



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## **Florida Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Announces Study on Voting Rights and Calls for Public Comment**

The Florida Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights will conduct a study of voting rights to examine the extent to which Florida residents have free, equal access to exercise their right to vote without regard to race, color, disability status, national origin, age, religion, and/or sex. Specifically, the Committee will examine the rejection of absentee ballots in Florida and the alleged discrepancies between counties, paying particular attention to county responses to the legal requirement of equal treatment with other forms of voting.

“The right to vote is fundamental to democracy and every Floridian must have confidence that their access to the ballot is safeguarded,” said Committee Chair Nadine Smith. “In 2001, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights held voting rights hearings across Florida and found ‘widespread voter disenfranchisement.’ Now, nearly two decades later, it is time to see how our state is ensuring every vote counts and every voter can vote.”

As part of this study, the Committee invites Florida voters to share their experiences registering to vote and voting in the state. Written statements may be submitted to the Regional Programs Unit of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 230 S. Dearborn, Suite 2120, Chicago, IL 60616; via email at [callen@usccr.gov](mailto:callen@usccr.gov); or fax 312-353-8324. Please submit statements by July 1, 2019.

The Committee will host a series of community forums, public briefings, and web-based meetings, to hear additional testimony. Dates, times, and locations are to be announced. You can stay abreast of updates at [www.usccr.gov](http://www.usccr.gov) or at the [Federal Register](#).

The Florida Advisory Committee will issue findings and recommendations in a report to the Commission after all testimony has been received.

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*The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, established by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, is the only independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights and reporting annually on federal civil rights enforcement. Our 51 state Advisory Committees offer a broad perspective on civil rights concerns at state and local levels. The Commission: in our 7th decade, a continuing legacy of influence in civil rights. For information about the Commission, please visit <http://www.usccr.gov> and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).*