

**TENNESSEE STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**to the**  
**THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS**

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**NEWS RELEASE**

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**TENNESSEE STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE RELEASES REPORT  
ON EX-FELON VOTING RIGHTS**

Atlanta -- The Tennessee State Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights (Committee or SAC) has released its report on ex-felon voting rights. In its report to the Commission, the Tennessee SAC finds that since 1981 there have been several amendments to the Tennessee disenfranchisement statute that have had the effect of expanding the scope of ex-felon disenfranchisement in the state.

The Tennessee SAC finds that the current Tennessee disenfranchisement laws are some of the most restrictive in the United States. Tennessee is one of only eleven states with a lifetime ban on ex-felons voting, and one of only five states that make certain ex-felons permanently ineligible from ever seeking restoration of voting rights. The Committee recommends that the Tennessee General Assembly and Governor consider the experiences of other states and remove unnecessary barriers to voting rights restoration for ex-felons in order to promote their integration into society.

Diane Di Ianni, chair of the Tennessee SAC, states, “Successful reintegration of ex-felons after they have served their sentences is good for society. It discourages recidivism and encourages ex-felons to become productive citizens. Voting rights restoration is an important part of successful reintegration. I hope that this report is viewed as a constructive contribution to the discussion of ex-felon disenfranchisement in Tennessee and how it might be made less restrictive in its application, and by removing unnecessary barriers to restoring one’s voting rights. Promoting the successful reintegration of ex-felons into society benefits all Tennesseans.”

The report is posted on the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights website at [http://www.usccr.gov/pubs/TN\\_SAC\\_Ex-Felon-Report.pdf](http://www.usccr.gov/pubs/TN_SAC_Ex-Felon-Report.pdf). A print version of the full report is available from the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights by calling (202) 376-8128.

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