



LOCAL CHOICE/ POSITIVE POLICY TOOLKIT



EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES TO PROMOTE
POSITIVE ELECTION CHANGES

LOCAL CHOICE/POSITIVE POLICY TOOLKIT

The Local Choice /Positive Policy Toolkit is an effective measure to advocate for better election systems and promote constructive election policies by:

- 1) Examining recent changes in methods of election,
- 2) Providing information on alternative election arrangements,
- 3) Analyzing redistricting proposals,
- 4) Encouraging intra-state networking opportunities.

In short, this toolkit encourages an examination of your current election systems, and suggests exploring alternative systems that may enhance fair voting opportunities.

QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1. Is the minority community adequately represented in the current system?
- 2. Are minority groups over concentrated in election districts?
- 3. Does your community have different means to effectively cast a ballot, e.g. early voting, vote-by-mail, automatic voter registration, same-day registration & voting, etc.
- 4. If a minority district is not possible are you willing to consider alternative election systems like cumulative voting, instant runoff voting, limited voting, etc.



Shelby v. Holder—Supreme Court struck down coverage formula and halted Section 5 enforcement.

STATES

Alabama

Georgia

Mississippi

South Carolina

Texas

Florida

Louisiana

North Carolina

Tennessee

Virginia





Using the Local Choice/Positive Policy Toolkit

- ⇒ Review answers to toolkit questionnaire
- ⇒ Discuss effects of any recent changes in election policies, submit op-eds, increase awareness
- ⇒ Use toolkit to become familiar with alternative systems, possible litigation efforts, effective communication strategies, and confer with SOLVE & SOLVE organizations that specialize in specific voting rights issues
- ⇒ Use toolkit to promote intrastate networking opportunities and combine resources in states and regions
- ⇒ Meet with community groups, organizers, elected officials, and other voting rights organizations to discuss current election policies and implications for advocating change
- ⇒ Develop a plan
- ⇒ Remain persistent



For more information and assistance contact SOLVE at www.solve.network





FAIR REPRESENTATION

All voters should have equal voting power, and, ideally, an equally realistic opportunity to elect their candidates of choice. Most of our elections systems are one, or some combination of the following:

- **Single-member District System**, where jurisdictions are divided into geographically-defined areas (districts) and voters within that district elect one representative,
- **At-large System**, candidates are elected from the entire area instead of specific districts, and all voters cast votes for a number of candidates,
- **Mixed System**, where jurisdictions combine both at-large and single-member district systems.

Those jurisdictions utilizing any form of the single-member district system must examine and redraw districts after every census to ensure equal population under the one-person, one-vote principle.

There are other constitutional forms of proportional representation that allow electing representatives roughly in proportion to their share of the vote in an election. Some Fair Representation Voting methods include:

- ♦ **Ranked choice voting**, voters rank candidates in order of their preference,
- ♦ **Cumulative voting**, voters allocate their votes however they wish, often giving one candidate several votes,
- ♦ **Limited voting**, voters cast fewer votes than the number of seats in an election,
- ♦ **Districts-plus voting**, preserves current geographically-based system, but ensures that when one party's candidate gets the most votes that party will win the most seats.

For a thorough explanation and more information on Fair Representation please visit FairVote at www.fairvote.org.

FairVote



ALABAMA

GOVERNMENT UNITS	COUNTIES	ISD
1,209	67	132

Home Rule powers granted by constitutional amendment

ELECTION SYSTEM & INFORMATION UPDATES

- Supreme Court remanded state House & Senate plan to lower court for further consideration of a Republican-led measure to pack minorities into districts to lessen their influence (*Alabama Legislative Black Caucus v. Alabama*)
- Mid-decade redistricting in Daphne, AL
- Reduction in polling places in Daphne, AL
- In 2016, enacted a e-poll book pilot program
- The Greater Birmingham Ministries filed felon voting rights lawsuit ; persons convicted of felonies involving “moral turpitude” are not able to vote.

FAIR REPRESENTATION

In the late 1908's, *Dillard v. Crenshaw County* was a mammoth lawsuit that challenged the legality of 180 local Alabama jurisdictions. Ultimately, 30 of 94 Alabama jurisdictions adopted an alternative election system as a remedy for minority vote dilution.

Fair Representation Voting Systems in Alabama:

Ariton City Council
Carbon Hill City Council
Calera City Council
Centre City Council
Chilton County Commission
Chilton County BOE
Cuba City Council
Dora City Council
Fultondale City Council
Goshen City Council
Guin City Council
Heath City Council
Kinsey City Council
Loachapoka City Council
Lowndesboro City Council
Madrid City Council
Myrtlewood City Council
Orrville City Council
Pennington City Council
Pickensville City Council
Pine Apple City Council
Providence City Council
Rutledge City Council
Silas City Council
Toxey City Council
Waldo City Council
Waverly City Council
Webb City Council

Organizations in Alabama

Alabama State Conference of the NAACP
alnaacp.org

American Civil Liberties Union of Alabama
www.aclualabama.org

Martin Luther King Celebration Committee (Baldwin County)
P.O. Box 434
Point Clear, AL 36564



FLORIDA

GOVERNMENT UNITS	COUNTIES	ISD
1,651	66	95

County governments may adopt home rule charters

ELECTION SYSTEM & INFORMATION UPDATES

- Between 2012 and 2015, the enacted Congressional and Senate maps were repeatedly challenged in the courts. In December of 2015, the Supreme Court of Florida and the Second Judicial Circuit Court in Leon County ordered new congressional and state senate plans, respectively.
- State's illegally gerrymandered Senate districts replaced by Fair Districts Now proposed map
- E-poll books may be used at precincts

FAIR REPRESENTATION

Fair Representation Voting Systems in Florida:

Lake Park City Council

Organizations in Florida

American Civil Liberties Union of Florida
<https://aclufl.org>



The New Florida Majority
www.newfloridamajority.org



GEORGIA

GOVERNMENT UNITS	COUNTIES	ISD
1,379	153	180

Counties operate under home rule

ELECTION SYSTEM & INFORMATION UPDATES

- E-poll books are used statewide, procedures for their use appear in the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia (183-1-12-07)
- Hundreds of thousands of qualified, registered voters removed from voter rolls for exercising their right not to vote (*Common Cause, GA State Conference of the NAACP v. Brian Kemp*)

Organizations in Georgia

The Georgia NAACP
www.naacpga.org





LOUISIANA

GOVERNMENT UNITS	COUNTIES	ISD
530	60	69

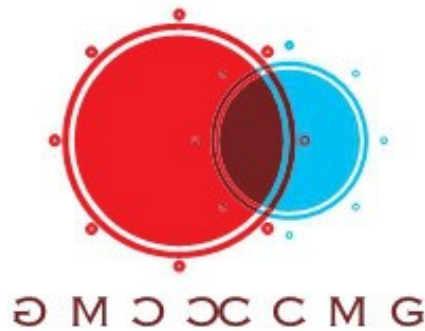
Parish governing bodies called police juries

ELECTION SYSTEM & INFORMATION UPDATES

- Efforts to enact automatic voter registration (AVR) remain
- LA law that required naturalized citizens to provide proof of U.S. citizenship was repealed
- College student ID cards now allowed for voting as a result of House Bill 940 by Rep. Randal Gaines

Organizations in Louisiana

Bayou Interfaith Shared Community Organizing
www.bisco-la.org



Crescent City Media Group
www.the-mediagroup.us

Geaux Vote LSU
geauxvotelsu.com

Voice of the ex-Offender (VOTE)
www.vote-nola.org



MISSISSIPPI

GOVERNMENT UNITS	COUNTIES	ISD
984	82	164

Counties and municipal governments operate under home rule

ELECTION SYSTEM & INFORMATION UPDATES

- Jurisdictions decide whether or not to use e-poll books
- Greater diversity needed in recruiting people of color to poll worker positions

Organizations in Mississippi

Action Communication and Education Reform
610 Head Start St.
Duck Hill, MS 38925

Mississippi NAACP
naacpms.org

One Voice
onevoicems.org

Tunica Teens in Action
www.tunicateensinaction.com



southernecho

Working to empower the African-American community through an inter-generational model of effective community organizing.



NORTH CAROLINA

GOVERNMENT UNITS	COUNTIES	ISD
974	100	

Counties exercise most municipal functions

ELECTION SYSTEM & INFORMATION UPDATES

- General Assembly must redraw 28 racially gerrymandered House & Senate districts by March 15, 2017, with special primary and general election in the fall of 2017.
- Reduction in polling places in several NC counties
- E-poll books are permitted in lieu of or in addition to paper poll books (N.C. Gen. Stat. §163-166.7)
- E-poll books failed in Durham County during 2016 Presidential Election
- Federal court rejected North Carolina's voter suppression efforts

FAIR REPRESENTATION

Fair Representation Voting Systems in North Carolina:

Alexander County BOE
Anson County BOE
Beaufort County Commission
Benson City Commission
Bladen County Commission
Bladen County BOE
Clinton City BOE
Martin County Commission
Perquimans County BOE
Robersonville City Council
Robeson County School Board
Sampson County BOE
Tyrell County BOE
Tyrell County Board of Commission
Williamston Town Commission

Organizations in North Carolina

North Carolina NAACP
www.naacpnc.org



SOUTHERN COALITION
for SOCIAL JUSTICE



SOUTH CAROLINA

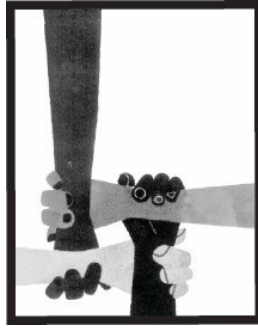
GOVERNMENT UNITS	COUNTIES	ISD
679	46	83

Municipalities are served by their county government

ELECTION SYSTEM & INFORMATION UPDATES

- The state election commission provides procedures, training, and support for e-poll books
- The SC Progressive Network's two year campaign resulted in a victory requiring the Greenville County Board of Registration to permit college students to register to vote and cease and desist requiring additional questionnaires from on-campus residents of Greenville County colleges.
- Statewide confusion over the state's voter education material
- Awaiting information from the state joint legislative commission on "Voting Systems Research" empaneled to review voting systems to replace the 12 year old paperless iVotronics

Organizations in South Carolina



SC Progressive Network

www.scpronet.com

South Carolina State Conference NAACP
scnaacp.org



TENNESSEE

GOVERNMENT UNITS	COUNTIES	ISD
917	92	14

County governments may adopt home rule charters

ELECTION SYSTEM & INFORMATION UPDATES

- Challenge to Tennessee's Senate plan on grounds that the plan divides more counties than allowed by state constitution (*Moore v. Haslam*)
- Permits the use of e-poll books and provides procedures for their use at polling places (Tenn. Code Ann. §2-7-112)

Organizations in Tennessee

ACLU of Tennessee
www.aclu-tn.org

Tennessee State Conference of the NAACP
www.tnnaacp.org



TEXAS

GOVERNMENT UNITS	COUNTIES	ISD
5,148	254	1,079

Municipalities of 5000 or more may adopt home rule charters

ELECTION SYSTEM & INFORMATION UPDATES

- Federal court maintains method of counting total population in redistricting (*Evenwell v. Abbott*)
- Supreme Court declined to hear arguments in TX voter ID battle, following lower court ruling that the 2011 law discriminates against minority groups.
- Challenge to state Congressional, House & Senate plans on grounds that the plan dilutes African American and Latino vote (*Perez v. Perry*)
- Allows for the use of an e-poll book with electronic signature capacity (Tex. Election Code Ann. §63.002)
- Federal court ruled that City of Pasadena, TX violated Section 2 of the VRA, and also purposely intended to discriminate against Latino voters by changing an eight single-member district system to a hybrid system that replaced 2 neighborhood districts with at-large seats.

FAIR REPRESENTATION

Fair Representation Voting Systems in Texas:

Abernathy City Council	Lockhart (ISD) School Board
Abernathy (ISD) School Board	Luling (ISD) Board of Trustees
Amarillo (ISD) School Board	Mertzon (Irion) (ISD) School Board
Andrews City Council	Morton City Council
Andrews (ISD) Board of Trustees	Morton (ISD) School Board
Anson City Council	Navarro (ISD) School Board
Anson (ISD) School Board	Nueces Canyon (ISD) School Board
Anton City Council	O'Donnell (ISD) School Board
Anton (ISD) School Board	Olton City Council
Atlanta City Council	Olton (ISD) Board of Trustees
Atlanta (ISD) School Board	Post (ISD) School Board
Bovina (ISD) School Board	Poth City Council
Carrollton-Farmers Branch (ISD) School Board	Poth (ISD) School Board
Denver City (ISD) School Board	Riviera (ISD) School Board
Dumas (ISD) School Board	Ropes (ISD) School Board
Earth City Council	Roscoe City Council
Eden City Council	Rotan City Council
Friona (ISD) School Board	Rotan (ISD) School Board
Grapeland City Council	Seminole (ISD) School Board
Hale Center City Council	Springlake-Earth (ISD) School Board
Hale Center (ISD) School Board	Stamford (ISD) School Board
Hamlin (ISD) School Board	Sudan (ISD) School Board
Wilson (ISD) School Board	Sundown (ISD) School Board
Yoakum (ISD) School Board	Wilson (ISD) School Board
Yorktown City Council	Yoakum (ISD) School Board
Yorktown (ISD) School Board	Yorktown City Council
Jourdanton City Council	Yorktown (ISD) School Board

Organizations in Texas

ACLU of Texas

<https://www.aclutx.org>

Texas State Conference of the NAACP

www.txnaacp.org



VIRGINIA

GOVERNMENT UNITS	COUNTIES	ISD
519	95	1

Municipal governments in Virginia are city & town governments

ELECTION SYSTEM & INFORMATION UPDATES

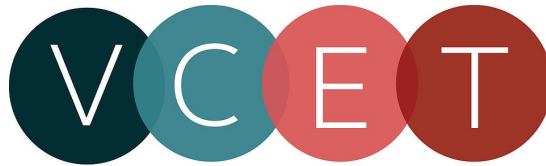
- Court struck down original congressional district lines that packed African American voters into lone African American lawmaker, Rep. Bobby Scott's district (District 3) [*Wittman v. Personhuballah*]
- VA restores voting rights to formerly incarcerated persons
- Provides procedures for the use of e-poll books and specifies that localities may purchase e-poll books that have been approved by the State Board of Elections. (Va. Code §24.2-611, § 24.2-668, §24.2-404 A.7)

Organizations in Virginia

CensusChannel®



NEW VIRGINIA MAJORITY
DEMOCRACY, JUSTICE, PROGRESS



Virginia Civic Engagement Table



National/Regional Organizations

CensusChannel®

FairVote



LATINOJustice
COMMITTED TO JUSTICE AND LEADERSHIP SINCE 1972 ■ PRLDEF

