



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

Chicago, IL – In light of current national discussion regarding voting fraud, restrictions, and disenfranchisement, the Illinois Advisory Committee to U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR) will convene a public meeting to discuss the status of voting rights in Illinois on Thursday, March 9, 2017, from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm CDT, at the Metcalfe Federal Building: 77 W. Jackson Blvd. in Chicago. This meeting is open to the public. Persons with disabilities requiring reasonable accommodations should contact USCCR's Midwest Regional Office ten days prior to the meeting to make appropriate arrangements.

This meeting will include a series of panel discussions to examine current challenges to voting rights facing diverse communities throughout the state. The Committee will hear testimony from community members, advocates, academics, legal professionals, and government officials. Members of the public will be invited to speak during an open forum session, scheduled from 4:20 to 5:00 pm. The Committee will also accept written testimony submitted to mwojnaroski@usccr.gov by April 10, 2017.

The Committee will examine potential disparities regarding access to voting and discrimination based upon the race, national origin, religion, sex, disability, and age of the electorate. It will also discuss challenges to voting facing the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated, Limited English Proficient individuals, individuals with disabilities, and those experiencing homelessness. Committee Chair Juan Carlos Linares said, "With an unprecedented election behind us, the issues of voting rights and access to the ballot have never been more prominent. The Illinois Advisory Committee has determined that as an issue of paramount importance in exercising one's constitutional rights, it will more closely explore the state of voting rights and ballot access in Illinois, and make recommendations to the USCCR according to its findings."

The 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 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 State Advisory Committees, please visit <http://www.usccr.gov> and follow us on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/usccrgov>.