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**Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals Reverses Major Voting Rights Win,
Rules Against Black Residents of Terrebonne Parish**

Yesterday, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed a trial court's decision on a case challenging how judges are elected in Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana, ruling against Black residents who sought an opportunity to elect a judge of their choice to the trial court bench. Advocates who represented the residents in *Terrebonne Parish Branch NAACP, Et Al. V. Jindal, Et Al.* released the following statement in response to the decision:

"The NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF), Ronald L. Wilson, and Cozen O'Connor, are proud to represent the Terrebonne Parish Branch NAACP; Rev. Vincent Fusilier, Sr.; Lionel Myers; Daniel Turner; and Wendell Desmond Shelby, Jr. They represent Black voters of Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana, who have looked to federal courts to protect their voting rights, after tirelessly spending more than 20 years urging Louisiana officials to help them.

"In 2017, they proved after trial that Louisiana's electoral system for the state court with jurisdiction over the Parish dilutes their voting power. The foremost expert on voting patterns in cases like theirs testified that the voting environment was one of, if not, the most racially polarized that he'd ever examined. Racial discrimination clearly exists in Terrebonne where no Black candidate has ever been elected in a contested parish-wide election.

"Moreover, in 2008, at-large voting permitted an incumbent white judge to be reelected under the system they challenged after this sitting judge had been suspended for appearing in public in black-face, an orange prison jumpsuit, and an afro wig. Yet, yesterday, bypassing the deference to these and a mountain of other facts — factual determinations an appellate court is obligated to respect — the Fifth Circuit reversed the trial court's findings in reaching a different conclusion. This is disappointing, and we are considering all options."

Read the court's decision [here](#).

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Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation's first civil and human rights law organization. LDF has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF's Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF.

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