



**For Immediate Release**  
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**LDF Media**  
212-965-2200 / [media@naacpldf.org](mailto:media@naacpldf.org)

## **Georgians Call for Immediate End to Ban on Line-Relief in Preliminary Injunction Hearing**

*Voters and voting rights groups asked the court to halt a portion of Georgia's anti-voter law that criminalizes Georgians handing food, water, or other relief to those waiting in long voting lines.*

**ATLANTA** – TODAY, July 18, 2022, Georgians called for the court to grant immediate relief through a preliminary injunction and block the portion of anti-voter law, [S.B. 202](#), that criminalizes Georgians providing food or water to their neighbors standing in long polling lines. A preliminary injunction hearing was held as part of ongoing litigation in [AME vs. Kemp](#), which challenges S.B. 202 for unconstitutionally creating barriers to voting that diminish the voices of communities of color, women, and people with disabilities.

The [Legal Defense and Fund \(LDF\)](#), [Southern Poverty Law Center \(SPLC\)](#), [American Civil Liberties Union \(ACLU\)](#), [ACLU of Georgia \(ACLU-GA\)](#), and the law firms of [Davis Wright Tremaine](#) and [WilmerHale](#) filed the preliminary injunction motion on May 25, 2022. Plaintiffs are the [Sixth District of the American Methodist Episcopal Church](#), [Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated/Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.](#), [Georgia ADAPT](#), [Georgia Advocacy Office](#), and the [Southern Christian Leadership Conference](#) represented by LDF, the ACLU of Georgia, ACLU National, and Wilmer Hale, as well as the [Georgia Muslim Voter Project](#), [Women Watch Afrika](#), [Latino Community Fund of Georgia](#) and [The Arc of the United States](#), represented by SPLC and DWT.

A copy of the groups' motion for preliminary injunction can be found [HERE](#).

“Georgia’s line-relief ban is another cruel tactic designed to make it harder for Black voters to participate and criminalize the long tradition of civil rights organizations like those we represent from providing food and water to voters standing in unacceptably long lines,” said **Leah Aden**, **deputy director of litigation at LDF**. “We are in court to remove this unconstitutional barrier and to protect Georgians' ability to fully participate in elections.”

“S.B. 202 forces barriers to voting on all Georgians, and especially diminishes the voices in government of communities of color, women, and people with disabilities,” said **Poy Winichakul**, **senior voting rights staff attorney with SPLC**. “In particular, the cruel ban on line relief that prevents Georgians from giving water to neighbors waiting in long lines, must be lifted so everyone can have an equal voice in their communities through their right to vote.”

“Georgia’s new ban on line relief is inhumane and unjustifiable,” said **Rahul Garabadu**, **voting rights staff attorney at the ACLU of Georgia**. “Today, we were in court to show

how this ban affects our clients and voters across the state, and why it violates the Constitution. We will never stop fighting to make voting accessible for all eligible voters.”

“We’re challenging this provision because it is inhumane and illegal. Georgians recognize it is just another attempt to make voting harder for them, and we urge the court to swiftly block the measure,” said **Sophia Lin Lakin, interim co-director of the ACLU’s Voting Rights Project.**

“Today we bore witness to the cruel consequences of an unjust law,” said **Adam Sieff, counsel at Davis Wright Tremaine LLP, who represents clients in First Amendment litigation.** “We presented evidence that this policy is not only inhumane, but a clearly unconstitutional ban on speech protected by the First Amendment.”

“S.B. 202’s line relief ban only makes it harder for our clients—and eligible voters across Georgia—to participate in our democracy,” said **George Varghese, partner at WilmerHale.** “We are in court today to show why this ban is unjustifiable and unconstitutional, and to ensure that our clients’ fundamental right to vote is not compromised.”

### **Background:**

After Georgia voters turned out in record numbers for the 2020 presidential election and U.S. Senate elections in early 2021, state legislators passed S.B. 202, a sweeping — and unconstitutional — voting law that threatened to massively disenfranchise voters, particularly voters of color.

In response, voting rights organizations and Georgia community leaders filed *AME v. Kemp* to challenge multiple provisions of S.B. 202 including:

- A ban on “line relief,” where volunteers provide water and snacks to people waiting in long lines to vote, a common occurrence at precincts with a large population of voters of color.
- A severe restriction on the use of mobile voting units, which have been used to address a shortage of accessible and secure polling locations that previously resulted in long lines of voters at existing and traditional polling locations.
- Additional and onerous identification requirements for requesting and casting an absentee ballot.
- A compressed period for requesting absentee ballots.
- Restrictions on the use of secure ballot drop boxes.
- Disqualification of provisional ballots cast in a voter’s county of residence but outside the voter’s precinct before 5 p.m. Previously, votes for all the races to which the person was eligible to vote on that precinct’s provisional ballot were counted.
- A drastic reduction of early voting in runoff elections.

The lawsuit describes how S.B. 202 violates voter protections under the 14th and 15th Amendments as well as Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It also outlines how the line relief ban violates the First Amendment right to freedom of expression.

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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.*