



NEWS RELEASE
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**Alaska Advisory Committee to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights
Announces Public Meeting: Alaska Native Voting Rights**

Anchorage, AK – The Alaska Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights will hold a public briefing on Alaska Native voting rights, Thursday, August 24, 2017, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm AKDT, at the Hilton Hotel, 500 West Third Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501. Yup'ik interpretation will be available.

Following the *Toyukak v. Treadwell* lawsuit, the state and Alaska Native plaintiffs reached a settlement to provide for the translation of voting materials into Yup'ik and Gwich'in languages. The Committee will be reviewing the implementation of the settlement and court order that outlines specific steps the state must take to provide voting materials to Alaska Native voters. As the state explores implementing a new voting method, the Committee also seeks to examine the potential impact of mail-in voting on this population.

The Committee will hear testimony from community members, advocates, academics, legal professionals, and government officials. The public will be invited to speak during two open forum sessions: 11:55 am to 12:15 pm and 4:35 pm to 4:55 pm. Written testimony can be submitted to afortes@usccr.gov by September 22, 2017. The Committee will issue its findings and recommendations in an advisory memorandum to the Commission, in order to supplement the Commission's 2018 statutory enforcement report on voting rights. The Alaska Committee will release a full report at the end of 2018.

Natalie Landreth, Chair of the Committee, stated: "Voting is the foundational right in our democracy because, as the Supreme Court has stated, it is 'preservative of all other rights.' It is the Committee's intention to examine the implementation and enforcement of voting rights in Alaska, particularly as they relate to Alaska Natives, and to make important recommendations to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights."

AGENDA

Opening Remarks and Introductions (9:00 – 9:10 am)

Federal and State Election Law (9:10 – 9:55 am)

*Justin Levitt, Associate Dean for Research and Professor of Law, Loyola Marymount University

Implementation of Settlement and Court Order: Government Perspective (10:05 – 10:50 am)

Indra Arriaga, Elections Language Assistance Compliance Manager, State of Alaska Division of Elections

Implementation of Settlement and Court Order: Statewide/Regional Perspective (11:00 – 11:55 am)

Tara A. Rich, Legal and Policy Director, American Civil Liberties Union of Alaska
Cindy Allred, Deputy Director, ANCSA Regional Association

Morning Open Public Forum (11:55 am – 12:15 pm)

Break (12:15 – 1:30 pm)

Implementation of Settlement and Court Order: Voter Perspective (1:30 – 2:30 pm)

James Tucker, Co-Counsel, Wilson, Elser, Moskowitz, Edelman, & Dicker LLP
Sarah Obed, Vice President of External Affairs, Doyon Limited, co-presenting with Allan Hayton,
Language Revitalization Program Director, Doyon Limited

Examining the Potential Impact of Mail-in Voting (2:40 – 4:25 pm)

Josie Bahnke, Director, State of Alaska Division of Elections
*Tammy Patrick, Senior Advisor, Democracy Fund
*Paul Gronke, Professor and Director of the Early Voting Information Center, Reed College
Ron Haberman, District Manager, U.S. Postal Service

Afternoon Open Public Forum (4:35 – 4:55 pm)

Closing Remarks (4:55 – 5:00 pm)

*panelists joining via teleconference/web conference

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The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is an independent, bipartisan agency charged with studying and advising the President and Congress on civil rights matters and issuing an annual federal civil rights enforcement report. For information about the reports and meetings of the Commission and its Advisory Committees, please visit <http://www.usccr.gov> and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).