis of wearing ‘Black Voters on the Rise’ apparel.”²⁴⁶ The same evening that BVOTR sent the letter, the Election Commission’s general counsel’s office responded, agreeing with LDF and stating that they would issue guidance to all forty-six counties. LDF separately confirmed that the guidance was sent.

While the incident indicated a lack of adequate training for poll workers, it also highlighted the state of play for Black voters in South Carolina. Poll workers, tasked with administering a process that is fundamental to a multi-racial democracy, conflated “Black” and “vote” with partisan speech—a deeply troubling notion that represents the threats faced by Black voters for simply exercising their rights.



BVOTR T-shirts worn by nonpartisan poll observers.



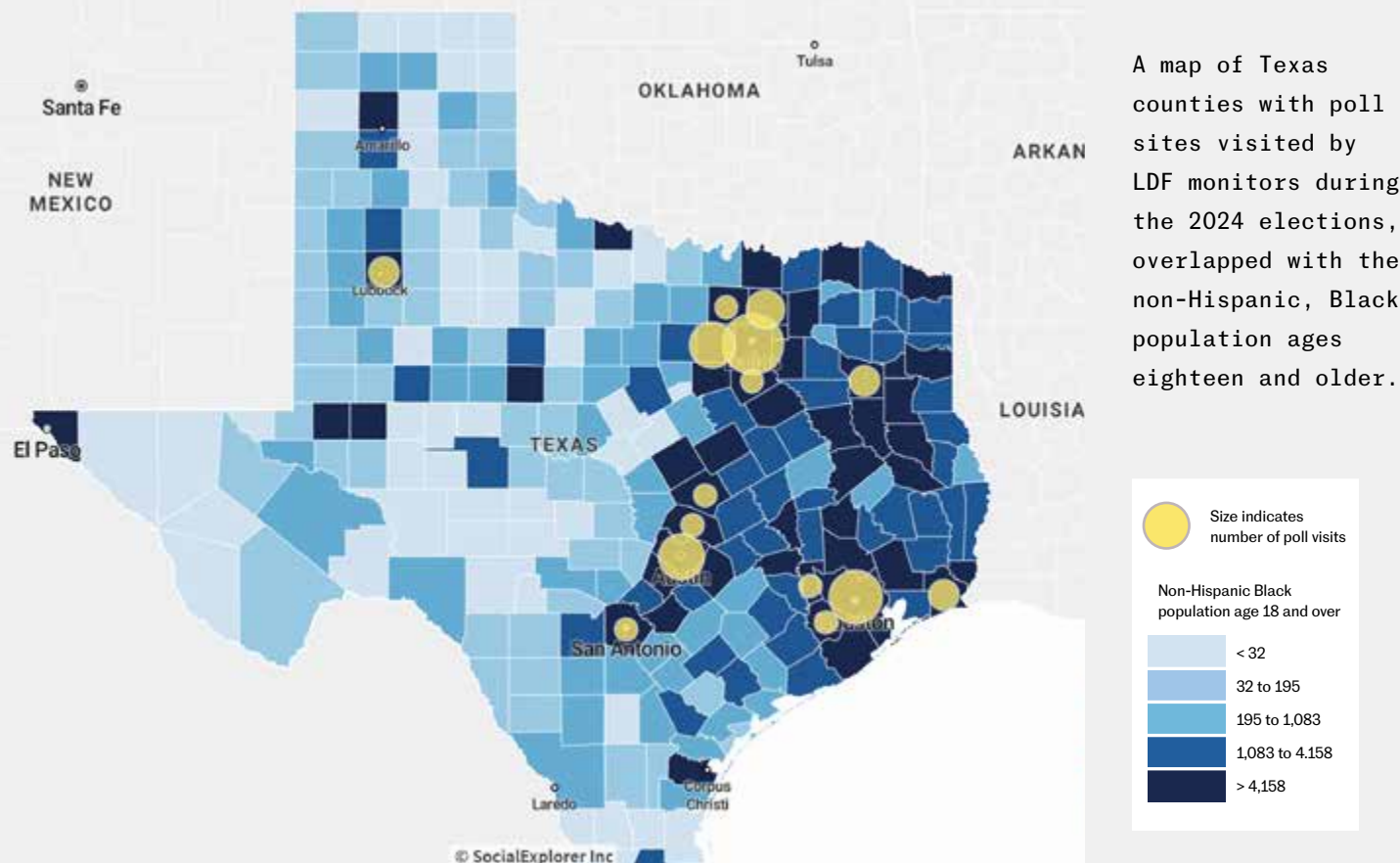
BVOTR’s South Carolina team conducts poll site monitoring in Charleston County during the June 2024 primary election. *Photo by LDF Staff*

FUTURE ADVOCACY AND NEXT STEPS

The information collected throughout the 2024 election cycle allowed LDF to reflect on the progress that has been made in South Carolina and to prepare for the next steps in community outreach and voter advocacy, including:

- ➔ Further expanding LDF’s footprint in the Lowcountry and supporting Black communities that have historically been underserved.
- ➔ Hosting “know your rights” sessions and poll observer trainings for students.
- ➔ Working with county officials to expand the number of early voting locations in counties with fewer than seven locations.
- ➔ Advocating for a statutory change that would allow counties to extend voting hours at any polling location experiencing a delay or interruption in voting—a long-needed reform given the many instances of delayed poll site openings during recent elections.

TEXAS



A map of Texas counties with poll sites visited by LDF monitors during the 2024 elections, overlapped with the non-Hispanic, Black population ages eighteen and older.

Low Voter Turnout, With a Small Racial Turnout Gap

According to the Texas Secretary of State, 18,623,931 Texans were registered to vote,²⁴⁷ and 11,416,616 Texans cast a ballot in the 2024 general election, resulting in a turnout rate of sixty-one percent of registered voters.²⁴⁸ Nearly seventy-five percent of white, non-Hispanic Texans of voting age were registered to vote, but less than sixty-seven percent of Black voting-age Texans were registered to vote.²⁴⁹ Overall, nearly fifty-eight percent of the eligible Black voting-age population in Texas cast a ballot in 2024, similar to the rate of their white, non-Hispanic counterparts.²⁵⁰

~58%

of the eligible
Black voting-age population
in Texas cast a ballot

LDF Nonpartisan Voter Outreach and Get Out the Vote

Impact by the numbers:

- BVOTR **DISTRIBUTED APPROXIMATELY 74,000 VOTER EDUCATION PALM CARDS** to Black Texas households ahead of Election Day.
- BVOTR **SENT 80,855 TEXTS** to voters.
- BVOTR **PRINTED MORE THAN 15,000 PALM CARDS AND 17,000 DOORHANGERS** for Black organizations in Texas, such as NAACP chapters, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, and The Afiya Center.
- BVOTR and Texas Election Protection Coalition (TEPC) volunteers **SUBMITTED MORE THAN 1,200 REPORTS ACROSS 1,043 POLL SITES** in 2024.
- BVOTR and partners **RECEIVED MORE THAN 5,000 HOTLINE CALLS TO 866-OUR-VOTE**.
- Throughout the 2024 election cycle, the BVOTR team **FIELDDED AND RESPONDED TO A TOTAL OF 2,344 REPORTED POLL SITE ISSUES** from volunteers and the hotline: **296** reports of inaccessible poll sites, **1,708** reports of problems with poll site administration (including delayed openings, broken voting machines, understaffed or undertrained poll site workers, and long lines), and **340** reports of intimidating or otherwise inappropriate voting environments (including electioneering, voter intimidation, and law enforcement presence).

Identifying and Addressing Barriers to Voting

LDF observed barriers to voting:

- Voter intimidation and threats
- Problems with ballot access and delays
- Insufficient accessibility of poll sites
- Attacks on third-party organizations
- Mass challenges

LDF ON THE GROUND

6

LDF staff members

24

volunteer trainings

650

volunteers

1,043

poll sites
monitored across
all 254 counties

6

members of the Texas Election Protection Coalition: LDF, ACLU of Texas, Common Cause, League of Women Voters Texas, Texas Civil Rights Project, and VoteRiders

BARRIERS TO VOTING

VOTER INTIMIDATION AND THREATS

Sixty percent of Texas voters said they believed it was “likely” that there would be political violence during the 2024 election cycle. LDF and its partners sent an advocacy letter to the Texas Office of the Attorney General, outlining the office’s obligations under state and federal law to combat voter intimidation. The BVOTR team also triaged reports from voters in Harris County who received racially charged voter intimidation letters by mail, along with phone calls.²⁵¹ Each letter included information about whether the voter and their neighbors had voted in prior elections and referenced their credit scores. In response, LDF and the Texas Civil Rights Project sent a cease-and-desist letter to the organization that sent the letters, which resulted in an immediate suspension of additional letters.

During the election, in Hopkins County, BVOTR poll monitors observed Black voters being asked to prove their reading skills, and at least one poll worker refused to give a provisional ballot to a voter. The Help America Vote Act provides that states shall permit voters to cast provisional ballots if they are not on the official list of eligible voters.²⁵² In Bexar County, a white poll worker questioned two Black voters about whether they lived in the area while they were reviewing a sample ballot on Election Day.



Men with Trump flags reportedly intimidate women supporting Harris at South County Community Center in Montgomery County on Election Day. Photo by LDF Staff

60%

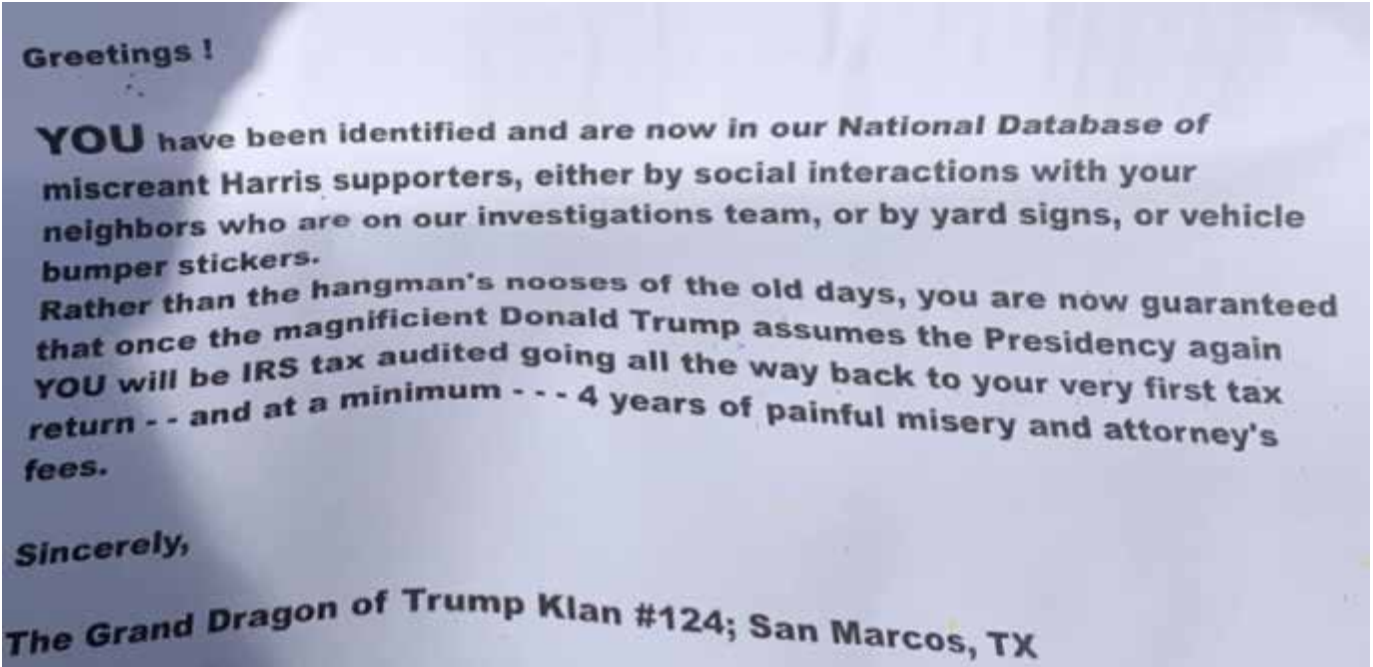
of Texas voters said they believed it was “likely” that there would be political violence during the 2024 election cycle



A man handing out literature to voters in line and reportedly trying to intimidate voters in Montgomery County. Photo by LDF Staff



A sign in Spanish warning noncitizens not to vote and threatening deportation at Wimberley Community Center in Hays County. Photo by LDF Staff



A pro-Trump flyer found on at least two Harris lawn signs in San Marcos that references nooses, lynchings, and the KKK. Photo by LDF Staff



A van with a black U.S. flag and campaign signs parked over the electioneering boundary line at the Civic Center in Denton County. *Photo by LDF Staff*

Additionally, the BVOTR team encountered signs that threatened voters with limited English proficiency and recently naturalized citizens with deportation. During the last week of early voting, a Latina caller in Bexar County reported to the Election Protection Hotline that she was harassed and held by poll workers in her car for five hours after she helped a friend who did not speak or read English well. LDF’s partners communicated with the county’s then-Elections Administrator Jacque Callanen to assist the caller.²⁵³ Another voter reported that a man at a poll site in Dickens County asked for the list of who had voted and yelled about “illegals” voting.²⁵⁴

In Hays County, the TEPC also intervened with resources and local counsel when law enforcement officers, who had been waiting outside a poll site,

forcibly held an immigrant voter against her will and accused her of illegally assisting her husband, who had disabilities, as well as a neighbor with limited English proficiency. Her husband was separated from her and denied necessary medical intervention as police questioned and threatened to arrest her. Although she was eventually released without criminal charges, she was deterred from voting in the future and from providing lawful assistance to her husband when he voted.²⁵⁵ This incident occurred merely one week after a federal District Court ruled that several provisions of Texas Senate Bill 1—which restricts and criminalizes assistance to voters with disabilities, limited literacy, or limited English proficiency—violate the VRA and, therefore, cannot be enforced, as discussed further below.²⁵⁶

5 hours

A Latina caller in Bexar County reported to the Election Protection Hotline that she was harassed and held by poll workers in her car for five hours after she helped a friend who did not speak or read English well.

PROBLEMS WITH BALLOT ACCESS AND DELAYS

College Campus Voting in Tarrant County

In mid-September 2024, just weeks before the start of early voting, the Tarrant County Commissioners Court proposed changes that would have removed early voting sites on college campuses.²⁵⁷ The removal of these polling places would have harmed not only student voters, but also those in the surrounding communities.²⁵⁸ All three of the initially proposed draft plans for “Consideration of Early Voting Sites for the General Election” removed sites at Tarrant County College South Campus and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Only about one-quarter of Tarrant County College’s student population is white, and the surrounding community has a nearly forty percent Black voting-age population. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary serves a community with a seventy percent Latino voting-age population.²⁵⁹

BVOTR and its partners at the Barbara Jordan Leadership Institute and Delta Sigma Theta led rapid response advocacy efforts. The groups sent an advocacy letter, raised media awareness, and testified in person alongside the Fort Worth community about the importance of these early voting locations and the proposed changes’ disproportionate harm to college students and their surrounding communities. After listening to the public outcry and the data-driven testimony provided by LDF Attorney Christina Das,²⁶⁰ the Tarrant County Commissioners Court rejected the draft plans, allowing continued use of the college campus poll sites. They also required an additional college poll site, which was a major win for the community and student voters.²⁶¹



LDF Attorney Christina Das provides testimony before the Tarrant County Commissioners to keep early voting locations on college campuses open. Screenshot by LDF Staff

Only about one-quarter of Tarrant County College’s student population is white, and the surrounding community has a

NEARLY 40%
BLACK VOTING-AGE POPULATION.

Photo by Julia Nikhinson / AFP via Getty Images

Anti-Voter Law: Challenging Texas Senate Bill 1

Texas enacted S.B. 1 in 2021, spurred by false claims of voter fraud in the 2020 elections.²⁶²

S.B. 1 unleashed a multi-pronged attack on voter assistance and voting by mail, and it created greater possibilities for voter intimidation by increasing the power of partisan poll watchers. S.B. 1's provisions ranged from new limits on assisting voters with disabilities or language-access needs to criminal penalties for election administrators who encourage absentee voting.

LDF and co-counsel^{iv} immediately intervened and filed *Houston Area Urban League v. Abbott*.²⁶³ Nearly two years later, in the fall of 2023, the case was tried over six weeks. LDF and co-counsel argued that the law violated parts of the First, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution and Section 2 of the VRA by targeting the methods and means of voting often used by voters of color, rendering it more difficult for them to vote.²⁶⁴

While the case was pending, multiple statewide and local elections occurred.

During the spring 2022 primary elections, absentee applications and ballots were rejected at drastically high levels as a result of S.B. 1.²⁶⁵

On September 28, 2024, the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas held that the voter canvassing restrictions in Section 7.04 of S.B. 1 violated the First Amendment and were unconstitutionally vague²⁶⁶ and struck down five provisions of S.B. 1 that restricted and criminalized voting assistance.²⁶⁷ These rulings marked major victories for Texas voters and the organizations that serve them, especially voters with disabilities, voters with low literacy, and voters with limited English proficiency.²⁶⁸ On February 12, 2026, the Fifth Circuit reversed the District Court's decision on appeal.

S.B. 1

unleashed a multi-pronged attack on voter assistance and voting by mail, and it **created greater possibilities for voter intimidation** by increasing the power of partisan poll watchers.

^{iv} The challenge to S.B. 1 included five lawsuits, including *Houston Area Urban League v. Abbott*, which was filed in 2021 by LDF, Reed Smith LLP, ArentFox Schiff, and The Arc on behalf of the Houston Area Urban League, Delta Sigma Theta, The Arc of Texas, and Jeffrey Lamar Clemmons, a poll worker.

Addressing Other Ballot Access Issues

The most common questions from Texas voters calling the hotline in 2024 concerned their eligibility and the necessary steps to become eligible to vote. Ahead of the November elections, 2.1 million Texas voters were scrubbed from the voter rolls and placed on the suspended or inactive list.²⁶⁹ Many poorly trained poll workers turned away people who were, in fact, eligible to vote and should have been able to update their information so they could vote using a regular ballot.

Many voters also called the hotline about absentee ballots. For example, during the spring 2024 primaries, Bexar County voters experienced delays in receiving their absentee ballots. As a result, many older voters risked their health to vote in person, and many student voters were unable to vote at all.²⁷⁰ LDF and coalition partners conducted public education about absentee ballot deadlines.²⁷¹

LDF further urged counties with high rates of absentee ballots to implement Intelligent Mail Barcodes (IMBs). An IMB is a “uniquely serialized,” sixty-five-bar code that allows the U.S. Postal Service to track the delivery and return of individual ballots. IMBs help track election mail, increasing transparency for voters about the ballot arrival and collection times. LDF was successful in working with Bexar County officials to implement IMBs on absentee ballots.

By 10 a.m. on the first day of early voting, poll workers in Dallas County noticed that some precinct numbers on printed ballots did not match the number associated with the person in the electronic pollbook.²⁷² When this occurred, precinct numbers were correct on the screen and in the pollbook, but the blank printed ballots were for the wrong precincts. Due to these errors and the high early voting turnout, voters waited for nearly two hours at certain poll sites across Dallas County. The BVOTR team and its partners investigated this issue and discovered that the ballots printed with the wrong precinct numbers appeared to be randomized. The team focused on educating the public so that voters knew to preemptively look for their precinct number on their ballot. The TEPC's advocacy about the delays caused by this administrative error led to Dallas County extending voting hours to 9 p.m. from October 30 through November 1.²⁷³

In an advocacy letter to the Dallas County election office ahead of Election Day, LDF and its partners requested that the office inform all poll workers about this administrative error and instruct them to check all ballots for the correct precinct numbers. This problem with mismatched precinct numbers continued into Election Day, and the TEPC stationed nonpartisan poll monitors at key locations to raise awareness among voters. Due to this advocacy, the problems and confusion about the precinct number error were likely on a much smaller scale.



A poll site at Arise Church in Dallas County with no accessible curb cut. Photo by LDF Staff

INSUFFICIENT ACCESSIBILITY OF POLL SITES

Under the ADA, all voters must be able to access all poll sites regardless of disability.²⁷⁴ However, the inaccessibility of poll sites and the lack of proper signage for curbside voting have been perennial problems in Texas elections. For example, the Alief Neighborhood Center in Harris County had no signage indicating that curbside voting was available. At a poll site in Dallas County, a commercial truck blocked the entrance to the parking lot and curbside voting. Curbside voters in Jefferson County had to wait over an hour before they received any voting assistance.



A lack of an accessible curb cut at Fretz Park Library in Dallas County. *Photo by LDF Staff*



A long line at White Settlement Public Library in Tarrant County, with some voters waiting over an hour. *Photo by LDF Staff*

ATTACKS ON THIRD-PARTY ORGANIZATIONS

A group of students from Howard University School of Law flew to Texas and were split into two groups to monitor polls and observe the last day of early voting: one in Harris County and the other in Jefferson County. While poll monitoring, the BVOTR team and the Howard law students faced hostility and intimidation from the poll workers at the Jefferson County Precinct One Office. Although the volunteers explained that they were nonpartisan monitors, the poll workers surrounded them,

encroached on their physical space, and yelled at them. The officials threatened to call the police and to “lock them up” unless they moved beyond the electioneering boundary, which at the time was erroneously placed more than 500 feet—instead of the requisite 100 feet—from the polling location. Partners at the Texas Civil Rights Project helped connect the BVOTR team with the Secretary of State’s Elections Director, who stepped in to resolve the situation.

MASS CHALLENGES

County election offices across Texas received a flood of formal, yet frivolous, challenges to voter eligibility in 2024.²⁷⁵ Third-party actors, such as True the Vote, questioned the validity of voter registrations, even within the federally mandated ninety-day quiet period before Election Day.²⁷⁶ The challenges predominantly utilized the U.S. Postal Service’s national change-of-address information to identify people who may no longer reside at the address where they were registered to vote. These challenges occurred even though the Texas Election Code states that challenges to a voter’s registration may only be considered if supported by “the personal knowledge of the voter desiring to challenge the registration” regarding “a specific qualification for registration that the challenged voter has not met.”²⁷⁷

LDF and partners at the Texas Civil Rights Project, the Campaign Legal Center, and the ACLU of Texas responded by sending guidance to all 254 Texas counties, explaining the applicable legal standard that required rejection of all third-party challenges missing the statutory “personal knowledge” requirement. Several counties, including Denton and Galveston counties, rejected frivolous challenges in response to this advocacy.



Voters wait outside a poll site in McAllen, Texas, on November 5, 2024. Photo by Michael Gonzalez/Getty Images

FUTURE ADVOCACY AND NEXT STEPS

The work of improving elections and educating voters is never over, and LDF plans to continue this advocacy in Texas through several initiatives, including:

- Continuing to analyze the robust information gathered by monitors across Texas during the 2024 election cycle. The team will use the data to determine which poll sites did not meet federal and state standards and which communities were impacted as a result. LDF will send advocacy letters in those areas, explaining best practices to ensure future compliance.
- Conducting a listening tour across target regions in Texas to hear from directly impacted voters and to advocate for improvements before future elections.
- Urging legislators to pass the Barbara Jordan Voting Rights Act of Texas.²⁷⁸

CONCLUSION

In the 1944 U.S. Supreme Court case *Smith v. Allwright*, LDF founder Thurgood Marshall won what he later described as the most important victory of his career: securing the right of Black voters to participate fully in the nation’s democracy under the Fifteenth Amendment. More than eight decades later, LDF’s work to protect that hard-won right continues in the face of intensifying authoritarian threats aimed at dismantling the basic systems that make democratic participation possible.

Across the South, voter suppression took new and dangerous forms in 2024. States increasingly criminalized efforts to assist voters, using the power of law enforcement to spread fear within communities and deter their civic participation. Mass voter challenges were weaponized to purge eligible voters—especially Black voters and other voters of color—from voter rolls. Misinformation and disinformation campaigns targeted communities with uncanny precision, sowing confusion and distrust. Officials in many jurisdictions refused to comply with federal accessibility laws, forcing voters with disabilities to face unequal and often insurmountable barriers at poll sites. The 2024 election cycle also saw an alarming rise in voter intimidation by both state and non-state actors, chilling political participation and undermining confidence in the political process.

Americans take pride in the ideal of “one person, one vote”—the belief that every voice matters and every ballot counts. Yet the United States continues to fall short of this promise, ranking near the bottom

among peer democracies in voter turnout and failing to guarantee that all people can participate in the political process safely, freely, and equally.

This Report captures only a snapshot of the obstacles that government and private actors erected during the 2024 election cycle—and the extraordinary efforts required by civil rights advocates, organizers, lawyers, and community members to overcome them. With the midterm elections coming up this year, urgent action is needed to better ensure that voting is fair, accessible, and secure for all.

The promise of the Reconstruction amendments, including the Fifteenth Amendment, remains unfulfilled. To protect the future success of our nation’s democracy, public officials and elected leaders must ensure that every person—regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, age, or zip code—can exercise their right to vote without fear or obstruction.

VOTING AND ELECTIONS DICTIONARY

Absentee ballot/vote-by-mail ballot: A ballot cast via mail by a person who is unable to vote in person at a polling location. The criteria to cast an absentee ballot vary by state. Only eight states (California, Colorado, Hawaii, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and, for general elections only, Vermont) automatically send all their eligible registered voters an absentee ballot.

Canvass: The process in which election officials evaluate all the data collected during the election and confirm their accuracy. During this process, every vote that is cast is confirmed, including votes cast by mail, by uniformed and overseas citizens, by provisional ballot, and during early voting and on Election Day.^v

Early voting: The period prior to Election Day during which voters can vote in person. The length of this period varies by state, and not every state offers early voting. In states that host in-person early voting, a person's early voting location may be different from their Election Day polling location.

Election: The act or process of electing, using the right, power, or privilege of making a choice.

At-large elections: Elections in which all voters cast their ballots for all candidates in the jurisdiction.^{vi}

Majority elections: Elections in which a majority of votes decides the winner.

Municipal elections: Elections for officials in a municipality (such as a city or town). Municipal elections can occur on various dates outside of state and federal elections.

Run-off elections: Elections that may occur if a candidate fails to achieve the necessary threshold of votes, typically at least fifty percent of the vote. In run-off elections, voters generally choose between the two candidates who garnered the most votes.

Single-member district elections: Elections in which voters in a designated electoral district elect a single representative.

Election certification: The process in which election officials attest that the election results are an accurate accounting of all the votes cast in that election. This is a necessary step for an election to be deemed final and complete.

Election Day: The official day to cast a ballot for candidates and propositions, and the final day to cast a ballot. Election days are typically on Tuesdays but can vary depending on the state and municipality hosting the election. For example, elections are held on Saturdays in Louisiana. Election Day is not a federal holiday, but some states recognize it as a state holiday and close their state offices, or they may require employers to provide paid time off.

Midterm elections: Elections that occur two years into a presidential term. Many elected officials, such as congressional or state representatives, serve for two-year terms.

Off-season elections: Elections that are held outside the two major election cycles that occur every two years (midterms) and four years (presidential).

Polling location: The location (also known as a precinct) where a person is assigned to cast their ballot in local, state, and federal elections based on their residential address. Some states have countywide polling locations, where people can vote at any location in their registered county during early voting or on Election Day. Polling locations are sometimes called poll sites, and both terms are used interchangeably.

Poll monitors: Nonpartisan volunteers who are positioned in or near poll sites to assist voters by answering questions about their voting rights. Poll monitors also observe and record any problems with election access and administration so they can notify election officials and report concerns to the nonpartisan Election Protection Hotline, 866-OUR-VOTE.

Poll watchers: People designated by candidates and political campaigns to observe the voting process and to notify election officials of any legal violation. While poll watchers have access inside poll sites and can keep notes on the conduct of the election, they are not allowed to intimidate voters, campaign, or disrupt the voting process. Many states require poll watchers to be identified and approved in advance of elections and to wear a badge or other identification indicating their role.

Poll workers: Official workers who are hired to administer elections, also known as election workers, election judges, poll commissioners, and election clerks. They work for and are paid by the government—not any candidate, campaign, or third party. Poll workers check in voters and ensure that every voter can effectively cast their ballot.

Postmark: An official mark stamped on a letter or other postal package giving the place, date, and time of posting. Postmarks are often used in reference to absentee ballot or vote-by-mail return. Ballots must be returned by Election Day. Ballots arriving after Election Day are still accepted if their postmark indicates they were mailed prior to Election Day.

Provisional ballot: A ballot provided to a voter who is unable to confirm their voter registration. Upon conclusion of the election, officials determine the voter's registration status, and, if registration is valid, the vote is counted.

Referendum: A vote held to decide a proposal, law, or political issue. Also known as a ballot measure or ballot proposition, a referendum is a method within the political process to place certain legislation directly in the hands of the electorate to decide by majority vote. Typically, a referendum is held if citizens in a state collect the required number of signatures to place a proposition on the ballot or if citizens demand that a recently passed law be subject to majority opinion.

Third-party voter registration organization: An organization that engages in any voter registration activity or conducts voter registration drives. Some states require these organizations to register to keep track of voter registration activity.

Vote: To express one's opinion by casting a ballot in an election.

Voter ID: Identification, such as a driver's license, U.S. passport, or state-issued ID, that registered voters may be required to present at a polling location to cast a ballot. Voter ID requirements and forms of acceptable identification vary by state.

^v For more information on the post-election process, visit the U.S. Election Assistance Commission website: <https://www.eac.gov/election-officials/election-results-canvass-and-certification>.

^{vi} For more information on at-large elections, see LDF's FAQ: <https://www.naacpldf.org/wp-content/uploads/At-Large-Voting-Frequently-Asked-Questions-1.pdf>.

Voter registration: The process by which an eligible voter registers with their local election office to cast a ballot. Upon registration, a person is eligible to vote in their registered state in all future elections. Local and state election offices keep track of who is permitted to participate in elections through voter rolls, a list of registered eligible voters.

Voter registration deadline: The deadline by which eligible voters must register to vote in any particular election. The deadline varies by state, and some states have same-day voter registration.

Voter rolls: An official list of those who are registered to vote in elections.

Voting equipment: The equipment with which voters cast their ballots. The equipment varies by state, and some states may use a hybrid version of the two most common forms: direct recording electronic systems and optical scanners.

Direct recording electronic systems:

Equipment that allows voters to directly mark their selections on an electronic device, which records the vote into computer memory.

Optical scanners: Equipment that allows voters to cast their ballot by filling in an oval or box next to their choice on a paper ballot. That ballot is then fed into a ballot scanner either at the polling location or at a central vote-counting facility that records their vote. Some voters may also use a ballot-marking device that encodes their vote into a QR code or barcode.

(right) Demonstrators carry U.S. flags during the Selma-to-Montgomery march for voting rights in Alabama in March 1965.

Photo by Robert Abbott Sengstacke/Getty Images



Endnotes

1 Katharine Jackson et al., *Trump says Republicans should ‘nationalize’ voting in at least 15 places*, Reuters (Feb. 2, 2026, 4:18 PM), <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/trump-says-republicans-should-nationalize-voting-least-15-places-2026-02-02/>; Jacob Wendler, *Trump says Republicans should ‘nationalize’ elections*, Politico (Feb. 2, 2026, 1:38 PM), <https://www.politico.com/news/2026/02/02/trump-nationalize-elections-2026-midterms-00760015>.

2 Jacob Knutson, *After court order, DOJ divulges search warrant affidavit for FBI’s Fulton County election raid*, Democracy Docket (Feb. 10, 2026), <https://www.democracymidterms.com/news-alerts/justice-department-fulton-county-georgia-search-warrant-affidavit/>.

3 Erin Doherty et al., *‘There’s something bigger going on’: State election chiefs rebuff Trump bid to seize voter rolls*, Politico (last updated Jan. 31, 2026, 2:36 PM), <https://www.politico.com/news/2026/01/31/democrats-election-trump-voter-rolls-00758940>.

4 Yunior Rivas, *White House ‘can’t guarantee’ ICE won’t be at polls*, Democracy Docket (Feb. 5, 2026), <https://www.democracymidterms.com/news-alerts/white-house-cant-guarantee-ice-wont-be-at-polls/>.

5 Brennan Ctr. for Just., *Voting Laws Roundup: September 2024* (Sept. 26, 2024), <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/voting-laws-roundup-september-2024> [https://perma.cc/9HCX-E67B]. The Brennan Center tracked that between 2013 and 2016, states enacted at least seventeen restrictive voting laws, and between 2017 and 2020, states enacted at least twenty-seven restrictive voting laws.

6 Jude Joffe-Block, *6 facts about false noncitizen voting claims and the election*, NPR (Nov. 5, 2024, 8:29 PM), <https://www.npr.org/2024/10/12/nx-s1-5147789/voting-election-2024-noncitizen-fact-check-trump> [https://perma.cc/CHS9-VNVQ]; Mike Wendling, *Investigating Trump campaign’s biggest illegal voter claim*, BBC (Oct. 22, 2024), <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cz040d1plx2o> [https://perma.cc/F3RZ-9RK5]; see Adriano Udani et al., *Your Typical Criminal: Why White Americans Hate Voter Fraud*, 88 Pub. Op. Q. (Special Issue) 757, 776–77 (2024) (finding that voter fraud stereotypes are “strongly correlated with antipathy toward immigrants and people of color” and “political rhetoric that links voter fraud with a racial or immigrant threat narrative will find a receptive audience.”), <https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfae023>.

7 Unite 4 Freedom, *Litigation: Legal Action*, <https://unite4freedom.com/litigation/> [https://perma.cc/6FEF-J7RL] (last visited Feb. 17, 2026).

8 Combined Letters from Gene Hamilton, Exec. Dir., Am. First Legal Found., to the States (June 24, 2024), <https://media.aflegal.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/24150622/Combined-Letter.pdf> [https://perma.cc/K2UR-AP9F].

9 Norman L. Eisen et al., *Top 10 Election Litigation Cases in 2024 Implicating the Rule of Law*, Just Sec. (Oct. 30, 2024), <https://www.justsecurity.org/104393/election-top-10-oct-29/> [https://perma.cc/V3SZ-LCDU] (noting that the attorneys general of Florida, Texas, and Ohio joined thirteen other states in sending a letter to then-Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas, demanding that the DHS hand over data relating to immigrants’ citizenship status in connection with the 2024 election); Interview by Scott Simon with Jude Joffe-Block, Reporter, NPR, *GOP lawsuits about an obscure immigration database may set up election challenges* (Oct. 26, 2024, 5:00 AM), <https://www.npr.org/transcripts/nx-s1-5156112> [https://perma.cc/XF3S-AC7A].

10 Clint Swift et al., *Unraveling the Rise of Mass Voter Challenges*, Protect Democracy 9-10 (June 2024), <https://protectdemocracy.org/work/voter-challenges/> [https://perma.cc/6ZD9-4WKS].

11 Jonathan Brater, *Voter Purges: The Risks in 2018*, Brennan Ctr. for Just. 1-2 (2018), https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/2019-08/Report_Voter_Purges_The_Risks_in_2018.pdf [https://perma.cc/3HSV-N75Y]; see also Laughlin McDonald, *A Voting Rights Odyssey: Black Enfranchisement in Georgia* 52–54 (Cambridge Univ. Press 2003) (describing the historical origins of Georgia’s voter challenge laws), <https://archive.org/details/votingrightsof0000mcdo> [https://perma.cc/N6AE-L77J].

12 Swift et al., *supra* note 10.

13 *Id.*

14 *Id.* at 5, 9–10.

15 Alice Clapman et al., *A New Antidemocracy Tool*, Brennan Ctr for Just. (Sept. 5, 2023), <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/new-antidemocracy-tool> [https://perma.cc/H9FY-9VPN].

16 Swift et al., *supra* note 10, at 9–10, 19.

17 *Id.*

18 Alexandra Berzon et al., *Inside the Movement Behind Trump’s Election Lies*, N.Y. Times (Oct. 28, 2024), <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2024/10/28/us/politics/inside-the-movement-behind-trumps-election-lies.html> [https://perma.cc/7LTH-FJJB] (“Over the past four years, [the] Election Integrity Network has done more than any other group to take Mr. Trump’s falsehoods about corruption in the democratic system and turn them into action.”).

19 Caroline Haskins, *A new tool targets voter fraud in Georgia – but is it skirting the law?*, The Guardian (Feb. 26, 2024, 7:00 AM), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2024/feb/26/eagleai-georgia-voter-registration-election> [https://perma.cc/HQY5-JYBN]; Am. Oversight, *American Oversight and Campaign Legal Center Urge Investigation into Potential Election Law Violation in Columbia County, Georgia* (Mar. 12, 2024), <https://americanoversight.org/american-oversight-and-campaign-legal-center-urge-investigation-into-potential-election-law-violation-in-columbia-county-georgia/> [https://perma.cc/DZ2S-8ZMT].

20 Swift et al., *supra* note 10, at 8–10.

21 Open Access, *The Future of Election Administration: Cases and Conversations* 259–62 (Mitchell Brown, Kathleen Hale, & Bridgett A. King eds., Palgrave MacMillan 2019), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334571181_The_Future_of_Election_Administration_Cases_and_Conversations.

22 Swift et al., *supra* note 10, at 8–10.

23 Dan Biddle et al., *The History of Violent Opposition to Black Political Participation*, Equal Just. Initiative (Special Feature) (Aug. 13, 2024), <https://eji.org/news/the-history-of-violent-opposition-to-black-political-participation/> [https://perma.cc/Z3V9-AVVL].

24 *E.g.*, Hansi Lo Wang et al., *Bomb threats disrupted what was otherwise relatively smooth voting on Election Day*, NPR (Nov. 6, 2024, 1:13 PM), <https://www.npr.org/2024/11/06/nx-s1-5181834/election-day-voting-bomb-threats> [https://perma.cc/SKU8-6JC5].

25 Aaron Katersky et al., *‘Highly volatile’ threat landscape for November elections, new assessment finds*, ABC News (Nov. 3, 2025, 9:52 PM), <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/highly-volatile-threat-landscape-november-elections-new-assessment/story?id=127148686> [https://perma.cc/TWJ7-4VQC].

26 *E.g.*, Gabriel R. Sanchez et al., *Misinformation is eroding the public’s confidence in democracy*, Brookings Inst. (July 26, 2022), <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/misinformation-is-eroding-the-publics-confidence-in-democracy/> [https://perma.cc/MV5C-9SD8].

-
- 27 GA Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger (@GaSecofState), X (Oct. 31, 2024, 8:09 PM), <https://x.com/GaSecofState/status/1852140776882315763> [<https://perma.cc/SVY8-TVT3>].
- 28 Laura Romero et al., *False accusations of election fraud prompt some election workers across the US to quit ahead of Election Day*, ABC News (Aug. 24, 2022, 4:03 AM), <https://abcnews.go.com/US/us-false-accusations-election-fraud-prompt-election-workers/story?id=88739763> [<https://perma.cc/F7RP-J6QN>].
- 29 E.g., *Demystifying Vote-by-Mail for All Americans*, Campaign Legal Ctr. (Sept. 8, 2020), <https://campaignlegal.org/update/demystifying-vote-mail-all-americans> [<https://perma.cc/F7TN-554J>].
- 30 See e.g., Priscilla L. Southwell, *A Panacea for Latino and Black voters? Elevated turnout in vote by mail elections*, 47 Soc. Sci. J. 819–28 (2010) (analyzing election data from 2004–2007 and concluding that Black voters and Latino voters participated more often in vote-by-mail elections), <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1016/j.socij.2010.04.006>.
- 31 E.g., Richard L. Hasen, *Identifying and Minimizing the Risk of Election Subversion and Stolen Elections in the Contemporary United States*, 135 Harv. L. Rev. 265, 291–92 (2022) (explaining that election officials might “interfere with the fair administration of [an] election by creating conditions for long lines”); Tiffany Henley et al., *Contemporary Voter Suppression: Impact on the 2020 General Election*, 7 Ralph Bunch J. Pub. Aff. 1, 19 (2024) (finding that “long wait times hindered the ability of people to vote in the November election of 2020”).
- 32 Hannah Klain et al., *Waiting to Vote*, Brennan Ctr. for Just. (June 3, 2020), <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/waiting-vote> [<https://perma.cc/9QNA-HJZW>]; see also M. Keith Chen et al., *Racial Disparities in Voting Wait Times: Evidence from Smartphone Data*, 104 Rev. Econ. & Stat. 1341, 1342, 1348–49 (Nov. 2022) (finding that “being in a majority-minority polling location leads to a 12 second increase in the time it takes to check in to vote” and “areas with a higher proportion of [B]lack (and to a lesser extent Hispanic) residents are more likely to face long wait times than areas that are predominantly white”); Henley et al., *supra* note 31, at 15, 19 (analyzing voter suppression methods and voter turnout in 2020 U.S. elections and finding that Black voters were nearly twice as likely as white voters to report long wait lines as the main reason for not voting in the 2020 general election, ultimately concluding that the relationship between race and long wait lines was statistically significant).
- 33 E.g., Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101–12213 (1990) (prohibiting discrimination against individuals with disabilities in critical areas such as voting).
- 34 Help America Vote Act of 2002, Pub. L. No. 107-252, 116 Stat. 1666 (codified as amended in scattered sections of 42 U.S.C.); U.S. Election Assistance Comm’n, *Voting Accessibility*, <https://www.eac.gov/voting-accessibility> [<https://perma.cc/8LBQ-DJSS>] (last updated Jan. 20, 2026) (summarizing accessibility improvements made to U.S. voting systems by the Help America Vote Act of 2002).
- 35 U.S. Election Assistance Comm’n, *supra* note 34; Help America Vote Act of 2002, Pub. L. No. 107-252, 116 Stat. 1666 (codified as amended in scattered sections of 42 U.S.C.).
- 36 Ashley Lopez et al., *Groups that register voters are feeling besieged by new state laws*, NPR (May 16, 2024, 5:01 AM), <https://www.npr.org/2024/05/16/1251289736/voter-registration-drive-state-restrictions> [<https://perma.cc/G6NY-ZNDF>].
- 37 See, e.g., *id.*
- 38 Alanna Durkin Richer et al., *Some Republican-led states refuse to let Justice Department monitors into polling places*, AP News (Nov. 4, 2024, 9:09 PM), <https://apnews.com/article/justice-department-election-monitors-republican-states-b432050ce1a28e106394b6cefeb4866c> [<https://perma.cc/ZN5S-CZST>].
- 39 Citizens for Resp. & Ethics in Wash., *Election certification under threat: A legal roadmap to protect the 2024 election including from 35 officials who have refused to certify results* (Aug. 2024), <https://www.citizensforethics.org/reports-investigations/crew-reports/election-certification-under-threat/> [<https://perma.cc/AT49-2VLR>] (focusing on unlawful actions in Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Michigan).
- 40 Justin Glawe, *Network of Georgia election officials strategizing to undermine 2024 result*, The Guardian (Sept. 18, 2024, 9:00 AM), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2024/sep/18/trump-election-georgia> [<https://perma.cc/REC2-PB5P>].
- 41 NAACP Legal Def. Fund, *Democracy Defended* (2020), at 8, T. Marshall Inst. (Sept. 2, 2021), https://www.naacpldf.org/wp-content/uploads/LDF_2020_DemocracyDefended-1-3.pdf (hereinafter “Democracy Defended 2020”); Press Release, NAACP Legal Def. Fund, LDF Launches Voter Empowerment Project “Black Voters on the Rise” as the Country Commemorates the Signing of the Voting Rights Act (Aug. 6, 2024), <https://www.naacpldf.org/press-release/ldf-launches-voter-empowerment-project-black-voters-on-the-rise-as-the-country-commemorates-the-signing-of-the-voting-rights-act/> [<https://perma.cc/XUY8-EDJT>].
- 42 Democracy Defended 2020, *supra* note 41, at 8.
- 43 *Id.* at 8–54.
- 44 NAACP Legal Def. Fund, *Power the Polls*, <https://www.powerthepolls.org/ldf> [<https://perma.cc/V9AY-WHP7>] (last visited Feb. 17, 2026) [hereinafter “Power the Polls”].
- 45 *Partners*, Election Prot., <https://866ourvote.org/partners/> [<https://perma.cc/R557-3ALM>] (last visited Feb. 17, 2026).
- 46 Garrick Gibson, *The Divine Nine: Sororities and Fraternities on HBCU Campuses*, HBCU Lifestyle (Dec. 2, 2012, updated Dec. 28, 2024), <https://hbculifestyle.com/divine-nine-sororities-fraternities/> [<https://perma.cc/X9E7-46BK>].
- 47 *Our Story*, The Team, <https://www.theteam.org/our-story> (last visited Feb. 17, 2026).
- 48 NAACP Legal Def. Fund, *Student Voting Road Map* (2024), <https://indd.adobe.com/view/6a8de40c-5ba1-4cb9-ab6b-8369fdd45c03> [<https://perma.cc/8FA3-UDTQ>].
- 49 *Power the Polls*, *supra* note 44.
- 50 Ramsey Archibald, *Detailed maps show exactly how, where Alabama changed in 2020 Census*, AL.com (Sept. 5, 2021, 8:47 AM), <https://www.al.com/news/2021/09/detailed-maps-show-exactly-how-where-alabama-changed-in-2020-census.html> [<https://perma.cc/K24C-7D9L>].
- 51 *Black Belt (region; United States)*, Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Black-Belt> [<https://perma.cc/GJ9Z-48QM>] (last visited Feb. 17, 2026).
- 52 *Id.*
- 53 Compl. at 1-2, *Allen v. Milligan*, No. 2:21-cv-01530-AMM (N.D. Ala. filed Nov. 15, 2021).
- 54 See *Singleton v. Merrill*, 582 F. Supp. 3d 924, 1032–34 (N.D. Ala. 2022).
- 55 See *Merrill v. Milligan*, 142 S. Ct. 879, 880 (2022).
- 56 *Allen v. Milligan*, 599 U.S. 1, 30–34 (2023).
-

57 Zach Schonfeld, *Court picks new Alabama congressional map that heightens Black voting power*, The Hill (Oct. 5, 2023, 12:40 PM EST), <https://thehill.com/regulation/court-battles/4240225-court-picks-new-alabama-congressional-map-that-heightens-black-voting-power/> [<https://perma.cc/BNV5-4CJH>].

58 *Id.*

59 Margo Gray et al., *Alabama makes history with two Black Representatives in Congress*, WAFF48 (Feb. 14, 2025, 6:11 PM), <https://www.waff.com/2025/02/14/alabama-makes-history-with-two-black-representatives-congress/> [<https://perma.cc/J324-Y9EL>].

60 Gracie Johnson, *Alabama redistricting trial could reshape congressional map*, ABC 33/40 News (Feb. 6, 2025, 4:41 PM), <https://abc3340.com/news/local/alabama-redistricting-trial-could-reshape-congressional-map-caster-v-allen-allen-v-milligan-shomari-figures-district-two> [<https://perma.cc/4J2N-23GY>]; Notice of Appeal of Order Granting Inj. at 1, *Milligan v. Allen*, No. 2:21-cv-1530-AMM (N.D. Ala. filed June 6, 2025), https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.alnd.179302/gov.uscourts.alnd.179302.495.0_1.pdf [<https://perma.cc/F3LW-QKF5>].

61 U.S. Census Bureau, *Louisiana: 2020 Census*, <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/state-by-state/louisiana.html#:~:text=Louisiana's%20population%20Was%204%2C657%2C757%20in%202020&text=See%20how%20they%20compare%20to,to%202020%20on%20five%20topics> [<https://perma.cc/7ZGD-MGYV>] (listing 33.1% of Louisiana's 2020 population as Black or African American alone or in combination) (last visited Feb. 17, 2026).

62 *See, e.g.*, E-mail from Michael Pernick, Redistricting Couns., NAACP Legal Def. Fund, to the Senate Comms. on House and Governmental Affs. & Senate Governmental Affs. (Oct. 18, 2021, 11:13 AM), https://redist.legis.la.gov/2020_Files/MtgFiles/Email%20Testimony%20-%20Michael%20Pernick.%20NAACP%20Legal%20Defense%20&%20Educational%20Fund.%20Inc.%20&%20others.pdf [<https://perma.cc/BS3T-KUFB>] (including seven map submissions with two Black opportunity districts).

63 *Praise, criticism for Edwards after congressional map veto*, Associated Press (Mar. 10, 2022, 2:35 PM), <https://apnews.com/article/voting-rights-race-and-ethnicity-legislature-john-bel-edwards-census-2020-62c0fa4fa7e73ef34be5f8a10f8a4c6a> [<https://perma.cc/M3FL-V285>].

64 Wesley Muller et al., *Louisiana Legislature overrides Gov. Edwards' veto of congressional map*, La. Illuminator (Mar. 30, 2022, 6:18 PM), <https://lailluminator.com/2022/03/30/louisiana-legislature-overrides-gov-edwards-veto-of-congressional-map/> [<https://perma.cc/A63C-UHK8>].

65 Compl. at 1-2, *Robinson v. Ardoin*, No. 3:22-cv-00211-SDD-RLB (M.D. La. filed Mar. 30, 2022), <https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.lamd.60244/gov.uscourts.lamd.60244.1.0.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/G2FC-FSJF>].

66 *See Robinson v. Ardoin*, 605 F. Supp. 3d 759 (M.D. La. 2022) [hereinafter “*Robinson I*”], *vacated and remanded by*, 86 F.4th 574, 593–95 (5th Cir. 2023) (affirming that Louisiana had likely violated Section 2) [hereinafter, “*Robinson III*”].

67 *See Robinson v. Ardoin*, 37 F.4th 208, 215 (5th Cir. 2022) (ruling the defendants were unlikely to prevail in their appeal of such preliminary injunction) [hereinafter “*Robinson II*”].

68 *Ardoin v. Robinson*, 142 S. Ct. 2892, 2892 (2022).

69 *See Robinson III*, *supra* note 66, 86 F.4th at 583.

70 La. Stat. Ann. § 18:1276.1 (2025).

71 *See, e.g.*, Brendan Heffernan, *Jeff Landry targeted Garret Graves in redrawing district map, LA lawmaker testifies*, Shreveport-Bossier City Advoc. (Apr. 9, 2024), https://www.shreveportbossieradvocate.com/news/trial-over-la-congressional-map-continues-in-shreveport/article_a086e11e-f697-11ee-be21-33ffe415c113.html [<https://perma.cc/BK2B-3D9J>].

72 Compl. at 1–4, *Callais v. Landry*, No. 3:24-cv-00122 (W.D. La. filed Jan. 31, 2024), <https://assets.aclu.org/live/uploads/2024/03/Complaint-1.31.2024.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/NK5U-G635>].

73 Press Release, NAACP Legal Def. Fund, *Black Voters Intervene in Lawsuit to Defend Majority-Black Districts in Louisiana* (Feb. 8, 2024), <https://www.naacpldf.org/wp-content/uploads/Final-Release-Black-Voters-Intervene-in-New-Lawsuit-to-Defend-Majority-Black-District.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/NR6P-S99K>].

74 *Callais v. Landry*, 732 F. Supp. 3d 574, 614 (W.D. La. 2024) (concluding the map resulted in a racial gerrymander that “violate[d] the Equal Protection Clause”).

75 *Id.*

76 Emergency Appl. for Stay of Inj., *Robinson v. Callais*, 144 S. Ct. 1171 (2024) (No. 23A994).

77 *Robinson v. Callais*, 144 S. Ct. 1171 (2024).

78 *See, e.g.*, Sara Cline, *Black residents worry new Louisiana congressional district could be lost in Supreme Court case*, AP News (Oct. 14, 2025, 7:04 AM), <https://apnews.com/article/supreme-court-louisiana-voting-rights-redistricting-c9381da4dc06adebfe98ef3e161398f1> [<https://perma.cc/Z7BR-9VCF>] (summarizing sentiments of Black Louisiana residents in regards to Dunn and quoting one resident as stating that the Black community “feel[s] positive that [they] have a representative who understands the plight of [their] people, the need of [their] people, and [who] is going to fight for things for [their] people”).

79 Kevin Morris et al., *Growing Racial Disparities in Voter Turnout, 2008–2022*, Brennan Ctr. for Just. (Mar. 2, 2024), <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/growing-racial-disparities-voter-turnout-2008-2022> [<https://perma.cc/JG3M-P22Q>].

80 *Louisiana v. Callais*, Oyez, <https://www.oyez.org/cases/2025/24-109> [<https://perma.cc/8S4V-PKLM>] (last accessed Feb. 17, 2026); *see also Louisiana v. Callais*, Nos. 24-109 & 24-110, slip op., 606 U.S. __ (2025) (Thomas, J., dissenting), https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/24pdf/24-109_l53m.pdf [<https://perma.cc/TK9V-3Q7R>].

81 Oyez, *supra* note 80.

82 Press Release, NAACP Legal Def. Fund, *LDF Submits Testimony to South Carolina House and Senate Redistricting Subcommittees* (Nov. 15, 2021), <https://www.naacpldf.org/news/ldf-submits-testimony-to-south-carolina-house-and-senate-redistricting-subcommittees/> [<https://perma.cc/K3SL-WYM3>].

83 Compl., *S.C. State Conf. of the NAACP v. McMaster*, No. 3:21-cv-03302-JMC (D.S.C. Oct. 12, 2021), ECF No. 1, https://vhdsf2oms2wcnsvk7sdv3so.blob.core.windows.net/thearp-media/documents/Complaint_10.12.21_OGQJUr3.pdf [<https://perma.cc/EV3U-P55Q>].

84 Press Release, LDF, *Civil Rights Groups Challenge South Carolina's New Redistricting Map* (Dec. 24, 2021), <https://www.naacpldf.org/press-release/civil-rights-groups-challenge-south-carolinas-new-redistricting-map/> [<https://perma.cc/6DNR-MPW7>].

85 *See S.C. State Conf. of the NAACP v. Alexander*, 649 F. Supp. 3d 177 (D.S.C. 2023), *rev'd in part by and remanded in part by, Alexander v. S.C. State Conf. of the NAACP*, 144 S. Ct. 1221 (2024).

86 *Alexander v. S.C. State Conf. of NAACP*, 602 U.S. 1 (2024); Oral Arg., *Alexander v. S.C. State Conf. of the NAACP*, No. 22-807, 2023 WL 9375559 (U.S. Oct. 11, 2023).

87 See *Alexander*, *supra* note 86.

88 Ala. Sec’y of State, *General Election – Nov. 5, 2024: Official Total Ballots Cast* (Jan. 2025), <https://www.sos.alabama.gov/sites/default/files/election-data/2025-01/2024GeneralElectionTotalBallotsCast.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/L3T3-CCGZ>].

89 *Id.*

90 *Id.*

91 Coryn Grange, *Alabama’s Racial Turnout Gap Hit a 16-Year High in 2024*, Brennan Ctr. for Just. (Mar. 4, 2025), <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/alabamas-racial-turnout-gap-hit-16-year-high-2024> [<https://perma.cc/L8LK-J3QV>]; Press Release, U.S. Census Bureau, Voting and Registration in the Election of November 2024 (Apr. 2025), <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/voting-and-registration/p20-587.html> [<https://perma.cc/J8LZ-87CT>].

92 Moira Warburton, *Lower Black voter turnout in US South gives Democrats room to grow*, Reuters (Jan. 23, 2024), <https://www.reuters.com/graphics/USA-ELECTION/DEMOCRATS-SOUTH%20CAROLINA/dwvkealrmvm/> [<https://perma.cc/2ETJ-J38U>].

93 U.S. Census Bureau, *supra* note 91, at tbl.4b.

94 Grange, *supra* note 91.

95 ACLU of Ala., Election Day Report (on file with ACLU of Alabama).

96 Ala. Code. § 17-6-4(a) (1975) (“[T]he county governing bodies shall designate the places of holding elections in the precincts”).

97 *Polling Locations*, Tuscaloosa Cnty. Ala., <https://www.tuscco.com/polling-locations/> [<https://perma.cc/8Z8W-XJR5>] (last visited Aug. 13, 2025).

98 Ala. Sec’y of State, Elections Div., *Primary, Primary Run-Off, and General Election Statistics, State of Alabama* (1986-2024) (last revised Dec. 9, 2024), <https://www.sos.alabama.gov/sites/default/files/election-data/2024-12/Comprehensive%20Voter%20Turnout%201986-2024.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/YMK9-ACTL>].

99 S.B. 1, 2024 Legis., Reg. Sess. (Ala. 2024), <https://www.sos.alabama.gov/sites/default/files/press/SB1%20Engrossed.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/LR3V-XPZC>].

100 *Id.*

101 *Id.*

102 *Id.*

103 See, e.g., Ala. Code § 17-11-3 (1975) (detailing the categories of people eligible to vote absentee); *id.* §§ 17-11-7–10 (requiring an affidavit signed in the presence of a notary or two witnesses to be included with the absentee ballot application); *id.* § 17-9-30(b) (requiring copies of photo identification to be included with the absentee ballot).

104 See generally Compl., *Ala. State Conf. of the NAACP v. Marshall*, No.: 2:24-cv-00420-RDP (N.D. Ala. filed Apr. 4, 2024), ECF No. 1, <https://www.splcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/alabama-naacp-v-marshall-complaint.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/9SL2-S8VD>].

105 *Id.* at 53–69.

106 Press Release, NAACP Legal Def. Fund, Federal Court Grants Preliminary Injunction Barring Enforcement of SB1 for Disabled, Blind, and Low Literacy Voters (Sept. 25, 2024), <https://www.naacpldf.org/press-release/federal-court-grants-preliminary-injunction-barring-enforcement-of-sb1-for-disabled-blind-and-low-literacy-voters/> [<https://perma.cc/PB3J-X22K>]; Mem. Op. & Order Enjoining in Ltd. Part Enf’t of Ala. S.B. 1 (2024), ECF No. 76, *Ala. State Conf. of NAACP v. Marshall*, No. 2:24-cv-00420-RDP (N.D. Ala. 2024), <https://www.naacpldf.org/wp-content/uploads/LIMITED-PART-ENFORCEMENT-OF-ALABAMA-SENATE-BILL-158.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/H2RP-MF9J>].

107 League of Women Voters, *Alabama NAACP v. Marshall (SB1 Challenge)*, *LWV Timeline*, <https://www.lwv.org/legal-center/alabama-naacp-v-marshall-sb1-challenge#:~:text=The%20court%E2%80%99s%20order%20prohibits%20the,December%202025> (last visited Feb. 18, 2026); FindLaw, *U.S. Eleventh Cir. cases, Ala. State Conf. of NAACP v. Att’y Gen. Ala* (2025), <https://caselaw.findlaw.com/court/us-11th-circuit/118035786.html> (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).

108 Riley Conlon, *St Clair County voters deal with long lines, confusion over misprinted ballots*, WVTM 13 (Nov. 5, 2024, 9:25 PM), <https://www.wvtm13.com/article/st-clair-county-ballot-amendment-election-printing-problem/62815715> [<https://perma.cc/7AMQ-47DY>].

109 Joyce Alene (@JoyceWhiteVance), X (formerly Twitter) (Nov. 5, 2024, 5:10 PM), <https://x.com/JoyceWhiteVance/status/1853922914963227086> [<https://perma.cc/G4J2-A4LH>].

110 See Ralph Chapoco, *Prefiled bill would establish early voting in Alabama*, Ala. Reflector (Dec. 3, 2024, 7:01 AM), <https://alabamareflector.com/2024/12/03/prefiled-bill-would-establish-early-voting-in-alabama/> (“Alabama does not currently allow people to vote in-person prior to Election Day.”).

111 See *Braxton v. Town of Newbern*, No. 1:23-cv-00127-KD-N, 2024 WL 3519193, at *3 (S.D. Ala. July 23, 2024); Ala. Sec’y of State, *Absentee Voting Information*, <https://www.sos.alabama.gov/alabama-votes/voter/absentee-voting> [<https://perma.cc/7KEE-9WQ2>] (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).

112 Ala. Sec’y of State, Elections Div., *Voter Guide 2024*, <https://www.sos.alabama.gov/sites/default/files/election-2024/2024%20Voter%20Guide.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/QJG7-8XNE>]; see also Alander Rocha, *Election Day in Alabama: What you need to know*, Ala. Reflector (Nov. 5, 2024, 7:00 AM), <https://alabamareflector.com/2024/11/05/election-day-in-alabama-what-you-need-to-know/> (noting the polling hours in the Alabama 2024 election).

113 Fla. Dep’t of State, Div. of Elections, *November 5, 2024 General Election Official Results: Voter Registration and Turnout*, <https://results.elections.myflorida.com/TurnoutRpt.asp?ElectionDate=11/5/2024&DATAMODE=> [<https://perma.cc/LB99-M2RM>] (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).

114 *Id.*; Fla. Dep’t of State, Div. of Elections, *Voter Turnout*, <https://dos.fl.gov/elections/data-statistics/elections-data/voter-turnout/> [<https://perma.cc/U5TC-HTBX>] (last updated Jan. 15, 2025).

115 U.S. Census Bureau, *supra* note 91, at tbl.4b.

116 Jessica Washington et al., *Inside Ron DeSantis’s Quest to Trample the Will of Florida Voters on Abortion*, The Intercept (Oct. 29, 2024, 11:26 AM), <https://theintercept.com/2024/10/29/florida-ron-desantis-election-amendments-abortion-marijuana/> [<https://perma.cc/D9BW-ZZX4>].

117 Brendan Pierson et al., *Florida top court allows for near-total abortion ban; says voters can decide issue in November*, Reuters (Apr. 1, 2024, 10:22 PM), <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/florida-top-court-lets-abortion-rights-ballot-measure-go-voters-2024-04-01/>.

- 118 Aydian Ahmad, *Normal operations resume after ‘suspicious package’ found near Jacksonville polling site, JSO says*, News 4 JAX (Nov. 5, 2024, 3:11 PM), <https://www.news4jax.com/news/local/2024/11/05/jso-bomb-squad-called-to-jacksonville-polling-site-after-report-of-suspicious-package/> [https://perma.cc/A5N9-9A8C].
- 119 Patrick Smith, *Machete-wielding teen arrested after group is accused of intimidating Democratic supporters at Florida polling station, police say*, NBC News (Oct. 30, 2024, 7:10 AM), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2024-election/machete-wielding-teen-arrested-group-accused-intimidating-democrat-sup-rcna177981> [https://perma.cc/P66C-W5PA].
- 120 S. 90, 2021 Reg. Sess., 2021 Fla. Laws, ch. 2021-11, <https://laws.flrules.org/2021/11> [https://perma.cc/5DCU-G8FL] (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).
- 121 Fla. Advisory Comm. to the U.S. Comm’n on C.R., *Report on Voting Rights in Florida Following Recent Amendments to the Election Code* (Aug. 2023), https://www.usccr.gov/files/2023-10/fl-voting-rights-report_2023.pdf [https://perma.cc/Y9SW-ZFUJ].
- 122 *Id.*
- 123 NAACP Legal Def. Fund, *Case: LDF’s Lawsuit Challenging Florida’s S.B. 90* (May 6, 2021), <https://www.naacpldf.org/case-issue/florida-naacp-v-lee/> [https://perma.cc/L5DH-HXCK].
- 124 Robert P. Jones, *American Democracy in Crisis: The Challenges of Voter Knowledge, Participation, and Polarization*, PRRI (July 17, 2018), <https://www.prri.org/research/American-democracy-in-crisis-voters-midterms-trump-election-2018/> [https://perma.cc/CV8Y-BUJM].
- 125 Daron Shaw et al., *Report on Provisional Ballots and American Elections, for the Presidential Comm’n on Election Admin.* (June 21, 2013), http://web.mit.edu/supportthevoter/www/files/2013/08/Provisional-Ballots-Shaw-and-Hutchings.docx_.pdf [https://perma.cc/6EWT-XUGF]; Joshua Field et al., *Uncounted Votes: The Racially Discriminatory Effects of Provisional Ballots*, Ctr. for Am. Progress (Oct. 2014), https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/ProvisionalBallots-report.pdf?_ga=2.111276417.42375908.1621859427-264694957.1618767359 [https://perma.cc/SV7A-GYAW].
- 126 Thessalia Merivaki et al., *A Failsafe for Voters? Cast and Rejected Provisional Ballots in North Carolina*, 73 Pol. Rsch. Q. 65–78 (2019), <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1065912919875816>; see Field et al., *supra* note 125.
- 127 *League of Women Voters of Fla., Inc. v. Lee*, 566 F. Supp. 3d 1238, 1244–45 (N.D. Fla. 2021).
- 128 *League of Women Voters of Fla., Inc. v. Fla. Sec’y of State*, No. 22-11143, slip op. (11th Cir. Apr. 27, 2023), ECF No. 193-1, https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2023-04/2023-04-27_11-Circ-Ct_opinion-part-aff-rev.pdf [https://perma.cc/AML2-RRUM].
- 129 Abigail Lafferty, *Election 2024: Florida voter information website crashes on Election Day: State official*, FOX 35 Orlando (Nov. 5, 2024, 11:07 AM), <https://www.fox35orlando.com/news/voter-information-website-has-gone-down-according-florida-secretary-states-office> [https://perma.cc/Q6S3-D6KV].
- 130 Clapman et al., *supra* note 15.
- 131 Letter from NAACP Legal Def. Fund et al., to All Florida Supervisors of Elections (Aug. 2, 2024), <https://www.naacpldf.org/wp-content/uploads/Guidance-on-Frivolous-Mass-Challenges-and-List-Maintenance-2024-Aug-2-2024.pdf> [https://perma.cc/5JS6-APJR].
- 132 *Id.*
- 133 Ethan Mannello et al., *Misinformation at the Watsco Center temporarily blocks out-of-state students from casting votes*, The Mia. Hurricane (Nov. 5, 2024), <https://themiamihurricane.com/2024/11/05/misinformation-at-the-watsco-center-temporarily-blocks-out-of-state-students-from-casting-votes/> [https://perma.cc/C6VA-XPAU].

- 134 NAACP Legal Def. Fund, *Florida Needs Its Own Voting Rights Act: The Harry T. and Harriette V. Moore Voting Rights Act of Florida* (n.d.), <https://www.naacpldf.org/case-issue/florida-voting-rights-act/> [https://perma.cc/BNM8-4QFF].
- 135 H.B. 1205, 2025 Reg. Sess., 2025 Fla. Laws, ch. 2025-21, <https://laws.flrules.org/2025/21> [https://perma.cc/XLB9-JSRJ] (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).
- 136 Ga. Sec’y of State, *Election Data Hub – Turnout*, <https://sos.ga.gov/page/election-data-hub-turnout> (last visited Feb. 19, 2026).
- 137 *Id.*
- 138 *Id.*
- 139 Kevin Morris et al., *Racial Turnout Gap Grew in Georgia—Again*, Brennan Ctr. for Just. (Dec. 23, 2024), <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/racial-turnout-gap-grew-georgia-again> [https://perma.cc/U5VJ-5EKK].
- 140 Avery Lotz, *Russian sources target several polling places with non-credible bomb threats*, Axios (Nov. 5, 2024), <https://www.axios.com/2024/11/06/russia-georgia-arizona-polling-places-bomb-threats>.
- 141 Tim Reid et al., *Hoax bomb threats linked to Russia target polling places in battleground states, FBI Says*, Reuters (Nov. 5, 2024, 10:02 PM), <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/fake-bomb-threats-linked-russia-briefly-close-georgia-polling-locations-2024-11-05/>.
- 142 Press Release, U.S. Dep’t of Just., *Georgia Poll Worker Arrested for Making Bomb Threat to Election Workers* (Nov. 4, 2024), <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/georgia-poll-worker-arrested-making-bomb-threat-election-workers> [https://perma.cc/EDC6-XLW4].
- 143 Chris Boyette et al., *Non-credible bomb threats against Atlanta-area polling places were from Russia, secretary of state says*, CNN US (Nov. 5, 2024, 8:25 PM), <https://www.cnn.com/2024/11/05/us/georgia-non-credible-bomb-threat-russia/index.html>.
- 144 *Id.*
- 145 Ga. Code Ann. § 21-2-413(i) (West 2019) (“No person except peace officers regularly employed by the federal, state, county, or municipal government or certified security guards shall be permitted to carry firearms within 150 feet of any polling place as [defined in the Code]”).
- 146 See David Niven, *Policing Polling Places in the United States: The Negative Effect of Police Presence on African American Turnout in an Alabama Election*, 18 Democracy & Sec. 170–83 (2022), <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17419166.2021.2010551>; The Lancet, *Fatal police violence in the USA: a public health issue*, 398 The Lancet 1195 (Oct. 2, 2021), <https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S0140-6736%2821%2902145-0>.
- 147 Sean Morales-Doyle et al., *Voters Should Not Be Intimidated*, Brennan Ctr. for Just. (last updated Oct. 7, 2020), <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/voters-should-not-be-intimidated> [https://perma.cc/RAB6-TESA].
- 148 NAACP Legal Def. Fund, *Black Voters on the Rise: Election Protection Field Notes* (2024) (on file with author).
- 149 *Id.*
- 150 Ga. Code Ann. § 21-2-541 (2021); Election Integrity Act of 2021, S. 202, 2021–22 Legis., Reg. Sess., § 1 (Ga. 2021); Mac Brower, *Georgia’s S.B. 202 Unpacked*, Democracy Docket (Mar. 24, 2023), <https://www.democracydocket.com/analysis/georgias-s-b-202-unpacked/>.

151 Compl., *supra* note 65. Overall, Black voters are likely to wait forty-five percent longer in line to vote than white voters. Black Georgians, on average, wait nearly one hour to vote; white voters only six minutes. In the 2020 primary election, Black voters in Fulton County waited over five hours to vote. During the early voting period in the 2020 general election, some Fulton County voters waited more than ten hours to cast a ballot. Hannah Klain et al., *Waiting to Vote*, Brennan Ctr. for Just. (June 3, 2020), <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/waiting-vote> [https://perma.cc/Q63W-2V6S]; Mark Niesse et al., *Extreme voting lines expose where Georgia primary failed*, Atlanta J.-Const. (July 28, 2020), <https://www.ajc.com/politics/extreme-voting-lines-expose-where-georgia-primary-failed/YQUMSTEBVFAY7CR7UQOQEHSLI/>.

152 Order, *In re Ga. Senate Bill 202*, No. 1:21-mi-55555-JPB, 2023 WL 5334582 (N.D. Ga. filed Aug. 18, 2023), ECF No. 144, <https://www.naacpldf.org/wp-content/uploads/AME-v.-Kemp-Line-Relief-PI-Order.pdf>.

153 Op., *In re Georgia Senate Bill 202*, No. 23-13095, (11th Cir. filed Dec. 1, 2025), ECF No. 188-1, <https://media.ca11.uscourts.gov/opinions/pub/files/202313095.pdf> [https://perma.cc/2QRT-2PAB].

154 Rahul Bali et al., *Georgia officials urge voters to use drop boxes instead of mailing absentee ballots*, WABE (Oct. 30, 2024), <https://www.wabe.org/georgia-officials-urge-voters-to-use-drop-boxes-instead-of-mailing-absentee-ballots/>.

155 Election Integrity Act of 2021, *supra* note 150; Ga. Code Ann. § 21-2-382 (West 2021).

156 Staff, *Ga. absentee voters face mail delays, vanishing drop boxes*, WRDW (Oct. 21, 2024, 12:10 PM), <https://www.wrdw.com/2024/10/21/ga-absentee-voters-face-mail-delays-vanishing-drop-boxes/> [https://perma.cc/BV6G-QANP].

157 Verified Pet. for Declaratory & Injunctive Relief, *Democratic Nat’l Comm. v. Cobb Cnty.*, No. 24GC08111 (Ga. Super. Ct., Cobb Cnty., Nov. 1, 2024), <https://www.democracymocket.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/2024-11-01-Petition.pdf> [https://perma.cc/49RQ-6CM7] (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).

158 Order, *Ayota v. Fall*, No. 24GC0811 (Ga. Super. Ct., Cobb Cnty., filed Nov. 1, 2024), <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:va6c2:dc335b91-1a48-4b80-8562-dc0a8efac230> [https://perma.cc/J7AQ-Z8K5] (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).

159 Order, *Republican Nat’l Comm., Inc. v. Ayota*, Case No. S25M0319 (Ga. Nov. 4, 2024) (granting supersedeas).

160 Press Release, U.S. Postal Serv., USPS Statement on Georgia Operations and Hurricane Helene Recovery as of October 7, 2024 (Oct. 8, 2024), <https://about.usps.com/newsroom/local-releases/ga/2024/1008-usps-statement-on-georgia-operations-and-hurricane-helene-recovery-as-of-october-7-2024.htm> [https://perma.cc/MJG6-KKC6]; Press Release, Lawyers’ Comm. for C.R. Under L., Civil Rights Groups: Extend Voter Registration Deadline as State Recovers from Hurricane Helene (Oct. 8, 2024), <https://www.lawyerscommittee.org/civil-rights-groups-extend-voter-registration-deadline-as-state-recovers-from-hurricane-helene/> [https://perma.cc/YTU4-9CT5].

161 Compl. for Declaratory & Injunctive Relief, *Ga. State Conf. of the NAACP v. Kemp*, No. 1:24-cv-04546-ELR (N.D. Ga. filed Oct. 7, 2024), ECF No. 1, <https://www.democracymocket.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/12024-10-08-Complaint.pdf> [https://perma.cc/DJ5R-R2V7].

162 *Id.* at 2.

163 Joint Stipulation Dismissing Pls. Compl., *Ga. State Conf. of the NAACP v. Kemp*, No. 1:24-cv-04546-ELR (N.D. Ga. Oct. 28, 2024), ECF No. 62, <https://www.democracymocket.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/62-2024-10-28-Joint-stipulation-dismissing-complaint-WM.pdf> [https://perma.cc/LEX8-Y6FB].

164 Mark Niesse, *GOP activists plan mass voter eligibility challenges with new Georgia law*, Atlanta J.-Const. (May 15, 2024), <https://www.ajc.com/politics/wave-of-georgia-voter-challenges-expected-before-2024-election/V7OXHYVD7NEZBI76VLGV35OP7M/>.

165 Jeff Amy et al., *With 2024 presidential contest looming, Georgia governor signs new election changes into law*, Associated Press (May 7, 2024, 5:46 PM), <https://apnews.com/article/georgia-kemp-voting-challenges-changes-aalfd9b62c7bcdd430c24dc439f8a728> [https://perma.cc/Y5JJ-VXA3].

166 *Supra* note 60.

167 *Id.*; see Clapman et al., *supra* note 15.

168 52 U.S.C. § 20507.

169 52 U.S.C. § 20507(c)(2).

170 See *Republican Nat’l Comm. v. Eternal Vigilance Action, Inc.*, 321 Ga. 771, 773 (2025) (discussing the following new rules or amendments to existing rules: Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 183-1-12-.02 (c.2); *id.* 183-1-12-.12 (.1)(6); *id.* 183-1-12-.12(a)(5); *id.* 183-1-12-.21; *id.* 183-1-13-.05; *id.* 183-1-14-.02 (18); and *id.* 183-1-14-.02 (19).

171 Letter from NAACP Legal Def. Fund et al., to Brian P. Kemp, Ga. Governor, Brad Raffensperger, Ga. Sec’y of State, and John Fervier, Chairman, Ga. State Election Bd. (Aug. 28, 2024) (“August 2024 SEB Certification Letter”), <https://www.naacpldf.org/wp-content/uploads/Letter-Re-SEB-Certification-Rules-to-GA-Officials.pdf> [https://perma.cc/Q2WV-4B5L].

172 Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 183-1-12-.12(a)(5).

173 Kate Brumback, *Georgia State Election Board approves rule requiring hand count of ballots*, Associated Press (Sept. 20, 2024, 4:55 PM), <https://apnews.com/article/georgia-state-election-board-rules-da1f271f360b15353abebdf9ff183b3d> [https://perma.cc/6ZJR-RNYB].

174 See August 2024 SEB Certification Letter, *supra* note 171.

175 Br. of Amici Curiae in Supp. of Pls.’ First Am. Compl. for Declaratory & Injunctive Relief, *Eternal Vigilance Action, Inc. v. State*, No. 24CV011558 (Ga. Super. Ct., Fulton Cnty., filed Oct. 9, 2024), <https://www.splcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/files/eva-state-georgia-amicus-brief.pdf> [https://perma.cc/Q6QR-RWNR].

176 Order Denying Pet’rs Mot. for Emergency Supersedeas, *Eternal Vigilance Action, Inc. v. State*, No. S25M0359 (Ga. Oct. 22, 2024), <https://www.aclu.org/cases/eternal-vigilance-action-inc-v-georgia?document=Order-Denying-Petitioners-Motion-for-Emergency-Supersedeas> [https://perma.cc/3YUW-8QFK].

177 Mark Niesse, *Georgia high court rejects election board rules for hand counts, inquiries*, Atlanta J.-Const. (June 10, 2025), <https://www.ajc.com/politics/2025/06/georgia-high-court-rejects-election-boards-rules-for-hand-counts-and-inquiries/?irclickid=2bLxkfxUMxyKW7ATXgz90VGgUkpW0dwZIQrDR00&sharedid=EdgeBingFlow&irpid=2003851&irgwc=1&afsrc=1>.

178 *Black Population by State 2025*, World Population Rev., <https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/black-population-by-state> [https://perma.cc/JB5E-GLWU] (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).

179 Philip Bump, *The subtle, vital effects of letting Louisiana’s congressional map stand*, Wash. Post (June 29, 2022), <https://wapo.st/4jz4DNP>.

180 *Id.*

181 *Id.*

182 U.S. Census Bureau, *supra* note 91, at tbl.4b.

183 Redistricting & Voting Rts. Data Off., *Citizen Voting Age Population by Race and Ethnicity*, U.S. Census Bureau (Jan. 30, 2026), <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/about/voting-rights/cvap.html> [https://perma.cc/3JY-Y-PMMSG]; La. Sec’y of State, *Post Election Statistic Files* (n.d.), <https://www.sos.la.gov/ElectionsAndVoting/GetElectionInformation/FindResultsAndStatistics/Pages/PostElectionStatisticFiles.aspx> [https://perma.cc/5XHU-Y45N].

184 See Sabrina Wilson, *Orleans Parish registrar says there’s nothing amiss about state workers at early voting sites*, WVUE/FOX 8 (Oct. 21, 2024, 8:38 PM), <https://www.fox8live.com/2024/10/22/orleans-parish-registrar-says-theres-nothing-amiss-about-state-workers-early-voting-sites/> [https://perma.cc/96X5-EH44].

185 La. Stat. Ann. § 18:1462 (West 2025).

186 Wesley Muller, *Gov. Landry targets ‘noncitizens’ in Louisiana, claiming immigrants pose voter fraud risk*, La. Illuminator (Aug. 27, 2024, 5:01 AM), <https://lailluminator.com/2024/08/27/gov-landry-targets-noncitizens-in-louisiana-claiming-immigrants-pose-voter-fraud-risk/>.

187 *Harding v. Edwards*, 487 F. Supp. 3d 498, 528 (M.D. La. 2020) (“The Court DENIES Plaintiffs’ Motion for injunctive relief to increase the period of early voting for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General and Open Congressional Primary Election to thirteen days. The Court GRANTS more limited injunctive relief as to early voting and shall order that the period of early voting for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General and Open Congressional Primary Election be increased to a ten-day period[.]”).

188 Victoria (Tori) Wenger, *An Early Voting Success Story – And a Call to Action: How Louisiana Voters Can Be Part of History This October*, NAACP Legal Def. Fund (Oct. 15, 2024), <https://www.naacpldf.org/louisiana-early-voting-making-history/> [https://perma.cc/562D-7C7T]; H.B. 286, 2021 Legis., Reg. Sess. (La. 2021), <https://legiscan.com/LA/bill/HB286/2021> (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).

189 Press Release, NAACP Legal Def. Fund, LDF Sends Letter to Caddo Parrish, Louisiana Commissioners Calling for an Additional Early Voting Site (Sept. 10, 2021), <https://www.naacpldf.org/press-release/ldf-sends-letter-to-caddo-parish-la-commissioners-calling-for-an-additional-early-voting-site/> [https://perma.cc/X378-VJPW].

190 TW Starr, *New early voting site for Caddo Parrish*, KTBS (Oct. 10, 2022), https://www.ktbs.com/news/new-early-voting-site-for-caddo-parish/article_4c28844e-48db-11ed-991f-ab9f80cc5926.html [https://perma.cc/KV26-2RXM]; Billy Anderson, *A Win for Caddo Voters*, Power Coal. for Equity & Just., <https://powercoalition.org/a-win-for-caddo-voters/> [https://perma.cc/QJ3W-EVVM] (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).

191 Leigh Logan, *Where We Vote Matters: How Poll Site Changes Impact Voters – And What To Do About Them*, NAACP Legal Def. Fund (Oct. 16, 2024), <https://www.naacpldf.org/poll-site-changes-and-voter-access/>.

192 H.B. 1065, 2022 Legis., Reg. Sess. (La. 2022), <https://legiscan.com/LA/text/HB1065/2022> (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).

193 Comparing 2025 *Polling Location Changes*, La. Sec’y of State (Dec. 22, 2025, 10:19 AM), https://electionstatistics.sos.la.gov/Data/Polling_Location_Changes/2025%20Polling%20Location%20Changes.pdf [https://perma.cc/ZQC9-7ZDM], with 2024 *Polling Location Changes*, La. Sec’y of State (Dec. 30, 2024, 10:41 AM), https://electionstatistics.sos.la.gov/Data/Polling_Location_Changes/2024%20Polling%20Location%20Changes.pdf [https://perma.cc/9Z7T-EULJ], and 2023 *Polling Location Changes*, La. Sec’y of State (Dec. 12, 2023, 10:58 AM), https://electionstatistics.sos.la.gov/Data/Polling_Location_Changes/2023%20Polling%20Location%20Changes.pdf [https://perma.cc/7L4S-AS6L].

194 H.B. 319, 2024 Legis., Reg. Sess. (La. 2025), <https://legis.la.gov/legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=1381950> (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).

195 Rep. Candace N. Newell, HB319, La. State Legis., 2024 Reg. Sess. (n.d.), <https://legis.la.gov/legis/BillInfo.aspx?s=24RS&b=HB319&sbi=y> [https://perma.cc/SF36-WUV3] (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).

196 David (@davesvt), X (formerly Twitter) (Nov. 5, 2024, 9:56 AM), <https://x.com/davesvt/status/1853813697774293372> [https://perma.cc/2UL4-UN6X]; Theresa Schmidt, *Would-be voter told, ‘You’re not registered, you’re canceled’*, KPLC (Nov. 5, 2024, 7:06 PM), <https://www.kplctv.com/2024/11/06/would-be-voter-told-youre-not-registered-youre-canceled/> [https://perma.cc/UG22-UT4Z]; Jessica Torricelli, *Reminders for Election Day*, KNOE News 8 (Nov. 5, 2024, 12:39 PM), <https://www.knoe.com/2024/11/05/reminders-election-day/> [https://perma.cc/A735-5PYD].

197 Ange Toussaint, *Thousands of inactive voters could face voting challenges on election day*, KATC ABC3 (Nov. 4, 2024, 3:01 PM), <https://www.katc.com/lafayette-parish/inactive-voters-could-be-deemed-ineligible-to-vote-to-due-last-minute-address-changes> [https://perma.cc/LL4J-5H8P].

198 *Id.*

199 La. Sec’y of State, *Vote on Election Day* (n.d.), <https://www.sos.la.gov/ElectionsAndVoting/Vote/VoteOnElectionDay/Pages/default.aspx> [https://perma.cc/JJ3N-SBT4].

200 U.S. Dep’t of Just., C.R. Div., Disability Rts. Sec., *Americans with Disabilities Act Checklist for Polling Places* (June 2016), <https://archive.ada.gov/votingchecklist.pdf> [https://perma.cc/8KBJ-2V3K].

201 Compl., *Callais v. Landry*, No. 3 :24-cv-00122-DCJ-KDM (W.D. La. filed Jan. 31, 2024), <https://www.lvw.org/sites/default/files/2025-03/1-complaint.pdf> [https://perma.cc/XH2A-2K2L].

202 U.S. Census Bureau, *supra* note 91, tbl.4b (view col. J, row 281).

203 *Id.*

204 *Id.* at tbl.A-5a.

205 *Id.* at tbl.4b.

206 *Id.*

207 Nat’l Conf. of State Legis., *Voting Outside the Polling Place Report, Table 1: States with No-Excuse Absentee Voting* (Dec. 20, 2023), <https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/table-1-states-with-no-excuse-absentee-voting> (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).

208 Mona Moore, *Why isn’t there early voting on the Mississippi Coast? What we know for this election*, Sun Herald (Oct. 30, 2024, 3:20 PM), <https://www.sunherald.com/news/politics-government/election/voter-guide/article294739059.html> [https://perma.cc/879C-KRVX].

209 Ashton Pittman et al., *Mississippi Counties Change 54 Voting Precincts, But Incorrect Information May Send Some Voters to the Wrong Place on Election Day*, Miss. Free Press (Oct. 30, 2024), <https://www.mississippifreepress.org/mississippi-counties-change-54-voting-precincts-but-incorrect-information-risks-sending-some-voters-to-the-wrong-place-on-election-day/> [https://perma.cc/U3HM-PAJJ].

210 *Id.*

211 Press Release, Michael Watson, Miss. Sec’y of State, 2024 November General Election Absentee Report (Nov. 4, 2024), <https://www.sos.ms.gov/press/2024-november-general-election-absentee-report-november-4> [https://perma.cc/76ZB-DYSW].

212 *Id.*; U.S. Election Assistance Comm’n, *Election Administration and Voting Survey 2018 Comprehensive Report* (June 2019), https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/eac_assets/1/6/2018_EAVS_Report.pdf [<https://perma.cc/9KFJ-JLXF>]; U.S. Election Assistance Comm’n, *Election Administration and Voting Survey 2020 Comprehensive Report* (Aug. 2021), https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/document_library/files/2020_EAVS_Report_Final_508c.pdf [<https://perma.cc/YWE7-7XYW>]; U.S. Election Assistance Comm’n, *Election Administration and Voting Survey 2022 Comprehensive Report* (June 2023), https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/2024-11/2022_EAVS_Report_508c.pdf [<https://perma.cc/G66L-ZBCZ>].

213 Letter from Polly Tribble, Exec. Dir., Disability Rts. Miss. et al., to Hon. Michael Watson, Miss. Sec’y of State (Dec. 3, 2024), https://www.naacpldf.org/wp-content/uploads/2024.12.03_Letter-re-Ballot-Return-and-Cure-Deadline-2.pdf [<https://perma.cc/VW66-YREG>].

214 Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-637 (West 2024); Miss. Sec’y of State, *Pt. No. 17 – Absentee Voting* (n.d.), <https://www.sos.ms.gov/adminsearch/ACCode/00000731c.pdf> (last visited Feb. 18, 2026) (providing text of certain rules); Miss. Sec’y of State, *Absentee Voting Information*, <https://www.sos.ms.gov/absentee-voting-information> (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).

215 Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-601 (West 2025).

216 *Id.* § 23-15-653.

217 See generally Letter from Polly Tribble, *supra* note 213.

218 State of Miss., *Certification of Vote for Mississippi Supreme Court Justice, District One, Place Three*, at 2-3 (Dec. 12, 2024), <https://sos.ms.gov/elections/electionresults/2024GeneralRunoff/Statewide%20Results/Certification%20of%20Vote%20for%20Mississippi%20Supreme%20Court%20Justice.%20District%20One.%20Place%20Three.pdf>; State of Miss., *Certification of Vote for Mississippi Court of Appeals Judge, District 5, Place Two*, at 2–3 (Dec. 12, 2024), <https://sos.ms.gov/elections/electionresults/2024GeneralRunoff/Statewide%20Results/Certification%20of%20Vote%20for%20Mississippi%20Court%20of%20Appeals.%20District%20Five.%20Place%20Two.pdf>; Grant McLaughlin, *MS Supreme Court race neck and neck. Vote counting expected into next week*, Clarion Ledger (Nov. 27, 2024, 3:45 PM), <https://www.clarionledger.com/story/news/politics/elections/2024/11/26/ms-judicial-runoff-race-results-for-supreme-court-court-of-appeals/76449177007/> [<https://perma.cc/CS3H-WAQ4>].

219 Press Release, S.C. Election Comm’n, South Carolina State Election Commission Celebrates Record Turnout and Successful Election Day (Nov. 7, 2024), <https://scvotes.gov/south-carolina-state-election-commission-celebrates-record-turnout-and-successful-election-day/> [<https://perma.cc/T7WY-8F4Y>].

220 S.C. Election Comm’n, *Voter Registration and Participation Statistics*, <https://vrem.scvotes.sc.gov/Statistics/VoterHistoryResults> [<https://perma.cc/P7NE-84UX>] (last visited Feb. 19, 2026).

221 U.S. Census Bureau, *supra* note 91.

222 *Id.*

223 Nat’l Inst. on Minority Health & Health Disparities, *HDPulse: An Ecosystem of Minority Health and Health Disparities Resources*, Soc., Econ., & Cultural Env’t Data Portal, <https://hdpulse.nimhd.nih.gov/data-portal/social/> (choose “South Carolina Counties” from “Area” dropdown; then choose “Population” from “Topic” dropdown; then choose “Black or African American” from “Variable” dropdown; then choose “All Races” from “Race/Ethnicity” dropdown; then choose “Both Sexes” from “Sex” dropdown; then choose “All Ages” from “Age” dropdown; and then click “Map”) (last visited July 25, 2025).

224 Letter from Antonio L. Ingram II, Sr. Counsel, NAACP Legal Def. Fund et al., to Hon. Alan Wilson, S.C. Att’y Gen. (Sept. 13, 2024), <https://www.naacpldf.org/wp-content/uploads/Request-to-Issue-Voter-Intimidation-Statement-9.13.2449.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/56KP-L23D>].

225 *Id.*

226 Colleen Long, *How ‘Let’s Go Brandon’ became code for insulting Joe Biden*, Associated Press (Oct. 30, 2021, 5:08 PM), <https://apnews.com/article/lets-go-brandon-what-does-it-mean-republicans-joe-biden-ab13db212067928455a3dba07756a160>.

227 See, e.g., Anna Wilder et al., *‘Let’s Go Brandon’ hat sparks physical altercation at early voting site in Orangeburg, SC*, The State (Nov. 1, 2024, 5:44 PM), <https://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/article294901794.html> [<https://perma.cc/EY65-QZ3S>].

228 Caitlin Byrd, *SC election security: Panic buttons and quiet rooms. Hidden features protecting poll workers for 2024*, Palmetto Pols. (Oct 26, 2024), https://www.postandcourier.com/politics/south-carolina-election-safety-precautions-in-place-2024/article_785b3804-9226-11ef-8cb7-071ae4d8bb9d.html [<https://perma.cc/U3Z6-685Y>].

229 S.C. Code Ann. § 7-13-25 (2024); Christina M. Das, *Voting in South Carolina’s Primaries: How Early and Curbside Voting Make the Polls More Accessible*, NAACP Legal Def. Fund, <https://www.naacpldf.org/south-carolina-voting/> [<https://perma.cc/Y6FA-UY43>] (last visited July 25, 2025).

230 See Press Release, S.C. Election Comm’n, South Carolinians Set New Records with Historic Pre-Election Day Turnout (Nov. 4, 2024), <https://scvotes.gov/south-carolinians-set-new-records-with-historic-pre-election-day-turnout> [<https://perma.cc/X9NZ-B6B3>]; S.C. State Legis., Act No. 150, 24th Gen. Assemb., Reg. Sess. (S.C. 2022), https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess124_2021-2022/bills/108.htm [<https://perma.cc/3DXR-5D58>] (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).

231 According to the South Carolina State Election Commission, there were almost 1.5 million ballots cast during early voting, and just under 3.5 million total registered voters. See S.C. Election Comm’n, *supra* note 220 (go to “Election Year” choose “2024” from dropdown; choose “General Election” from “Election Type” dropdown; and choose “Participating” from “Voter Data” dropdown); see also S.C. Election Comm’n, *supra* note 230.

232 See S.C. Election Comm’n, *Early Voting*, <https://scvotes.gov/voters/early-voting/> [<https://perma.cc/A5XQ-9BKY>] (last visited Feb. 18, 2026) (Counties like Abbeville, Kershaw, and Oconee maintained just one early voting site).

233 See, e.g., WLTX, *‘Worst Nightmare’: Richland County voting problems lead to long lines, frustration*, News19 (June 10, 2020, 9:13 AM), <https://www.wltx.com/article/news/politics/richland-county-voting-problems-lead-to-long-lines-frustration/101-65712ede-06d3-4b3c-b718-f4be245783b0> [<https://perma.cc/UV5V-DV9U>]; Adam Mintzer, *Hand-written ballots, 90-degree heat, long lines: Voter turnout in Richland County bigger than expected*, WIS 10 (June 9, 2020, 6:01 PM), <https://www.wistv.com/2020/06/09/hand-written-ballots-degree-heat-long-lines-voter-turnout-richland-county-bigger-than-expected> [<https://perma.cc/ANW7-DYQG>].

234 See Haley Thiem et al., *Hurricane Helene’s extreme rainfall and catastrophic inland flooding*, Climate.gov (Nov. 7, 2024), <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/event-tracker/hurricane-helenes-extreme-rainfall-and-catastrophic-inland-flooding> [<https://perma.cc/YL6F-X3RQ>].

235 Cary Mock, *How Hurricane Helene became a deadly disaster across 6 states*, Univ. of S.C. (Oct. 7, 2024), <https://sc.edu/uofsc/posts/2024/10/conversation-hurricane-helene-deadly-disaster-six-states.php> [<https://perma.cc/L3FY-X46S>].

236 Press Release, ACLU-S.C., Civil rights groups: Extend S.C. voter registration deadlines as state recovers from Helene, ACLU-S.C. (Oct. 4, 2024, 12:00 PM), <https://www.aclusc.org/en/press-releases/civil-rights-groups-extend-sc-voter-registration-deadlines-state-recovers-helene> [<https://perma.cc/7BNR-CPC3>].

237 Press Release, FEMA, 30 Days After Hurricane Helene, Recovery Continues in South Carolina (Oct. 31, 2024), <https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20241101/30-days-after-hurricane-helene-recovery-continues-south-carolina> [<https://perma.cc/NEY9-XXQB>].

238 Abraham Kenmore, *Court extends voter registration deadline 10 days following storm*, S.C. Daily Gazette (Oct. 4, 2024, 1:12 PM), <https://scdailygazette.com/2024/10/04/court-extends-voter-registration-deadline-10-days-following-storm/>.

239 Press Release, S.C. Election Comm’n, Voter Registration Deadline Extended to October 14 (Oct. 4, 2024), <https://scvotes.gov/voter-registration-deadline-extended-to-october-14/> [https://perma.cc/M9RR-UP3T].

240 Press Release, ACLU, ACLU-SC and ACLU Sue South Carolina DMV, Election Commission Over Denial of Voter Registration Opportunities to Thousands of 17-year-olds (Oct. 22, 2024, 1:30 PM), <https://www.aclu.org/press-releases/aclu-sc-and-aclu-sue-south-carolina-dmv-election-commission-over-denial-of-voter-registration-opportunities-to-thousands-of-17-year-olds> [https://perma.cc/4RYS-YUVJ]; Summons & Compl. for Declaratory & Injunctive Relief, *ACLU of S.C. Found. v. State Election Comm’n*, No. 2024CP4006286 (S.C. C.P., Richland Cnty., filed Oct. 22, 2024), https://www.aclusc.org/sites/default/files/field_documents/dkt_1_-_summons_and_complaint.pdf [https://perma.cc/Y8UM-2CVU].

241 *Id.*

242 Order, *ACLU of S.C. Found. v. State Election Comm’n*, No. 2024CP4006286, (S.C. C.P., Richland Cnty., filed Oct. 25, 2024), <https://publicindex.sccourts.org/Richland/PublicIndex/PIImageDisplay.aspx?ctagency=40002&doctype=D&docid=1729886274218-317&HKey=11654114809811743717010783110861135511710855110113104877911812070105881177210180867712-27110867507111888111>; Josie Frost, *Judge denies request to grant nearly 2,000 voter registrations before Nov. 5 to 17-year-olds denied at the DMV*, WLTX19 (Oct. 25, 2024, 7:20 PM), <https://www.wltx.com/article/news/local/judge-denies-aclu-request-voter-registrations-denied-at-the-dmv/101-09314c57-7863-45d6-b5cb-5b3f0717db22> [https://perma.cc/3PD8-KBGJ].

243 Records from people who called the election protection hotline, (866) OUR-VOTE.

244 S.C. Code Ann. § 7-13-25(D) (2022).

245 See S.C. State Election Comm’n, *Prep for the Polls in South Carolina*, <https://scvotes.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/SEC-BSL-3025-202508-Prep-for-the-Polls-Brochure.pdf> [https://perma.cc/SW5J-7C65] (last visited Feb. 19, 2026).

246 Letter from Antonio L. Ingram II et al., NAACP Legal Def. Fund, to Howard M. Knapp, Exec. Dir., S.C. State Election Comm’n (Oct. 31, 2024), <https://www.naacpldf.org/wp-content/uploads/LDF-Letter-Re.-First-Amendment-Protection-for-LDF-Volunteers-10.31.2428.pdf> [https://perma.cc/7QTW-DS5X]; see also Press Release, NAACP Legal Def. Fund, LDF Urges South Carolina Election Commission to Issue Guidance that Non-partisan Poll Monitors Wearing Non-partisan Apparel Are Allowed to Conduct Monitoring Activities (Oct. 31, 2024), <https://www.naacpldf.org/news/ldf-urges-south-carolina-election-commission-to-issue-guidance-that-ldfs-non-partisan-black-voters-on-the-rise-apparel-does-not-prevent-ldf-volunteers-from-poll-monitors/> [https://perma.cc/GJ6K-BETT].

247 *Election Information & Turnout Data*, Tex. Sec’y of State, <https://earlyvoting.texas-election.com/Elections/getElectionDetails.do> [https://perma.cc/PYG9-FJWC] (last visited Feb. 19, 2026).

248 *Id.*

249 *Id.*

250 See U.S. Census Bureau, *supra* note 91, tbl.4c.

251 Ashley Brown, *Harris County Democratic officials decry ‘racist’ election mailers*, Hous. Pub. Media (Nov. 1, 2022, 5:11 PM), <https://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/news/politics/2022/11/01/436492/harris-county-democratic-officials-decry-racist-election-mailers/> [https://perma.cc/29FJ-KUJK].

252 Help America Vote Act, 52 U.S.C. § 21082(a)(3) (2002).

253 NAACP Legal Def. Fund, *supra* note 148.

254 *Id.*

255 *Id.*

256 *La Unión Del Pueblo Entero v. Abbott*, 753 F. Supp. 3d 515 (W.D. Tex. 2024).

257 Tarrant Cnty. Gov’t, Commr’s Ct. Commc’n, *Consideration of Early Voting Sites for the General Election on November 5, 2024* (Sept. 12, 2024), <https://tarrantcounty.primegov.com/Portal/Meeting?meetingTemplateId=127836> [https://perma.cc/QH4Y-9U3L] (click item “V.A.1” from outline; then click “Download”) (last visited Feb. 19, 2026).

258 *Id.*

259 *Id.*

260 NAACP Legal Def. Fund, *Tarrant County, Texas Commission Votes to Keep Early Voting Locations on College Campuses Open* (Sept. 13, 2024), <https://www.naacpldf.org/news/tarrant-county-commission-votes-to-keep-early-voting-locations-on-college-campuses-open/> [https://perma.cc/NZE2-VFYP].

261 *Id.*

262 Alexa Ura, *Gov. Greg Abbott signs Texas voting bill into law, overcoming Democratic quorum breaks*, Tex. Trib. (Sept. 7, 2021, 11:24 AM), <https://www.texastribune.org/2021/09/01/texas-voting-bill-greg-abbott/> [https://perma.cc/7X5H-RBSM]; S.B. 1, 87th Legis., 1st Spec. Sess. (Tex. 2021), <https://capitol.texas.gov/tlodocs/872/billtext/html/SB00001F.htm> [https://perma.cc/SLE3-HQMK] (last visited Feb. 19, 2026).

263 Compl. for Declaratory & Injunctive Relief, *Hous. Just. v. Abbott*, No. 5:21-cv-00848 (W.D. Tex. filed Sept. 7, 2021), <https://www.naacpldf.org/wp-content/uploads/Houston-Justice-et-al.-v.-Abbott-et-al.-Complaint.pdf> [https://perma.cc/8RKA-7NSB]; NAACP Legal Def. Fund, *Case: Houston Urban League v. Abbott*, <https://www.naacpldf.org/case-issue/haul-v-abbott/> [https://perma.cc/32JK-9GUQ] (last visited Feb. 19, 2026).

264 See Compl., *supra* note 263. Plaintiffs also argue the law violates the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Section 208 of the Voting Rights Act by imposing voting barriers that discriminate against voters with disabilities and deny people with disabilities full and equal opportunities to participate in the state’s voting programs.

265 Nick Corasaniti, *Texas Voting Law Leads to Jump in Absentee Ballot Rejections*, N.Y. Times (Feb. 18, 2022), <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/18/us/politics/texas-primary-voting-law.html>; Jill Ament et al., *Analysis shows mail-ballot rejections soared under Texas’ tougher new voting law*, Tex. Standard (Mar. 17, 2022, 7:00 AM), <https://www.texasstandard.org/stories/analysis-shows-mail-ballot-rejections-soared-under-texas-tougher-new-voting-law/> [https://perma.cc/TLX6-95AT].

266 *La Union del Pueblo Entero v. Abbott*, 751 F. Supp. 3d 673, 732 (W.D. Tex. 2024), rev’d, No. 24-50783, 2026 WL 391215 (5th Cir. Feb. 12, 2026) (Section 7.04 makes it a third-degree felony for organizers employed by voter outreach organizations, and even volunteers who received meals or reimbursement for gas, to talk to voters in the presence of a mail ballot and encourage those voters to support ballot measures and candidates.).

267 *Id.*

268 *Id.*; Op., *La Union del Pueblo Entero v. Abbott*, No. 24-50783, 2026 WL 391215, at *12 (5th Cir. Feb. 12, 2026).

269 Staff, *Over 2.1 million Texas voters face suspension ahead of elections*, KFOX14 (Aug. 13, 2024, 5:20 PM), <https://kfoxtv.com/news/local/over-21-million-texas-voters-face-suspension-ahead-of-elections-dallas-morning-news-november-secretary-state-tx-october-7-last-day-to-register-registration>.

270 Reported into nonpartisan 866-OUR-VOTE election protection hotline. See Election Prot., Upcoming Elections, Election Protection Hotlines, <https://866ourvote.org/> [<https://perma.cc/Q9YD-NL6X>] (last visited Feb. 19, 2026).

271 Patty Santos, *Bexar County voter worries mail-in ballot applications were not processed*, KSAT12, <https://www.ksat.com/news/local/2024/02/28/bexar-county-voter-worries-mail-in-ballot-applications-were-not-processed/> (Feb. 27, 2024, 10:11 PM).

272 Katy Blakey, *Electronic poll book software issue fix cuts voting wait times in Dallas County*, 5 NBC DFW (Oct. 22, 2024, 5:17 PM), <https://www.nbcdfw.com/decision-2024/electronic-poll-book-software-issue-fix-cuts-voting-wait-times-in-dallas-county/3677613/>.

273 Sara Diaz-Maldonado, *Dallas County extends early voting hours next week due to high turnout*, 5 NBC DFW (Oct. 25, 2024, 5:31 PM), <https://www.nbcdfw.com/decision-2024/extension-on-early-voting-hours/3681031/>.

274 U.S. Dep’t of Just., Ams. with Disabilities Act, C.R. Div., *Voting and Polling Places*, <https://www.ada.gov/topics/voting/> [<https://perma.cc/T8G7-LTXF>] (last visited Feb. 19, 2026).

275 Natalia Contreras, *Texas election officials are dealing with a flood of challenges to voter registrations*, Tex. Trib. (Aug. 16, 2024, 5:00 AM), <https://www.texastribune.org/2024/08/16/voter-registration-challenges-texas/> [<https://perma.cc/5ZFS-DDLH>].

276 U.S. Dep’t of Just., C.R. Div., *NVRA List Maintenance Guidance* (Sept. 2024), <https://www.justice.gov/crt/nvra-list-maintenance-guidance> [<https://perma.cc/MD7Z-VDHF>].

277 Tex. Elec. Code Ann. § 16.092(2) (West 2003). This heightened standard is distinct from the process of filing mass challenges in other states and excludes challenges based on speculation, guesswork, or secondhand information—only firsthand observation or experience is sufficient to constitute “personal knowledge.”

278 NAACP Legal Def. Fund, *Texas Needs Its Own Voting Rights Act: The Barbara Jordan Voting Rights Act of Texas (TXVRA)*, <https://www.naacpldf.org/case-issue/barbara-jordan-texas-voting-rights-act-txvra/> [<https://perma.cc/Q8MW-G2G3>] (last visited Sept. 10, 2025).

(right) A student displays her “I Voted” sticker after participating in early voting at Jackson State University in Mississippi. Photo by Aron Smith/Jackson State University via Getty Images





TO VIEW THIS ONLINE, PLEASE VISIT:

tminstituteldf.org

THIS IS YOUR DEMOCRACY.

MAKE IT.

PROTECT IT.

PASS IT ON.

—Thurgood Marshall

©2026 The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.

The Legal Defense Fund (LDF) is America's premier legal organization fighting for racial justice. Using the power of law, narrative, research, and people, we defend and advance the full dignity and citizenship of Black people in America.