

Civil Rights Groups Secure Victory in Landmark Case Challenging Racial Discrimination in Louisiana's State Legislative Maps

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 8, 2024

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BATON ROUGE, La. — In a victory for fair maps, a federal court today ruled in favor of Louisiana voters, agreeing that the current state House and Senate district maps violate Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

The plaintiffs who challenged the state legislative maps — the Louisiana State Conference of the NAACP, Black Voters Matter Capacity Building Institute, and several individual voters — are represented by the American Civil Liberties Union, ACLU of Louisiana, Legal Defense Fund (LDF), law firm Cozen O' Connor, and Louisiana attorneys Ron Wilson and John Adcock.

In its decision, the court condemned the packing and cracking of Black communities within the maps, emphasizing the importance of upholding the principles of equal representation for all citizens.

In response to these findings, the court has mandated remedial measures to rectify the discriminatory boundaries, ensuring that future elections reflect the true diversity of the Louisiana population. Today's decision reinforces the importance of protecting every citizen's right to vote and ensures that electoral processes are fair, just, and free from discriminatory practices.

“This decision sets a powerful precedent for challenging discriminatory redistricting efforts across the nation, confirming that attempts to dilute Black communities' votes and their power will not be tolerated,” said **Megan Keenan, staff attorney with the ACLU Voting Rights Project**. “This win would not be possible without the commitment displayed by our clients and generations of Black Louisianians who have spent years organizing and fighting to receive the Voting Rights Act's promise of fair representation. We commend the court for bringing our clients one step closer to justice, and we will continue our work to protect the voting rights of all Americans.”

“The impact of this victory cannot be overstated,” said **Nora Ahmed, ACLU of Louisiana legal director**. “Representation at the state level has an enormous impact on the daily lives of all Louisianians, and fair representation in the Louisiana Legislature is paramount. We are

extremely pleased that the court has ruled in favor of minority voters who were actively having their voices silenced by their elected officials, and we will continue to fight on their behalf.”

“Today, hope surges through Louisiana,” said **Dr. Dorothy Nairne, plaintiff**. “Fair maps ignite a spark of empowerment in our communities, opening opportunities to elect and be represented by candidates of our choices. This is our victory, shared by every Louisianian who yearns for a brighter future. I am revitalized to build on this momentum and keep working toward transformation.”

“Today’s decision is a victory that affirms the voices and votes of Black voters in Louisiana,” said **Sara Rohani, redistricting fellow at the Legal Defense Fund**. “Voting rights and political participation are under attack across our country. This win is a testament to the strength and resilience of Black communities across the state that fought to be fairly recognized, represented, and heard. LDF will continue to work with its partners to protect the rights of Black voters across the country today, and for the foreseeable future.”

Nairne v. Ardoin was originally brought in March 2022 and asserts that the maps deny Black residents an equal opportunity to participate in the political process and elect candidates of their choice, in violation of Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act bans the discriminatory drawing of legislative district lines that dilute the voting strength of Black voters. In the last decade, communities of color in Louisiana have grown, but the state Legislature failed to draw district lines that would allow Black Louisiana voters to elect their preferred leaders.

Ruling: <https://www.aclu.org/documents/nairne-v-ardoin-opinion-2-8-2024>

Statement: <https://www.aclu.org/press-releases/civil-rights-groups-secure-victory-in-landmark-case-challenging-racial-discrimination-in-louisianas-state-legislative-maps>