

In 1992, Effingham County, Georgia proposed an at-large election system despite anticipating that, due to racially polarized voting, after the change, African-Americans would no longer be able to elect the commissioner who would serve as chairperson. This decision came on the heels of the county's decision to eliminate the position of vice-chairperson, long held by an African-American commissioner. The county's justification for the change—that the proposed system would avoid tie votes in the selection of a chairperson—was tenuous at best because under the new system, an even number of commissioners would invite tie votes to a greater extent than the existing system. This is Robert Kengle, "Voting Rights in Georgia: 1982-2006," RenewTheVRA.org at 9-10.

Ten years after a successful lawsuit that forced the adoption of single-member districts in the city of Freeport, TX, minority candidates had gained two seats on the city council. The City then sought to revert to at-large elections, garnering an objection from the Department of Justice. Similarly, the Haskill Consolidated Independent School District sought to revert to at-large voting after significant gains by minority populations.

After the Washington Parish, Louisiana, School Board finally added a second majority-African American district in 1993, bringing the total to 2 out of 8, representing an African American population of 32 percent, it immediately created a new at-large seat to ensure that no white incumbent would lose his or her seat and to reduce the impact of the two African American members, to 2 out of 9. The Department of Justice objected to this change. (See Letter from James P. Turner, Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division, U.S. DOJ, to Sherri Marcus Morris, Assistant Attorney General, State of Louisiana, and Jerald N. Jones, City of Shreveport, September 11, 1995, cited in Debo Adebile, Voting Rights in Louisiana: 1982-2006, February 2006, at 21.)

A Federal district court found that the at-large method of electing the nine member Charleston County Council in South Carolina violated section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. In particular, the court found evidence of white bloc voting and concluded that in 10 general elections involving African-American candidates, "white and minority voters were polarized 100 percent of the time." The court also noted that there was a history of discrimination that hindered the present ability of minority voters to participate in the political process; significant socio-economic disparities along racial lines; a negligible history of African-American electoral success; and significant evidence of intimidation and harassment of African-American voters at the polls. Following the court's decision, which was affirmed on appeal, a single-member district plan was put in place with four majority African-American districts that eventually led to the election of four African Americans to the County Council. This is Laughlin McDonald "The Case for Extending and Amending the Voting Rights Act," A Report of the Voting Rights Project of the American Civil Liberties Union at 591-592.

In 2005, a three-judge Federal court enjoined the city of McComb, MS, from enforcing a State court order it had obtained that removed an African-American member of that city's board of selectmen from his seat by changing the requirements for holding that office, holding that the order clearly altered the pre-existing practice. The court ordered the selectman restored to his office and enjoined the city from enforcing the change unless preclearance was obtained. This is Robert McDuff, "Voting Rights in

Mississippi: 1982-2006," RenewTheVRA.org at 8.

In 1991 the Concordia Parish Police Jury in Louisiana announced that it would reduce its size from 9 seats to 7, with the intended consequence of eliminating one African-American district, claiming the reduction was necessary as a cost-saving measure. However, DOJ noted in its objection that the parish had seen no need to save money by eliminating districts until an influx of African-American residents transformed the district in question from a majority-white district into a majority African-American district. This is Debo P. Adebile, "Voting Rights in Louisiana: 1982-2006," RenewTheVRA.org at 24.

ANNEXATIONS

The following are examples from the record where jurisdictions changed their boundaries in order to diminish the voting power of minorities by selectively changing the racial composition of a district. Numerous jurisdictions have annexed neighboring white suburbs in order to preserve white majorities or electoral power.

In 1990, the city of Monroe, LA attempted to annex white suburban wards to its city court jurisdiction. In its objection, DOJ noted that the wards in question had been eligible for annexation since 1970, but that there had been no interest in annexing them until just after the first-ever African-American candidate ran for Monroe city court. This is Debo P. Adebile, "Voting Rights in Louisiana: 1982-2006," RenewTheVRA.org at 24.

Pleasant Grove, Alabama was an all-white city with a long history of discrimination, located in an otherwise racially mixed part of Alabama. The city sought pre-clearance for two annexations, one for an area of white residents who wanted to attend the all-white Pleasant Grove school district instead of the desegregated Jefferson County school district, the other for a parcel of land that was uninhabited at the time but where the city planned to build upper income housing that would likely be inhabited by whites only. At the same time, the city refused to annex to two predominantly black areas. The United States Supreme Court upheld the District Court's denial of pre-clearance. This is from City of Pleasant Grove v. United States, 479 U.S. 462, 1987.

In 2003, the Department of Justice interposed an objection to a proposed annexation in the Town of North, SC, because the town had "been racially selective in its response to both formal and informal annexation requests." DOJ found that "white petitioners have no difficulty in annexing their property to the town" while "town officials provide little, if any, information or assistance to black petitioners and often fail to respond to their requests, whether formal or informal, with the result that the annexation efforts of black persons fail." Though the town argued that no formal attempts had been made by African-Americans to be annexed into the town, DOJ's investigation revealed that at least one petition had been signed by a significant number of African-American residents who sought annexation. The fact that the town ignored or was non-responsive to the requests of African-Americans, while accommodating the requests of whites, led DOJ to determine that race was "an overriding factor in how the town responds to annexation requests." This is a Letter from R. Alexander Acosta, Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice, to H. Bruce Buckheister, Mayor, North, SC, September 16, 2003.

THE CRISIS IN THE MIDDLE-EAST

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I stand firmly with the people of Israel and their government as they defend themselves against these outrageous attacks. The kidnapping of Israeli soldiers and missile attacks against Israeli citizens are unacceptable and cannot be tolerated.

The first steps toward establishing peace must begin with the unconditional and immediate return of the kidnapped Israeli soldiers. Lebanon, Syria, Iran, and countries throughout the region must also condemn the actions of and cease all forms of support of Hezbollah, Hamas, and other groups committed to blocking or derailing the pursuit of peace. These countries must take strong actions immediately to return stability to the region.

Any sustainable peace depends on the cessation of support for terrorist organizations. U.N. resolutions have clearly articulated obligations and requirements of countries throughout the region. Iran and Syria must stop all support for Hezbollah and Hamas immediately.

That said, all sides to this conflict must show as much restraint as possible. It is in the long-term interest of peace that parties to this conflict find an end to this current crisis without damaging the prospects for a sustained and permanent solution to this conflict.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING DR. PETER ALAN McDONALD

● Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, today I, along with Senator CANTWELL, pay tribute to the life of a talented physician and respected citizen, Dr. Peter Alan McDonald, who passed away on June 15. I know he will be greatly missed in both Washington and his native Indiana.

Peter has left a rich legacy through his efforts to better the lives of others. From his studies in mathematics and medicine at Indiana University to his well-known work as a gifted and efficient emergency physician at St. Joseph Hospital, he dedicated himself to ensuring the welfare of those around him.

Peter's boundless passion for life led him to excel in many fields beyond his profession. An active outdoorsman and athlete, he found great joy in hockey, windsurfing, boating, and fishing. Family and friends may best remember Peter for his wonderful stories and sense of humor. He is survived by his wife, Kelli McDonald; his father, Alan McDonald; his mother, Mary Mandeville; his two brothers, Tom McDonald and Jeff McDonald; and his sister, Linda Frank.

While it is a tragedy to have Peter taken from us at such an early age, we can find comfort in the full life he led. It is a rare man who can make such an