



April 5, 2016

Mr. Eric Fey
Director of Elections
St. Louis County Election Board
12 Sunnen Drive
Maplewood, MO 63143

Co-Chairs

John M. Nonna
James P. Joseph

Secretary

Eleanor H. Smith

Treasurer

Andrew W. Kentz

General Counsel

Nicholas T. Christakos

*President and
Executive Director*

Kristen Clarke

Dear Mr. Fey:

On behalf of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, I am writing to express my grave concern regarding today's municipal election now underway in St. Louis County. The Lawyers' Committee leads the nation's largest nonpartisan voter protection coalition, including its 866-OUR-VOTE voter hotline, which any voter can call to ask questions about the voting process or report problems they experience at the polls.

It is our understanding that voters across St. Louis arrived at polling sites that did not have sufficient ballots for today's municipal election. By way of example, a voter in St. Louis County called to report that when she went to her assigned polling place (Our Lady of Lourdes School) at 8 a.m. local time, two hours after polls opened, she was told that the polling place did not have her ballot style available and to return later. That voter has to work all day and had planned to vote in the morning before work, as many voters do. This voter was not likely able to return to cast her ballot in today's municipal election before polls close at 7 p.m.

After conversations with your office, as well as media reports, we have learned that this was not an isolated incident and that many polling places throughout the county lacked all of the ballots they should have had on hand. We are very concerned about the many voters who were disenfranchised because their polling places lacked the ballots they should have had this morning. In addition, U.S. Census data indicates that St. Louis City has an African-American population of 49.2% percent and the County has an African-American population of 23.3 percent. It is unclear whether a disproportionate number of impacted polling sites were located in majority minority communities.

We ask that you provide information on the remedial actions that will now be taken by the St. Louis County Elections Board to address the issues that have impacted today's election. It is critically important that all voters be provided a fair opportunity to participate in these elections. Please let us know if the Elections



Board will be taking action to provide provisional ballots to voters, extending polling hours to the extent permitted by law, or otherwise advertising additional opportunities to cast ballots in this municipal election.

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We will follow up after the election to better understand the events that led to these issues and to ensure they do not occur in upcoming elections. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact me or Marcia Johnson-Blanco at mblanco@lawyerscommittee.org or 202.662.8346.

Sincerely,

Kristen Clarke
President and Executive Director
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law