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LDF Media
212-965-2200 / media@naacpldf.org

**Black Voters Win Right to Elect Candidates of Their Choice
as Court Approves Settlement in Pleasant Grove Voting Rights Case**

A federal court approved a final settlement between the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) and the City of Pleasant Grove regarding its at-large method of electing its City Council, which plaintiffs alleged violated Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. Pursuant to the terms of the settlement, the City will change its electoral method to cumulative voting, where each voter will be allowed as many votes as there are vacant seats on the City Council. The settlement terms also include a voter education and training plan, which the City will begin to implement well in advance of its next municipal election in August 2020.

“This is a huge win for voting rights in Alabama,” said LDF/Fried Frank Fellow [Zachery Morris](#). “While Pleasant Grove has a lot of work to do before the 2020 election cycle, it will be the first time Black citizens’ voices are truly heard.”

The original complaint, filed in December 2018 with Alabama voting rights attorney Jim Blacksher on behalf of the Alabama NAACP and Eric Calhoun and Jennifer Ford, individual voters residing in the city, challenged the city’s at-large method of election for City Council, which has prevented a Black candidate from ever being elected.

Pleasant Grove has a well-documented history of racial discrimination in voting, education, employment, and housing. In *City of Pleasant Grove v. United States* (1987), the U.S. Supreme Court found that the city had intentionally discriminated when it annexed nearby unincorporated white communities, but not similarly situated Black communities. In August 2017, LDF won a similar lawsuit against Louisiana state officials, where an at-large voting model had prevented a Black candidate from being elected to the state judiciary in Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana. The court held that Louisiana had intentionally discriminated in refusing to adopt single member districts that would permit Black voters to elect candidates of their choice.

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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 and 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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