

Making Sense of...Voting Rights Litigation

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Overview:

- The 2018 midterm elections [raised many questions](#) in the U.S., particularly with regards to [voter suppression laws and policies](#) impacting the democratic process.
- In the aftermath of the 2018 Georgia gubernatorial race, [candidate Stacey Abrams called out visible methods of voter suppression](#), including long lines and relocation of polling locations, which made voting difficult.
- While communities of Color and impoverished communities are [historically](#) the targets of voter suppression efforts, a target group often underrepresented [in conversations around voter suppression is college students](#).
- The 2020 pandemic has added to these concerns for student voters, and confusion amongst college students on the vote-by-mail process has led to a need for universities to help students navigate the ever-complicated and restrictive barriers to participation.
- Among the many voting issues exacerbated by the pandemic, college students must navigate major barriers related to [where they are allowed to vote, the issue of voter ID for out-of-state students, and displaying proof of residency](#), all while housing uncertainty persists for those on and off campus.

Readings:

- [Tennessee Adopts New Law that Could Strip Some Protestors of their Voting Rights](#), The Washington Post
- [Voting Rights Litigation 2020](#), The Brennan Center for Justice
- [State Student Voting Guides](#), Campus Vote Project
- [State Voting Rights Tracker](#), Voting Rights Lab
- [2020 Voting Rights Cases at the American Civil Liberties Union](#), ACLU
- [Memo Regarding Fall 2020 Voting Conditions](#), Institute for Democracy & Higher Education, Andrew Goodman Formation, & Campus Vote Project
- [League of Women Voters of Michigan and Five Local Leagues Intervene in Lawsuit over Voter Purges](#), League of Women Voters

Questions for discussion:

- Given the spread of strict voter ID laws, [like in Wisconsin](#), should more policies be created to protect college student voting rights? If so, why?
- What is the role of university leadership regarding protection of student voting rights?
- What is the role of faculty members in disseminating information related to voting? How do you think academic freedom supports faculty members' work with students, particularly when it comes to civic and political issues?
- How can election officials and local politicians fully engage college students in both local and national elections?