



Protecting Our Voting Rights

What Faith Communities Need to Know

**The information contained herein is general information and not legal advice. If you are seeking legal advice about your specific situation, you may consult an attorney.*

On April 29, 2026, the United States Supreme Court issued its opinion in *Louisiana v. Callais*. This opinion is receiving significant attention because it is enormously consequential for the future of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 is an important civil rights law that addresses minority political disenfranchisement and racial discrimination¹ in elections.

What is the *Louisiana v. Callais* case?

The origin of the dispute in this case goes back to an older lawsuit from 2022, *Robinson v. Ardoin*. In that case, the plaintiffs were black voters who challenged newly approved district maps, alleging that they violated §2 (section two)² of the Voting Rights Act (VRA). The U.S. District Court ruled for the plaintiffs and ordered the state legislature to redraw the maps to include a second majority-Black district to reflect the results of the 2020 census.³ The Louisiana Secretary of State sought a stay of that order. Ultimately, the 5th Circuit Court ordered Louisiana to redraw the maps with two majority-Black districts. After those maps were redrawn, another group of plaintiffs – self described “non-African-American voters” – filed suit, alleging that the new majority-Black district constituted an illegal racial gerrymander. While the procedural history is somewhat complicated, the matter eventually came before the Supreme Court, and Louisiana no longer defended its redrawn maps. A 6-3 majority of the justices affirmed a lower court’s ruling that Louisiana’s new district map, which included an additional majority-minority district⁴, constituted an illegal racial gerrymander.

¹ Refers to the prevention or restriction of a minority group's ability to meaningfully participate in the political process, including direct and indirect practices that impact the ability of minority racial groups to vote, influence elections, and elect candidates of their choosing

² §2 addresses, among other things, the practice of vote dilution – in which districts are drawn to divide concentrated populations of minority voters across multiple districts (“cracking”) or artificially concentrating minority voters into a few districts (“packing”)

³ [Robinson v. Ardoin Ruling and Order Preliminary Injunction](#)

⁴ Refers to electoral districts in which racial or ethnic minorities make up more than half of the total population. Majority minority districts resulted from the Voting Rights Act (VRA), providing a mechanism to prevent minority vote dilution and ensuring an opportunity for minority communities to elect candidates of their choosing





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What are the consequences of the Supreme Court's opinion in *Callais*?

In *Callais*, the court rewrites an important civil rights law, continuing the Roberts court's legacy of hollowing out the protections in the VRA. The Court ruled that minority voters challenging redistricting maps must prove more than dilution of voting power; they must bring evidence that supports a strong inference that a state drew the map in order to diminish minority voting opportunities. If the dilution of voting power can be explained by other, legal goals – like partisanship and incumbent protection – minority voters have a far more difficult burden to carry in proving discriminatory action. Thus, *Callais* will make it more difficult to address discriminatory impacts and make it easier for discrimination to be masked by partisan goals.⁵

Why should we be concerned?

By delivering a powerful blow to the VRA, *Callais* puts our multiracial democracy at risk. The VRA has been enormously successful in achieving its policy goals and dismantling “Jim Crow”. Without the meaningful ability to challenge minority political disenfranchisement through the VRA, we can expect an unraveling of some of the more than 60 years of progress it supported. States will take action to eliminate existing majority-minority districts, which have had enormous success in helping elect minority representatives.

In the immediate aftermath, Louisiana suspended its May 16th primary election in order to redraw its maps, despite having already mailed out ballots to some residents. Several other states, largely in the Southern U.S., immediately took steps to redraw more extremely gerrymandered districts before the 2026 mid-term elections, and Tennessee removed its only majority-minority district from the map.⁶ While the majority in *Callais* reflects on the great social changes that have occurred in the intervening years, particularly in the Southern U.S., those social changes were in many cases the direct result of the VRA and other civil rights laws that are currently under threat.

⁵ [In major Voting Rights Act case, Supreme Court strikes down redistricting map challenged as racially discriminatory | SCOTUSblog](#)

⁶ [‘This is not democracy’: voting rights activists shocked by speed of US states moving to stifle Black voters](#)



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What can faith communities in Colorado expect in light of this change?

Our communities are facing so many challenges – food and housing costs, concerns about our safety and that of our immigrant neighbors – that threats to our democracy can feel big and intangible. But what is being threatened is **our ability to elect candidates that reflect our communities and address those challenges through the political process.**

In 2025, Colorado enacted the Colorado Voting Rights Act (COVRA). The Interfaith Alliance of Colorado supported that bill, in coalition with many others who want to protect democratic elections. We are fortunate to have state laws in place to protect us. But an important takeaway from this case should be that:

1. our voting rights are under attack by those who want to keep people from voting to protect and expand their power, and
2. we must remain engaged and vigilant to protect and expand our existing safeguards.

What can faith communities do to protect and expand voting rights and safeguards in Colorado?

Voting

Perhaps the most important thing we can do to protect voting rights in Colorado is to vote, and to encourage and support our community in registering to vote, accessing the ballot, and making a plan to vote. Interfaith's annual Vote Your Values Guide includes information to help you do just that.

As voters, we educate ourselves on the candidates and policies on our ballot. Our Vote Your Values Guide includes information on select ballot initiatives. While our guide does not include information on or endorsements of candidates, you can find candidate information online from websites like [Ballotpedia.org](http://ballotpedia.org)⁷ and the Colorado Secretary of State. Colorado also publishes the “[Bluebook](https://leg.colorado.gov/initiatives/ballot-information-booklet-blue-book)”⁸ to provide information on ballot initiatives.

⁷ Ballotpedia - <http://ballotpedia.org>

⁸ Blue Book - <https://leg.colorado.gov/initiatives/ballot-information-booklet-blue-book>





Protecting Our Voting Rights

What can faith communities do to protect and expand voting rights and safeguards in Colorado? (continued)

Community Engagement

As we engage our community on the importance of exercising and protecting our voting rights, we can be sources of encouragement, support, and credible information. We can also connect our community to election protection resources. Using our existing relationships, we can organize and educate within our communities.

Civic Engagement

As we organize and educate our neighbors, we can also educate policymakers and advocate for policies that protect our right to vote at every level of government.

We can also become more deeply involved and contribute directly to election administration by becoming a poll worker or [election judge](#).

Poll Chaplaincy

This year, Interfaith will strengthen our election protection efforts by inviting clergy to participate in our Interfaith Poll Chaplaincy Program.

Poll Chaplains walk community members to and through the voting process, providing encouragement and information, documenting and reporting concerns, discouraging and de-escalating voter intimidation efforts, and generally contributing to calm and transparent election administration.

If you're interested in receiving more information, you can complete the following interest form:

[Interfaith Poll Chaplain Interest Application](#)

