



For Immediate Release

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LDF Condemns Illegal, Unconstitutional Executive Order Seeking to Undermine Voting Rights in Federal Elections

The Legal Defense Fund (LDF) condemns an Executive Order issued yesterday by President Donald Trump that seeks to sharply curtail the fundamental right to vote for millions of Americans. The order requires individuals to show documents proving their citizenship in order to register to vote – permitting only a narrow set of documents, such as a passport, that many Americans do not have easy access to. It also attempts to bar states from counting mail ballots that arrive after Election Day, even if they were mailed and postmarked on or before Election Day. Currently, 18 states allow mail ballots to be counted as long as they are postmarked by Election Day.

LDF President and Director-Counsel Janai Nelson issued the following statement.

“This Executive Order is a blatantly unconstitutional attempt to erect arbitrary barriers to the ballot that risk disenfranchising millions of Americans. Our Constitution makes clear that the President does not have the power to regulate federal elections – that responsibility is explicitly delegated to Congress and the states. This Order is an illegal and dangerous power grab, a direct attack on American democracy, and an affront to the rule of law.

“The Order purports to be grounded in concerns about election integrity, but despite what President Trump claims, the reality is that voter fraud, including voting by noncitizens, is exceedingly rare. This Executive Order is not about election integrity. It’s about making it more difficult for people to vote.

“By requiring documents that many Americans do not have ready access to – such as a passport – this order imposes an undue burden on the fundamental right to register and vote. It will prevent eligible citizens from registering and casting a ballot, and will be especially burdensome for Black voters – indeed, only one-third of Black people have passports. The consequences will be grave: fewer eligible people will be able to register to vote and our democracy will be eroded because of it.”

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