

VOTING RIGHTS ACT PANELISTS



LEAH ADEN

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF LITIGATION

NAACP LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATIONAL FUND, INC.

Leah C. Aden serves as Deputy Director of Litigation at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF), where she uses litigation, policy, and public education strategies to ensure that Black people have equal access to the political process, environmental justice, and employment opportunities.

Aden was a member of LDF's litigation team in *Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder*, a high-profile case in which the U.S. Supreme Court rendered inoperable Section 5, a core protection of the Voting Rights Act. Over more than four decades, Section 5 previously deterred, scrutinized, ameliorated, and blocked proposed redistricting plans that certain jurisdictions attempted to implement.

She has advocated on behalf of Black voters and civil rights organizations in challenges to dilutive redistricting practices like at-large electoral methods for city councils, county commissions, school boards, and a state court. She also advocates for the abolition of another dilutive redistricting practice, prison-based gerrymandering, the counting of incarcerated people where they are imprisoned rather than in their home communities for redistricting purposes.

Aden has authored or otherwise significantly contributed to numerous friend-of-the court briefs before the Supreme Court and other federal courts related to redistricting and other voting rights issues. She also has led in the development of much of LDF's public education guidance on the 2020 decennial census and post-2020 redistricting process.

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DAVID J. BECKER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND FOUNDER
CENTER FOR ELECTION INNOVATION & RESEARCH

David Becker is the Executive Director and Founder of the non-profit Center for Election Innovation & Research, leading CEIR's successful efforts to help election officials of both parties, all around the country, ensure that all eligible voters can vote conveniently in a system with maximum integrity. As one of the foremost elections experts in the country, with over two decades of experience, Becker is an expert on all aspects of election administration, including election cybersecurity, disinformation, foreign interference, long lines and other issues with in-person voting, mail and early voting, and voter registration.

Prior to founding CEIR, Becker was Director of the elections program at The Pew Charitable Trusts. As the lead for Pew's analysis and advocacy on elections issues, he spearheaded development of the [Electronic Registration Information Center](#), or ERIC, which to date has helped a bipartisan group of thirty states update over 10 million out-of-date voter records, and helped those states register tens of millions of new eligible voters.

Before joining Pew, Becker served for seven years as a senior trial attorney in the Voting Section of the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division, overseeing voting rights enforcement in several states, including California and Georgia, and served as lead counsel on major voting rights litigation, including the case of *Georgia v. Ashcroft*, ultimately decided by the U.S. Supreme Court.

He serves as CBS' election law expert, and his many appearances in the media include *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, CNN, MSNBC, PBS NewsHour, and NPR, and is frequently published on election issues, including by the [Stanford Social Innovation Review](#) and [The Washington Post](#).

Becker received both his undergraduate and law degrees from the University of California, Berkeley, and was a two-time champion on *Jeopardy!* and a winner on *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*.

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MICHAEL LI
SENIOR COUNSEL
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Michael Li serves as senior counsel for the Brennan Center’s Democracy Program, where his work focuses on redistricting, voting rights, and elections.

Prior to joining the Brennan Center, Li practiced law at Baker Botts L.L.P. in Dallas for ten years. He was the author of a widely cited blog on redistricting and election law issues that the *New York Times* called “indispensable.”

He is a regular writer and commentator on election law issues, appearing on PBS *NewsHour*, MSNBC, and NPR, and in print in the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *USA Today*, *Roll Call*, *Vox*, *National Journal*, *Texas Tribune*, *Dallas Morning News*, and *San Antonio Express-News*, among others.

In addition to his election law work, Li previously served as executive director of Be One Texas, a donor alliance that oversaw strategic and targeted investments in nonprofit organizations working to increase voter participation and engagement in historically disadvantaged African American and Hispanic communities in Texas.

Li received his JD with honors from Tulane Law School and an undergraduate degree in history from the University of Texas at Austin.

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MODERATOR



DR. MATT GROSSMANN
DIRECTOR, PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
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Dr. Matt Grossmann is Director of Michigan State University’s Institute for Public Policy and Social Research. He is also a Professor of Political Science at MSU.

A nationally known political scientist, Dr. Grossmann is an expert on American politics and government whose research spans national and state policymaking, election campaigns, interest groups, and political parties. He has authored numerous journal articles on policy change, political party networks, the legislative process and public opinion. His latest book, *Red State Blues* was recently made available through Cambridge University Press. He is also editor of the volume *New Directions in Interest Group Politics*, from Routledge.

He was named IPPSR Director in 2016. IPPSR is a policy, leadership and research unit within MSU's College of Social Science. It focuses on policy education, political leadership development and survey research.

Under Grossmann's leadership, IPPSR added more than 60 affiliated faculty members from 25 different departments and nine colleges, built a Policy Fellows Program with some 20 graduate and undergraduate students per year. He also expanded the Institute's outreach capabilities, doubling the number of Public Policy Forums at the Michigan Capitol and launching the State of the State Podcast and Michigan Policy Wonk blog.

Grossmann also created a policy-relevant research search engine and the Correlates of State Policy online database (1,000 variables measured for all 50 states each year), designed a new online survey panel of political insiders, established a new training program for legislative staff, transformed an internship award into a leadership certification for legislative interns, and created an event series for training faculty to engage policymakers.

He received a bachelor's degree from Claremont McKenna College, a master's degree in political science in 2002 and doctorate from the University of California, Berkeley, in 2007.

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