NAACP LITIGATION & LEGAL ADVOCACY UPDATE
June 28, 2022

Redistricting

- June 17th, Governor McMaster signed into law new maps for the South Carolina state house. These maps, achieved through settlement by the South Carolina State Conference, represent a major victory for Black voters in South Carolina and substantively increase representation for Black voters in South Carolina. These maps will go into effect for the 2024 elections.

Dobbs Opinion

- On June 24th, the U.S. Supreme Court issued an opinion in Dobbs v. Johnson Women’s Health Organization. The opinion struck down Roe v. Wade and essentially held that women have no constitutional right to choose to terminate their pregnancies. The concurring opinion from Justice Brett Kavanagh says, in essence, because the word “abortion” does not appear in the Constitution (written in 1787), the prior composition of the U.S. Supreme Court improperly created the right. In the concurring opinion from Justice Clarence Thomas, he indicated that the Court should also revisit the rulings on the right to contraception, same-sex marriage, and the right of adults to have consensual sexual relations without interference from the state. This case marks the first time in U.S. history that the Supreme Court has taken away rights from more than half the population. The decision is particularly troubling because it implies a willingness to jettison established law to reach a desired result. Nearly every member of the Office of General Counsel, including the Kellogg’s Summer Law Fellows, worked diligently to provide the NAACP National office with summaries of the opinions and details about “trigger” laws in the 13 states where abortion immediately became illegal or will become illegal in a matter of weeks. OGC stands ready to support NAACP units with reproductive issues arising from the opinion.

Criminal Justice / Conditions of Confinement

- On June 10th, the Georgia State Conference of the NAACP and individual plaintiffs filed a joint stipulation of dismissal to end their lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, entitled Georgia State Conference of the NAACP v. Ward. The case challenged the conditions of confinement in the Coffee County Correctional Facility, which was the site of a severe COVID-19 outbreak earlier in the pandemic. Over the course of the case, members of OGC and co-counsel at Elias Law Group won initial, expedited discovery into test rates and COVID-protocols within Coffee County Correctional Facility and across the Georgia Department of Correction (GDC). Last fall, however, the Court denied plaintiffs’ request for a preliminary injunction, which suggested that it would not have ruled for plaintiffs at summary judgment or after trial. The stipulation of dismissal provides a favorable resolution to the case. Under the terms of the agreement, GDC and CoreCivic, the private company that runs Coffee County Correctional Facility, will continue to provide plaintiffs with monthly updates on the number of tests conducted in Coffee County Correctional Facility and the number of COVID-19 cases, as well as any educational materials related to COVID-19 vaccines.
Navigator Program

- The NAACP Kellogg’s Summer Law Fellows are currently working with the Housing Navigator Program to provide direct client services to individuals facing eviction and housing instability. In the past few weeks, Fellows have secured crucial legal and financial resources for clients at risk of losing their homes.

Spotlight: Kellogg’s Summer Law Fellow

- Ashley Brickhouse
My name is Ashley and I am a rising 2L at THEE Howard University School of Law. I applied to this internship because I wanted to be a part of the legacy of such a trailblazing organization. NAACP is on the forefront of so many civil rights issues and as a future civil rights attorney I knew that this would be an invaluable opportunity to grow and learn about the many areas of civil rights law.

The highlight of the fellowship so far has been working with my fellow fellows and the amazing staff attorneys at the NAACP Office of General Counsel. They all truly make me feel like my voice is heard and that I have a home within the NAACP. I have also enjoyed being a part of the Housing Navigator Program and being able to directly interact with clients facing housing insecurities and connecting them to resources that are able to assist them.

My future career goals are still loading! Being a part of this program has taught me that I can be a civil rights attorney and serve my community in any area of law so I am excited to explore and see where my journey takes me. Currently, I am particularly interested in Housing Law and hope to pursue that interest further.

Continuing Legal Education at 113th NAACP National Convention

- The battle regarding redistricting continues and election season is beginning with a spate of new voter suppression and nullification laws. The fate of American democracy is at stake. To protect our right to vote, the NAACP Office of the General Counsel is offering two days of FREE Continuing Legal Education training on redistricting and voting rights.

  Sunday, July 17, 2022 • 9:00 A.M. EST to 2:30 P.M. EST

Redistricting

Educational sessions will include:

- Redistricting: What Every Lawyer Should Know
- Information about recent developments in Redistricting
- Overview of NAACP Office of General Counsel Redistricting Cases
- Justice Deferred: An Analysis of the Purcell Principle
Monday, July 18, 2022 ● 9:00 A.M. EST to 12:15 P.M. EST

Voting Rights

Educational session will include:

- Legal responses to recent Voter Suppression Laws Passed in FL, TX GA, and other jurisdictions
- Protecting Democracy: A primer on challenging voter suppression and voter nullification laws

Scheduled panelists include lawyers and senior staff from: American Civil Liberties Union; The Law Offices of Carroll Rhodes; Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law; NAACP Michigan State Conference; NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.; Middle Tennessee State University; NAACP Texas State Conference; Southern Coalition for Social Justice; Texas Southern University; University of Baltimore School of Law.

This program is OPEN TO EVERYONE.

You do NOT need to be a lawyer to attend, but lawyers may receive up to SEVEN (7) CLE CREDITS.

REGISTER at https://naacp.org/convention/registration