

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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**Election Protection Groups Ask Court to
Protect Colorado Voters from Illegal Purge**

DENVER — Yesterday, a lawsuit was filed on behalf of Colorado Common Cause, Mi Familia Vota, and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) asking a federal court to reinstate approximately 30,000 Colorado voters who were illegally purged by Secretary of State Mike Coffman from the state's voter registration lists.

"Legitimate voters should have their voices heard. By returning wrongfully purged voters to the list we can ensure their rights are protected," explained Jenny Flanagan, Executive Director of Colorado Common Cause. "That's not just common sense. It's also the law."

In an action not required by any Colorado law, the Secretary of State has removed tens of thousands of voters from the official voter rolls in violation of the NVRA, which bans systematic removal of voters from the rolls within 90 days of a federal election except for narrowly specified reasons. The groups have substantial evidence that during the NVRA's 90 day no-purge period, defendant Secretary of State actually removed approximately 30,000 voters' registration records from Colorado's voting rolls, in addition to the 1,892 who were removed for the NVRA-allowed reasons because of death, incarceration for a felony, or withdrawal.

Several thousand eligible voters have also been removed from the voter registration list due to a Colorado law that requires cancellation of new registrations when a non-forwardable notice sent by mail to the voter is returned as undeliverable within 20 days of receipt of the registration application. A similar law in Michigan was recently found by the US District Court to violate the NVRA and unenforceable.

"All eligible Colorado voters who followed the rules should have confidence that on November 4th they will be able to vote and their vote will be counted" Ben Monterroso, national director of Mi Familia Vota.

The lawsuit asks the court to grant relief that would:

- Discontinue purging any voters from the official list of eligible voters for any reason not allowed by the NVRA between now and November 4, 2008;
- Reinstate any and all voters who were improperly purged from the official list of registered voters during the 90 day no-purge period, except those exempted by the NVRA, and all voters disqualified through the illegal cancellation procedure based on return of the single registration card.
- Permanently enjoy the practice of the illegal cancellation procedure based on the returned registration cards.

“Citizens have to do their part to make sure their votes count,” said Dawn Le, with the Service Employees International Union. “But if they do the right thing and register to vote, government and its mistakes should not get in the way.”

Regardless of the outcome of the lawsuit, voters should be prepared before they go to the polls. Voters who have any questions about their registration status, do not know where to vote or encounter any problems should call 866-OUR-VOTE or visit www.JustVoteColorado.org.

To read a copy of the complaint

<http://www.advancementproject.org/pdfs/CO-Complaint.pdf>

Attorneys for Plaintiffs include: Advancement Project, Brennan Center for Justice, Debevoise & Plimpton LLP, Altshuler Berzon LLP and Fair Elections Legal Network

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