



VICTORY! Virginia Stops Illegal Voter Purges

April 20, 2026- ALEXANDRIA, VA — The commonwealth of Virginia recently [agreed to stop](#) its illegal voter purge program that disproportionately impacted naturalized citizens on the eve of federal elections. This is a major victory for voters after the US Supreme Court permitted the potential disenfranchisement of over 1,600 eligible Virginians right before the 2024 presidential election.

The National Voter Registration Act bans the systematic removal of voters from rolls within 90 days of a federal election, known as the “quiet period.” On the first day of the quiet period prior to the 2024 general election, then-Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin directed the state’s Department of Elections to escalate its systematic list maintenance procedures to identify and purge voters. This was problematic because the data provided by the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles prompting voters’ removal is faulty and outdated, and the only remedy provided to voters is a single written notice with no further efforts to confirm their eligibility. The League of Women Voters of Virginia, Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Rights, African Communities Together, and two individual Virginia voters who were unlawfully purged from the voter rolls filed a lawsuit to stop this illegal purge program. The plaintiffs are represented by Campaign Legal Center, Protect Democracy, the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, and the Advancement Project.

"After a long battle in federal court, we are proud to reach a settlement that protects Virginian voters from being systematically purged within 90 days of a federal election," said **Joan Porte, president of the League of Women Voters of**

Virginia. "LWVVA will use information from this lawsuit to continue our advocacy work to ensure every eligible voter can cast a ballot and have that ballot counted."

"This settlement agreement is a testament to the hard-won protections of the National Voter Registration Act. The law was on the side of Virginians," said **Caren Short, director of legal and research for the League of Women Voters.** "The League will always fight to defend eligible voters from discriminatory, systematic voter purges."

"The court's decision to end this systemic purge program is a relief for the thousands of naturalized citizens who were wrongfully targeted, but it should never have taken a lawsuit to get here," said **Monica Sarmiento, executive director for the Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Rights.** "Our communities deserve better than to have their votes threatened days before an election based on unreliable data. It should alarm every American that the Supreme Court allowed an illegal systemic purge program targeting vulnerable populations to proceed in 2024. We will continue to fight until every eligible voter in the Commonwealth can cast their ballot without fear."

"This systematic purge prevented eligible voters from participating in one of the most important aspects of citizenship: voting," said **Bert Bayou, deputy executive director of organizing for African Communities Together.** "In every call with naturalized citizens from Africa, we heard how deeply they value the right to vote. Thanks to our united efforts, that right in Virginia will continue to be protected and strengthened. ACT will continue to fight for a stronger democracy in Virginia and to ensure that every voice is heard at the polls."

"The moment Executive Order 35 was issued, our coalition didn't hesitate. The Virginia Election Protection Coalition, under the leadership of the Virginia Civic Engagement Table (VCET), mobilized immediately, standing shoulder to shoulder with neighbors and organizations on the frontlines of this fight," said **Michelle Moffit, director of civic engagement for VCET.** "We knocked doors, made calls, sent postcards, and had real conversations about what this order meant for our

communities — making sure every eligible voter could check their registration status and re-register if they'd been wrongfully purged. That swift, coordinated response is community care in action: showing up for democracy, for each other, and for every Virginian whose voice deserves to be heard."

"Voter purges, especially when done so close to an election, deny American citizens their freedom to vote," said **Simone Leeper, senior legal counsel for the Campaign Legal Center**. "In some cases, citizens do not even realize that they have been removed from the voter rolls or they are intimidated by their removal and scared to lawfully reregister. Virginia's last-minute, systematic and discriminatory voter purge program was based on unreliable data and offered inadequate remedies to voters who were wrongfully removed. As a result, naturalized citizens tend to be unduly impacted when they should be able to make their voices heard just like all Americans. Congress initially passed the National Voter Registration Act to prevent state-level officials from wrongfully removing voters from voter rolls. We will keep working with our partners to ensure that the fundamental freedom to vote is protected in the Commonwealth of Virginia and nationwide."

"This rule was part of an ongoing national campaign to undermine the public's trust in the election process. Federal law exists to prevent precisely this kind of last-minute, error-prone purging — and today's settlement affirms that those protections work," said **Anna Dorman, counsel for Protect Democracy**. "This agreement is a win for the voters of Virginia and a crucial step in pushing back against the false narratives that seek to undermine our democracy. Every eligible Virginian voter has a right to have their voice heard, and this settlement affirms that no purge program built on misinformation can take that away."

"Every American citizen has the same right to vote, and we are committed to protecting this fundamental freedom by fighting discriminatory voter purges based on unreliable data," said **Ryan Snow, counsel for the voting rights project of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law**. "We are glad that Virginia has agreed to halt this unlawful voter purge in the run-up to federal

elections, but more work is needed to ensure that all eligible voters are able to participate equally in our democracy."

"This agreement marks an important step forward that protects Virginia voters seeking to vote in upcoming elections," said **John Powers, legal director for the Advancement Project**. "Today's settlement will prevent many eligible Virginia citizens from being wrongfully purged from the rolls. Last-second, systematic voter purges risk disenfranchising eligible voters and disproportionately harming voters of color, naturalized citizens, and other marginalized communities. We will continue to use every available tool to protect the right to vote."

Strict laws are already in place to ensure that only U.S. citizens can vote in federal elections. While the Supreme Court allowed this harmful voter purge program to go forward, the Commonwealth of Virginia's decision to comply with federal law is a major step forward for protecting the fundamental freedom to vote.

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<https://www.lwv.org/newsroom/press-releases/victory-virginia-ends-illegal-voter-purge-program>



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