

PUBLIC INTEREST

— LEGAL FOUNDATION —

Challengers to Virginia Election Laws Withdraw Claims in Federal Court *Attempt to Overthrow Virginia Felon Re-Enfranchisement System Dropped*

(Alexandria, VA) – November 17. A federal court in Richmond, Virginia, agreed to the voluntary dismissal of a challenge to Virginia’s felon re-enfranchisement program. Just last month, Public Interest Legal Foundation filed an *amicus curiae* brief advocating that Virginia’s program was constitutional.

The challenge was part of a coordinated trio of lawsuits filed by lawyers funded by billionaire George Soros attacking state election integrity laws in key swing states ahead of the 2016 Presidential election. This attack involved Virginia’s voter ID requirement, its system for restoring felon voting rights, and allegedly long lines at voting precincts. The claim had maintained that the rule requiring re-enfranchisement to proceed on an individual basis was arbitrary and not rationally related to any state interests.

Plaintiffs in the case, including the Democratic Party of Virginia, claimed that it was unconstitutional for Virginia to re-enfranchise felons on an individual basis and demanded that the state re-enfranchise thousands of felons by a sweeping action from the governor. This was a head-on assault on the Virginia constitution, which had stood unchallenged for centuries.

Apparently realizing the radical nature of their challenge, last week the Democratic Party voluntarily withdrew that challenge. The judge granted the withdrawal with prejudice, remarking that it was “appropriate to do so.”

“It was ridiculous to claim that a system that was part of the Virginia constitution and had been in place for centuries was irrational,” said J. Christian Adams, President of the PILF. “The Fifteenth Amendment expressly empowers states to make their own rules for felon enfranchisement and so Virginia’s system emphatically does not violate the Constitution.”

PILF is the only outside group to file a brief with the court. The case is *Lee v. Virginia State Board of Elections*, Case No. 3:15-cv-357 (E.D. Va., Richmond).

The Public Interest Legal Foundation (PILF) is a 501(c)(3) public interest law firm dedicated to election integrity. PILF exists to assist states and others to aid the cause of election integrity and fight against lawlessness in American elections. Drawing on numerous experts in the field, PILF seeks to protect the right to vote and preserve the Constitutional framework of American elections.

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Court filings can be found here: <http://publicinterestlegal.org/cases/oh-wi-and-va-voting-lawsuits/>

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