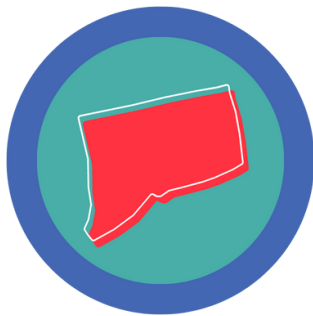




Dear {{FirstName or 'Friend'}},

In the wake of Wisconsin's historic supreme court race in April, the focus on state court elections shifted to Pennsylvania this month, with a primary election held on May 16th. While a range of offices were up for election, from city council seats to state house and senate seats, AFJ Action paid close attention to races for seats on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Commonwealth Court, and Superior Court. The May 16th election determined which candidates would move forward in each of those races, with the following candidates appearing on the November ballot:

- For the Supreme Court, Dem-endorsed Superior Court **Judge Daniel McCaffrey** will run against Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas **Judge Carolyn Carluccio**.
- For Commonwealth Court, Dem-endorsed Philadelphia Municipal Court **Judge Matt Wolf** will face former state senate parliamentarian **Megan Martin**.
- For two seats on the Superior Court, Pittsburgh attorney **Jill Beck** and Superior Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas **Judge Timika Lane** emerged from the Dem primary and will run against attorney **Maria Battista** and Philadelphia Municipal Court Judge **Harry Smail**.

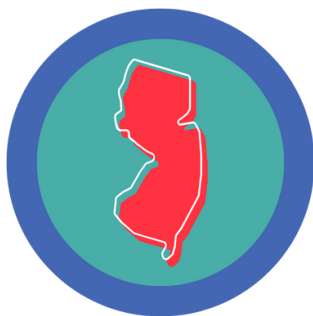


Connecticut Supreme Court Nominee Withdraws from Consideration

Last month, Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont nominated Sandra Slack Glover, appellate chief in the Connecticut U.S. Attorney's office, to fill a vacancy on the state's supreme court.

After Glover's nomination, a 2017 letter she signed supporting Amy Coney Barrett's nomination by then-President Donald Trump to a seat on the federal appellate bench drew significant criticism and led activists to call on the Judiciary Committee to reject her nomination. Last week, Glover asked Governor Lamont to withdraw her nomination.

Glover's withdrawal brings renewed hope that Governor Lamont will nominate a candidate who brings much-needed professional and demographic diversity to the court. Last year, People's Parity Project released a report highlighting the stark lack of professional diversity on the Connecticut Supreme Court, which you can read [here](#).



Historic New Jersey Supreme Court Nomination

New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy made another historic nomination to the state's highest court by nominating criminal defense and immigration attorney **Michael Noriega** to replace retired Justice Barry Albin.

If confirmed, Noriega would be the third Hispanic to serve on the state's highest bench, and the only Hispanic justice on the court following Justice Faustino

Fernandez-Vina's retirement last year. Noriega began his career as a public defender and would be the only justice on the court to have that experience.

Noriega is Governor Murphy's fourth appointment to the court. Noriega must face a hearing before the New Jersey Senate Judiciary Committee and a full senate confirmation vote. AFJ Action is watching his confirmation process closely, particularly since current NJ Supreme Court Justice Rachel Wainer Apter's nomination was delayed for over a year.



Jury Selection



Texas

United Rentals North America, Inc. v. Evans

The Supreme Court of Texas overturned an award in a wrongful death suit, finding that trial was compromised by improper jury selection tactics of the plaintiffs' counsel where they struck certain jurors who lacked specific racial characteristics. The court emphasized the "need for race-neutral proceedings."

Criminal Justice

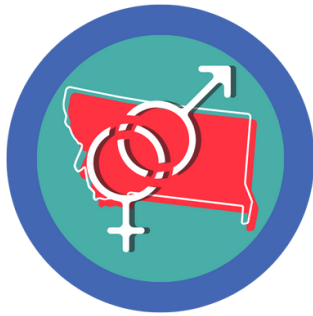


Wisconsin

Wisconsin Justice Initiative, et al. v. Wisconsin Elections Commission et al.

The Wisconsin Supreme Court rejected a challenge to a constitutional amendment expanding the rights of crime victims. The amendment was unsuccessfully challenged by advocates for the rights of the accused on grounds that voters were not informed that the proposed amendment would decrease the rights of people accused of criminal activity while expanding crime victims' rights.

Reproductive Rights

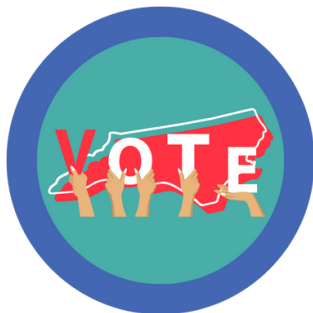


Montana

Weems v. Montana

In a unanimous decision, the Montana Supreme Court ruled that the right of individual privacy in the state's constitution protects residents' "fundamental right of privacy to seek abortion care from a qualified health care provider of [their] choosing," allowing nurse practitioners and clinicians to continue providing abortion care to patients in Montana.

Voting Rights & Democracy



North Carolina

Harper v. Hall

Under the North Carolina Supreme Court's new conservative majority, the state supreme court shockingly reheard multiple decisions it had recently delivered in late 2022. Here, the court overruled its previous decision blocking partisan gerrymandered congressional maps.

Holmes v. Moore

In another case reheard by the North Carolina Supreme Court's new majority, the court again overruled a recent decision from late 2022 and greenlit a racially discriminatory voter ID law.



[State Supreme Court Diversity – May 2023 Update](#)

The Brennan Center for Justice released a report examining the racial, ethnic, and gender diversity across all 50 state supreme courts. Of note, in **18 total states** there are no justices of color and men hold nearly 60 percent of all state supreme court seats.



[Georgia Supreme Court is considering whether abortion law is invalid](#)

Earlier this month, the Georgia Supreme Court heard arguments for a case challenging the validity of the state’s six-week abortion ban. Abortion after six weeks remains banned in the state while litigation is ongoing.



[Justice Michael Morgan not running for re-election to NC Supreme Court](#)

North Carolina Supreme Court Justice Michael Morgan announced that he will not run for re-election when his term ends next year, after serving on the court for six years. Morgan is one of two liberals on the bench, and as of yet no individuals have announced their intent to run for his seat.



[Third Republican judge announces campaign for Ohio Supreme Court](#)



[Ohio Republicans defend Aug. 8 election amid constitution question in response to lawsuit](#)



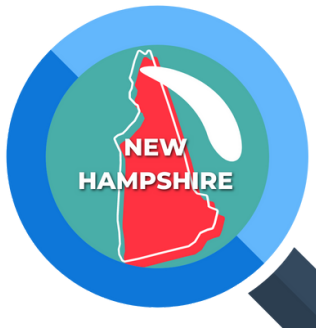
[Wisconsin Supreme Court to hear dispute over religious groups'](#)

Earlier this month, Franklin County Common Pleas Judge Dan Hawkins announced his intent to run as part of a conservative ticket for the Ohio Supreme Court. Hawkins will be one of three conservatives running for the three seats up on the court.

The legality of State Issue 1, a constitutional amendment making it harder to change the state constitution and propose constitutional amendments, is being challenged by pro-democracy groups. Democracy groups and conservative state officials are finalizing their arguments before the conservative-controlled Ohio Supreme Court, which will then determine whether it takes up the case.

[participation in unemployment programs](#)

A religious charity is challenging its obligation to participate and pay into the state's unemployment system. The group is claiming that because it is related to the Diocese of Superior it should be entitled to the same religious exemption the Diocese receives. No hearing date for the case has been set.



[At New Hampshire Supreme Court, a debate over what constitutes a fair political map](#)

Democratic voters and conservative legislators made their arguments before the New Hampshire Supreme Court in a case alleging partisan gerrymandering in the legislature's most recent congressional maps.

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