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Firm Takes Georgia to Court Over New Voter Bill

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April 9, 2021 – Six groups represented by Hughes Hubbard have filed a federal lawsuit against Georgia officials, seeking to block a newly enacted voting legislation. The lawsuit alleges that the statute restricts voting and constitutes intentional discrimination in violation of the U.S. Constitution and Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

HHR, acting as pro bono counsel with the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law and The Law Office of Bryan L. Sells LLC, filed the federal lawsuit on March 28 on behalf of the Georgia State Conference of the NAACP, Common Cause, the Georgia Coalition for the People's Agenda, Inc., the GALEO Latino Community Development Fund, Inc., League of Women Voters of Georgia and the Lower Muskogee Creek Tribe.

The groups are suing to block voter restrictions included in SB202, legislation signed into law by Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp days before the suit was filed. According to the lawsuit, in enacting SB 202, the Georgia Legislature used racial discrimination as a means to achieve a partisan end. Their efforts to restrict voting access through SB202 constitute intentional discrimination in violation of the U.S. Constitution and Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

SB202 allegedly targets and makes more difficult early in-person voting, voting by absentee ballot and using ballot drop boxes, all of which were used much more extensively by voters of color as compared to voting in person on Election Day 2020. SB202 also removes the voting power of the secretary of state on the State Elections Board, and allows the State Election Board to take over county election boards. The complaint argues that this would give the State Elections Board unprecedented authority to target jurisdictions with a large population of Black voters and other voters of color.

"Georgia state lawmakers are making it more difficult to vote, criminalizing ordinary voter assistance, and then lying to their own constituents to suggest it is for their own good," said Damon Hewitt, acting president and executive director, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. "By limiting access to absentee ballots and early

voting, they are targeting communities of color, who are a growing part of the state's electorate. These actions show that discriminatory voter suppression is alive and well and it cannot stand."

HHR has previously worked with the Lawyers' Committee on two challenges to "exact match" requirements imposed on voter registrations in Georgia, one of which is continuing.

The filing made headlines in [The New York Times](#), [CNN.com](#), [Bloomberg News](#), [CBSNews.com](#), and other media outlets.

The HHR team includes Vilia Hayes, Neil Oxford, Jim Fitzpatrick, Dustin Smith, Greg Farrell, Karen Chau, Carolyn Harbus, Victor Sandoval and Scott Sanders.

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