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## **Arizona to Shed Burdensome Voting Requirements Following Lawsuit**

***San Francisco law firm Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger partnered with Campaign Legal Center to secure successful outcome in pathbreaking voting rights case***

**PHOENIX** – On June 4<sup>th</sup>, Campaign Legal Center (CLC) and co-counsel reached a settlement agreement with the Secretary of State of Arizona and the Maricopa County Recorder over a lawsuit on behalf of League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and Arizona Students' Association (ASA) challenging the state's overly burdensome voter registration process. The Secretary and Recorder agreed to nearly all of the requested changes to the voter registration process sought in the lawsuit.

CLC's co-counsel Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP played a key supporting role in this settlement that has national implications for voting rights. Their team included attorneys Andrew Schwartz, Winter King, and Stephanie Safdi.

"This settlement is an important victory in the fight for fair and equal access to elections across the country," said Andrew Schwartz, a partner at Shute Mihaly & Weinberger.

CLC and co-counsel anticipate this settlement will result in the enfranchisement of tens of thousands of eligible voters in Arizona whose voter registrations were arbitrarily rejected. Arizona previously registered voters based on whether they happened to fill out a state or federal voter registration form rather than whether they met the qualifications to vote. Going forward, Arizona will treat all registrants the same regardless of the form they use, easing a registration process that was one of the most complicated in the country.

The settlement agreement also requires Arizona to ease its burdensome requirement that voters show documentary proof of citizenship to register for state elections. Among other measures, Arizona will now be required to check its motor vehicles database for citizenship documentation and add any voter with documentation on record to the state rolls. This change will ensure that voters will not be turned away from any election when the state already has the information it needs to allow a resident to vote.

"Secretary Reagan's agreement to these commonsense changes is an affirmation that democracy works best when all citizens can vote without barriers," said Danielle Lang, senior legal counsel, voting rights and redistricting at CLC. "Our lawsuit will successfully protect eligible Arizonans from being unfairly prevented from registering to vote and participating in federal elections because of unnecessary requirements. We are pleased that the bureaucratic nightmare in Arizona is coming to an end."

“We at Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger look forward to continuing to grow our practice in the area of voting rights,” said Winter King, also a partner at Shute Mihaly & Weinberger LLP. “The stakes have never been higher than they are today when it comes to protecting the right to vote. Voting plays an essential role in shaping the environmental laws and policies that are critical to our clients and our collective welfare. To protect our planet and our communities, we need to focus more than ever on ensuring that all citizens can go to the polls and vote their interests.”

In addition to CLC and Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger, the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law served as attorneys in the matter, along with Spencer G. Scharff, and Luis Roberto Vera, Jr., who served as private co-counsel in the case.

### **Background**

After learning from state advocates that Arizona’s system had disenfranchised at least 26,000 eligible voters in Maricopa County alone, CLC, Shute Mihaly & Weinberger and their legal partners on this matter filed a [legal complaint](#) on behalf LULAC and ASA with the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona on Nov. 7, 2017 challenging the state’s dual registration system as an undue burden on the right to vote and the Constitution’s promise of equal protection. Read CLC's [case page](#) for background information.

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