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## **Civil Rights Groups Defend District Court Preliminary Injunction Wins at the 11<sup>th</sup> Circuit to Block Provisions of Georgia’s Voter Suppression Law SB 202**

Civil and voting rights organizations scored [two significant wins](#) for Georgia voters when they secured preliminary injunctions that would ease burdensome birthdate requirement for casting absentee ballots and allow “line relief” for voters waiting in long lines to cast their ballots. But those wins have been appealed to the 11<sup>th</sup> Circuit and, with less than 10 weeks left before the general election, Plaintiffs, are hopeful these injunctions issued by the Northern District of Atlanta remain in place.

Plaintiffs are comprised of individual community members and trusted community organizations, and are defending these injunctions to ensure Black voters, voters of color and voters with disabilities are not deprived of the right to vote in the upcoming election. The rulings blocked portions of the Georgia’s Law ([SB 202](#)) that needlessly requires voters to include their birthdate on absentee ballot envelopes and prohibited Georgians from providing food and water to voters waiting in lines more than 150 feet from the polls – a practice called “line relief.” Plaintiffs successfully argued they were likely to win because requiring birthdates on ballot return envelopes and blocking line relief violate the Civil Rights Act and First Amendment, respectively.

However, the State of Georgia and the Republican National Committee (RNC) have challenged the preliminary injunctions on appeal at the Eleventh Circuit. Plaintiffs filed briefs on August 30 defending [line relief](#) and eliminating immaterial [birthdate requirement](#) arguing they should remain in place while the case is pending before the District Court.

Meanwhile, Plaintiffs continue to challenge other parts of Georgia’s SB 202 as violating federal law and intentionally discriminating against Black voters, voters of color, and voters with disabilities. The lawsuit argues that several provisions violate protections voter under the 14th and 15th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, as well as Section 2

of the Voting Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act, and the Civil Rights Act.

The challenged provisions of SB 202 include:

- 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 5:00 p.m. Previously, votes for all the contests 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.
- 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.

The [Legal Defense Fund \(LDF\)](#), [The Southern Poverty Law Center \(SPLC\)](#), [American Civil Liberties Union \(ACLU\)](#), the [ACLU of Georgia](#), and the law firms [WilmerHale](#) and [Davis Wright Tremaine LLP \(DWT\)](#) filed the lawsuit with other legal groups and the [U.S. Department of Justice](#). They filed on behalf of the [Sixth District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church](#), [Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.](#), [Georgia ADAPT](#), and the [Georgia Advocacy Office](#), represented by LDF, ACLU Ga, ACLU, 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.

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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.*