

#### **4th Circuit strikes down North Carolina voter ID law, finds discriminatory intent**

A federal appeals court on Friday struck down North Carolina's voter ID law, finding that lawmakers acted "with racially discriminatory intent."

The Richmond, Virginia-based 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the voter ID requirement, along with other challenged provisions of the new law, violated the equal protection clause and the Voting Rights Act. Publications covering the ruling include Politico, the Election Law Blog, the Washington Post, the News & Observer and the National Law Journal (sub. req.).

The ruling not only bars North Carolina from requiring photo identification to vote, it also restores a week of early voting; allows same-day registration and voting; and allows preregistration by 16- and 17-year-olds, according to the News & Observer.

The ruling (PDF) follows an en banc appeals court decision last week that struck down Texas' voter ID law. The decision by the New Orleans-based 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals was based on the Texas law's discriminatory effect, while the 4th Circuit found a discriminatory intent, according to the Election Law Blog post by University of California at Irvine law professor Richard Hasen.

Despite its finding on discriminatory intent, the 4th Circuit declined to require federal supervision of North Carolina voting changes, Hasen writes. "Taking Section 3 preclearance off the table probably makes Supreme Court review less likely, but I wouldn't count it out" should North Carolina seek review, Hasen writes. "The case presents the very rich question of what it means to engage in racially discriminatory intent when race and party so overlap."

BY: DEBRA CASSENS WEISS