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## **LDF Proudly Continues Nonpartisan Election Protection Tradition at Poll Sites and Calls on Officials to Denounce Harmful Mischaracterizations**

The Legal Defense Fund (LDF) has long trained and worked with nonpartisan poll monitor volunteers who help ensure voters can exercise the right to vote by casting ballots safely and efficiently. These volunteers play an essential role in protecting our elections and advancing democratic principles by providing nonpartisan information about voting and by observing the election process. As general elections are underway across the United States, the work of these volunteers has been intentionally mischaracterized by political actors as partisan, which threatens to infringe on their civil and constitutional rights.

**Janai Nelson, President and Director-Counsel** of the Legal Defense Fund (LDF), issued the following statement:

“In every election, nonpartisan poll monitor volunteers, including those volunteering with nonprofit, nonpartisan organizations like the Legal Defense Fund, play a vital role in upholding our democracy, shepherding the electoral process by ensuring voters’ rights are protected and respected, and making certain poll site operations are efficient and safe. Throughout election season, nonpartisan poll monitor volunteers work tirelessly to ensure eligible voters can cast their ballots without issue and take immediate action to resolve barriers to voting access.

“When voters see nonpartisan election protection poll monitors – typically identified by clothing or badges declaring their nonpartisan volunteer status – at their poll sites, they should rest assured that these individuals are there to serve the general public and help them navigate the voting process. These volunteers do not work for or promote any candidate, campaign, or political party and are specifically trained not to endorse any candidate, campaign, or political party in their election protection efforts.

“It is not only patently false to refer to nonpartisan volunteers as partisan actors, it is inherently dangerous. Such disinformation may subject nonpartisan volunteers to intimidation and harassment, which we are already seeing unfold.

“Targeting nonpartisan poll monitor volunteers is a direct attack on the electoral process and a stain on our democracy. It may also violate federal and state laws and result in serious penalties. We, therefore, call on state and local officials to actively monitor and condemn the mischaracterization of nonpartisan election protection efforts. Officials must make clear that any intimidation or harassment of nonpartisan poll monitor volunteers will not be tolerated. The safety and security of nonpartisan poll monitor volunteers is paramount and necessary to the integrity of the election process. Any nonpartisan poll monitor volunteer experiencing threat or anyone who witnesses such conduct should immediately report it to the election protection hotline: 1-866-OUR-VOTE.”

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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.*