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Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism
April Verrett
Service Employees International Union
Harman Singh
Sikh Coalition
Bryan Fair
Southern Poverty Law Center
Janet Murgula
UnidosUS

President and CEO
Maya Wiley

June 12, 2026

Dear Senator:

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and the undersigned 23 national organizations write out of urgent concern that President Trump continues to stack the federal judiciary with judges who support his long-running campaign to undermine voting rights and free and fair elections in this country. Following the [Supreme Court's evisceration of the Voting Rights Act of 1965](#), the stakes for our communities – and for our democracy as a whole – could not be higher. We implore you to only confirm judges who have *proven* to be independent, well-qualified, and committed to civil and human rights, including the right to vote.

Our multi-racial democracy rises and falls on ensuring that every citizen can participate in our elections and decide who may best represent them. But in recent years, we have witnessed unprecedented attacks on the right of citizens to vote, and these attacks have only accelerated in the past year. The recent effort to pass the SAVE Act (S. 1383) may have failed, but it is only a symptom of a much more serious problem: President Trump and his allies have spent years waging a massive disinformation campaign questioning the integrity of American elections. This campaign is being waged in order to whip up support for federal and state policies that would make it harder for certain groups of citizens to vote.

Long before the Supreme Court declared that states could use partisanship as an excuse to engage in racially discriminatory redistricting, in *Louisiana v. Callais* (2026), it had already done incalculable damage to voting rights. In the years since its decision in *Shelby County v. Holder* (2013), 31 states have [enacted](#) 114 restrictive voting laws, which disproportionately burden voters of color. Many of these restrictions made little pretense of their intent to target and bar voters of color, and numerous federal courts found plainly intentional discrimination behind them. Many were also passed on the basis of false (and repeatedly debunked) allegations of voter fraud in the 2020 election.

The harm has been palpable: racial disparities in voter turnout have [increased](#), particularly in areas formerly protected by the Voting Rights Act's preclearance provision, which the Court dismantled. And these attacks on voting rights have undermined the voices of Black and other historically marginalized voters as a result.

Since returning to office, President Trump has only continued to escalate his unfounded attacks on electoral integrity and fairness. For example, he and his administration have:

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- Issued an executive order that unlawfully attempts to require voters to show costly [documentary proof of citizenship, such as passports or birth certificates](#), when they register to vote, even though [millions of citizens lack ready access to those documents](#), and voters are already required to attest to their citizenship when registering;
- Pressured states to use a flawed DHS database (“SAVE”) to remove people from voter rolls, despite its [well-documented inaccuracies](#);
- Sued numerous states demanding voter roll information, including sensitive personal information, and even openly tried to use ICE and CBP as leverage to pressure Minnesota to release its files;
- Used the FBI to raid Fulton County, Georgia, offices and seize hundreds of boxes of election materials related to the 2020 election, as part of an effort to revive debunked claims of voter fraud; and
- Issued a second executive order that unlawfully orders the U.S. Postal Service to refuse to deliver [mail-in ballots](#) unless states contribute to an unworkable and wildly inaccurate national voter database.

At the same time, Congress is continuing to consider bills, beyond the failed SAVE Act, to impose on all states many of the worst discriminatory voting restrictions that have been enacted in some states.

Ultimately, many disputes around these emerging state laws and attempted federal policies will need to be addressed in court. And it is imperative that we have a judiciary that is up to the task: an independent and fair-minded judiciary has long been a bedrock of our rights, and is now more important than ever.

This is why we are deeply troubled that President Trump has been nominating, and the Senate has been rushing to confirm, many nominees to the federal bench on the basis of loyalty to him and his discriminatory agenda. A number of these nominees have highly alarming records on voting rights issues. For example:

- Justin Smith, nominated to the Eighth Circuit, helped defend Trump’s claim of presidential immunity against prosecution for his role in the January 6, 2021, insurrection to overturn the 2020 election. As a senior aide to then-Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt, he worked in support of Trump’s failed efforts to challenge the 2020 election, through frivolous litigation to invalidate the results in Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.¹
- Michael Hendershot, nominated to the Northern District of Ohio, helped defend his state’s voter purge practice triggered by non-voting, which unfairly threw more than a million eligible voters off the rolls. Although the Sixth Circuit found that this violated the National Voter Registration Act, the Supreme Court reversed in a narrowly decided 5-4 ruling.² As Justice Sotomayor noted in her dissent, the purge disproportionately affected minority, low-income, disabled, and veteran voters.

¹ *United States Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, Questionnaire for Judicial Nominees* as submitted by Justin Smith, https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/smith_sq1.pdf at 23-24 (citing his work in *Trump v. United States*, 603 U.S. 593 (2024), and *Texas v. Pennsylvania*, 141 S. Ct. 1230 (2021)).

² *Husted v. A. Philip Randolph Institute*, 584 U.S. 756 (2018).

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- Benjamin Flowers, nominated to the Sixth Circuit, has [urged the Supreme Court](#) to overrule *Thornburg v. Gingles*, the landmark 1986 precedent that – until it was gutted by *Callais* – had helped courts detect and act when a voting system has a racially discriminatory impact.

These nominees follow a number of judges that have already been confirmed in the past year despite having records of working to undermine voting rights. For example:

- Prior to her confirmation to the District of Montana, Kathleen Smithgall Lane represented an Alabama county when it was sued for racial gerrymandering in drawing district lines. A federal court found “powerful circumstantial evidence of racial gerrymandering” and determined that the Commission’s “purported reliance on traditional redistricting criteria” was simply “not credible.”³ Representing the Republican National Committee, she also defended a Montana law that was enjoined because it chilled voter registration without any adequate justification.⁴
- Prior to his confirmation to the Western District of Texas, Andrew Davis represented Fox News in Dominion Voting System’s high-profile defamation lawsuit against the network, stemming from Fox’s participation in President Trump’s massive disinformation campaign to discredit the outcome of the 2020 election. He also defended Texas’s congressional and state house redistricting schemes that a three-judge lower court unanimously rejected, and which the Supreme Court narrowly upheld on a 5-4 basis in *Abbot v. Perez* (2018) despite clear evidence of discriminatory intent.
- Prior to his confirmation to the Northern District of Alabama last October, Edmund LaCour used his position as Solicitor General of Alabama to defend a congressional redistricting plan that violated the Voting Rights Act. After the Supreme Court struck down the plan in *Allen v. Milligan* (2019), he worked with Alabama to defy the ruling by creating a new plan that was once again struck down in the courts. Prior to that effort, he led Alabama’s unconstitutional and unsuccessful effort to exclude undocumented immigrants from the 2020 census.
- Similarly, prior to his confirmation to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, Eric Tung filed an *amicus* brief in *Moore v. Harper* (2023) on behalf of an organization formed by Republican political operative Karl Rove. In the brief, Tung argued for the so-called “Independent State Legislature Theory,” which would let state legislatures rig presidential and congressional elections in violation of their own state constitutions, while preventing state courts from doing anything about it. The Supreme Court rejected this theory in a 6-3 ruling.

In the coming months and years, the fate of free and fair elections in our country will depend heavily on the courts. We urge the Senate to only confirm judges who meet the highest bar for independence, who do

³ *McClure v. Jefferson County Commission*, 800 F. Supp. 3d 1209 (N.D. Ala., 2025).

⁴ *Montana PIRG v. Jacobsen*, 731 F. Supp. 3d 1175 (D. Mont., 2024).

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not flaunt their blatant disregard for the judicial system, and who are strongly committed to upholding the right of every eligible person to vote. Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

Advocates for Youth

American Atheists

Black Voters Matter Fund

CenterLink

Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

Court Accountability Action

Defend the Vote Action Fund

Equal Justice Society

Feminist Majority

Lambda Legal

Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law

League of Conservation Voters

Mi Familia en Accion

Muslim Advocates

National Association of Social Workers

National Council of Jewish Women

National LGBTQ+ Bar Association

National Women's Law Center

Oasis Legal Services

People For the American Way

Reproductive Freedom for All

Voter Participation Center

Women Lawyers On Guard Action Network