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LDF Responds to the Fifth Circuit Courts’ Decision to Weaken Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act and Deny Black and Brown Coalitions the Ability to Challenge Racial Vote Dilution

Last week, the 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in *Petteway v. Galveston County* that Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act does not permit multiracial coalitions of voters to challenge racially discriminatory redistricting plans. The ruling impacts three southern states – Texas, Mississippi and Louisiana. LDF filed an amicus brief in support of the claim brought by Black and Hispanic voters against the Galveston, Texas County Commission and issued the following statement:

“The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals’ decision to deny multiracial coalitions the ability to challenge discriminatory maps in coalition is a desecration of Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act (VRA). A majority of the Fifth Circuit denies the reality that Black and Brown voters who live and work together in the same communities often have a shared experience of discrimination and unresponsive government. This decision trounces decades of precedent and deprives multiracial communities of their day in court to challenge discriminatory redistricting and defend their right to a more just political process.

“We call on Congress to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and we implore everyone eligible to vote to cast their ballots this fall. Your vote is your voice, and we urge you to use that voice to claim your political power.”

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Founded in 1940, the Legal Defense Fund (LDF) is the nation’s first civil rights law organization. LDF’s Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Please note that LDF has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights.