

Simpson Thacher Teams With the Southern Coalition for Social Justice to Challenge an Unjust North Carolina Law Criminalizing Voting

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On September 24, 2020, the Firm, along with the Southern Coalition for Social Justice, filed a federal lawsuit in North Carolina challenging a vague and racially discriminatory law that makes it a Class I felony for North Carolina residents to vote if they are on parole, probation or post-release supervision for a felony conviction, even if they mistakenly believe they are eligible to vote. Virtually every other election crime punishable as a Class I felony in North Carolina requires intent. Recent high-profile prosecutions under this strict liability law have chilled countless eligible voters with criminal convictions from exercising their right to cast a ballot.

Plaintiffs the North Carolina A. Philip Randolph Institute and Action NC claim that this law, which dates back to the nineteenth century, violates the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. Plaintiffs have moved for an injunction prohibiting prospective enforcement of the law, including for the 2020 presidential election.

The lawsuit was recently covered by the [Associated Press](#).

The Simpson Thacher team includes Jonathan Youngwood, Nihara Choudhri and Andrew Garber.

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