Please join the Standing Committee on Election Law as it convenes a roundtable of national and local experts on a timely and important discussion of the crown jewel of the Civil Rights Movement, the Voting Rights Act. Key provisions of the Voting Rights Act were reauthorized in 2006, yet litigation continues involving Sections 2 and 5 of the Act. Our panelists will engage in a lively debate regarding these important issues, as well as any other topics that the audience would like to bring to the table.

Panelists:

Benjamin E. Griffith
Partner
Griffith & Griffith, Cleveland, MS

Dale Ho
Assistant Counsel
NAACP LDF, New York, NY

Laughlin McDonald
Director, Voting Rights Project
American Civil Liberties Union, Atlanta, GA

Estelle H. Rogers
Director of Advocacy
Project Vote, Washington, DC
BENJAMIN E. GRIFFITH is a partner in the Cleveland, Mississippi firm of Griffith & Griffith. His multistate practice includes civil litigation and administrative proceedings in the fields of election law and voting rights. He served as county board attorney for 21 years, board attorney for a 17-county special district for 22 years and as lead counsel in voting rights actions, Section 5 proceedings and other governmental litigation in the District of Columbia, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas and his home state of Mississippi.

He is the current Chair of the Standing Committee on Election Law, a member of the ABA House of Delegates, and a Past-Chair of the ABA Section of State and Local Government Law. He has written and edited numerous peer-reviewed publications in his field of practice, including America Votes! A Guide to Modern Election Law and Voting Rights (ABA 2008 & Supp. 2009).

DALE HO is Assistant Counsel with the Political Participation Group of the NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF). His work at LDF includes litigation under the Voting Rights Act, felon disfranchisement, prison-based gerrymandering, barriers to registration, and ballot access. For two years prior, he was the LDF Fellow at Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP, where he litigated complex commercial matters and federal civil rights cases. He previously served as a Law Clerk, first to Judge Barbara S. Jones, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, and then to Judge Robert S. Smith, New York Court of Appeals. His writings have appeared or are forthcoming in the Florida Law Review, the Harvard BlackLetter Law Journal, and the Stanford Law & Policy Review.

LAUGHLIN MCDONALD received a B.A. degree from Columbia University and an LL.B from the University of Virginia. He has been director of the Voting Rights Project of the American Civil Liberties Union in Atlanta, Georgia, since 1972. Prior to that he was in private practice and taught at the University of North Carolina Law School. McDonald has represented minorities in scores of discrimination cases and specialized in the area of voting rights. He has argued cases before the U.S. Supreme Court, numerous federal appellate courts, testified frequently before Congress, and written for scholarly and popular publications on a variety of civil liberties issues. He is the author of several books, including A Voting Rights Odyssey: Black Enfranchisement in Georgia and American Indians and the Fight for Equal Voting Rights.

ESTELLE H. ROGERS, an attorney, has been Project Vote’s Director of Advocacy since January 2010. In this position, she coordinates the organization’s policy work on both state and federal levels, including interacting directly with legislators and staff, writing testimony and public education materials, and building coalitions with other organizations. Prior to joining the Project Vote staff, Ms. Rogers spent several years as a part-time consultant to the organization. Her work included representing Project Vote at meetings and legislative hearings, preparing a voting rights agenda for submission to the Presidential Transition Team in 2008-2009, and authoring The National Voter Registration Act at Fifteen: A Report to Congress. Ms. Roger’s work on civic engagement issues began in 2004, when she served as special counsel to America’s Families United, supervising the verification of thousands of new voter registrations in 65 counties in 17 states. In 2005-2006, she was a senior staff attorney with Advancement Project, continuing her legal work on voter registration and election administration issues. She serves in the American Bar Association’s House of Delegates and is a member of the ABA’s Standing Committee on Election Law. She also serves on the board of the Capital Area Immigrant Rights Coalition, an organization providing legal services to immigrant detainees in the Washington, DC area.