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Nos. 08-1387, 08-1534

LEONARD GREEN, Clerk

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In the  
United States Court of Appeals  
for the Sixth Circuit

COALITION TO DEFEND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, INTEGRATION AND  
IMMIGRATION RIGHTS AND FIGHT FOR EQUALITY BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY  
(BAMN), et al.,  
*Plaintiffs-Appellants,*

v.

REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, et al.,  
*Defendants - Appellees,*

and

BILL SCHEUTTE, Michigan Attorney General  
*Intervenor-Appellee.*

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On Appeal from the United States District Court  
for the Eastern District of Michigan at Detroit

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BRIEF OF COMMITTEE OF LAW PROFESSORS AND CONSTITUTIONAL  
HISTORIANS AS AMICUS CURIAE IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS-APPELLANTS

Wilson R. Huhn (223698)  
The University of Akron  
School of Law  
150 University Avenue  
Akron, OH 44325  
(330) 972-6791  
whuhn@uakron.edu

*Amicus Curiae Committee of  
Law Professors and  
Constitutional Historians*

October 25, 2011

**CORPORATE DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**

Fed. R. App. P. 26.1

1) The full name of every party that the attorney represents

in the case:

Professor Michelle Adams  
Cardoza Law School

Professor Richard L. Aynes  
John F. Seiberling Chair of Constitutional Law  
University of Akron Law School

Professor Wilson R. Huhn  
C. Blake McDowell, Jr., Professor of Law  
University of Akron Law School

Professor Michael A. Lawrence  
Michigan State University College of Law

Professor Michael Perry  
Robert W. Woodruff Professor of Law  
Emory University School of Law

Professor Richard Saphire  
University of Dayton Law School

Professor Christopher Waldrep  
Professor of History and Pasker Chair of American History  
San Francisco State University

Professor Rebecca Zietlow  
Charles W. Fornoff Professor of Law and Values  
University of Toledo College of Law

Each of the foregoing parties is an individual and not a corporation. None of the foregoing parties has any financial interest in this matter. Each of the foregoing parties is appearing in an individual capacity and does not speak for or represent the views of the university or law school that employs him or her.

2) The names of all law firms whose partners or associates

have appeared for the party in the case (including

44 administrative proceedings in the district court or before  
 45 an administrative agency) or are expected to appear for the  
 46 party in this court:

47 *Amici* are represented by Wilson R. Huhn who is a member of  
 48 the Court. Mr. Huhn does not speak for or represent his  
 49 employer, The University of Akron.

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 51  
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229 **INTEREST OF THE AMICI CURIAE**  
230

231 Each of the *amici curiae* is a professor who has published  
232 books or articles on affirmative action or American  
233 constitutional history. Their many publications include  
234 Michelle Adams, *Is Integration a Discriminatory Purpose?*, 96  
235 Iowa L. Rev. 937 (2011); Richard L. Aynes, *On Misreading John*  
236 *Bingham and the Fourteenth Amendment*, 103 Yale L. J. 57 (1993);  
237 Wilson R. Huhn, *A Higher Law: Abraham Lincoln's Use of Biblical*  
238 *Imagery*, Rutgers Journal of Law and Religion (forthcoming 2011);  
239 Michael A. Lawrence, *Radicals in Their Own Time: Four Hundred*  
240 *Years of Struggle for Liberty and Equal Justice in America*  
241 (Cambridge University Press 2011); Michael J. Perry, *The*  
242 *Political Morality of Liberal Democracy*, (Cambridge University  
243 Press 2010); Richard Saphire, *Bringing Brown to*  
244 *Cleveland*, chapter in *A History of the Northern District of Ohio*  
245 (Ohio University Press, forthcoming 2011); Christopher Waldrep,  
246 *African-Americans Confront Lynching: Strategies of Resistance*  
247 *from the Civil War to the Civil Rights Era* (Rowman & Littlefield  
248 Publishers 2009); and Rebecca Zietlow, *Enforcing Equality:*  
249 *Congress, the Constitution, and the Protection of Individual*  
250 *Rights* (NYU Press, 2006).

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**SUMMARY OF ARGUMENT**

The purpose of this brief is to place the dispute over affirmative action in Michigan's public universities within a broader historical context. State constitutional amendments such as Proposal 2 are not uncommon in American history. In reaction to calls for reform from a minority group - whether it be the end of slavery, the enactment of non-discrimination laws, or the adoption of voluntary programs of racial integration - the majority has often responded by attempting to prevent the debate from occurring, by denying members of the minority group the opportunity to participate in the political process, or by making it impossible for the government to adopt the reform. State constitutional amendments like Proposal 2 are unconstitutional because they deny minority groups the equal right to achieve their goals through the normal political process.

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**ARGUMENT**

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**I. CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENTS ARE EXERCISES IN DEMOCRACY**

Movements for civil rights express the deepest yearnings of Americans for fundamental fairness and reflect our enduring faith in democracy. These struggles have often commanded the attention and consumed the energy of entire generations of



274 American citizens. Carrie Chapman Catt described the women's  
275 suffrage movement in these words:

276 "To get the word 'male' in effect out of the  
277 Constitution cost the women of the country fifty-two  
278 years of pauseless campaign... During that time they  
279 were forced to conduct fifty-six campaigns of  
280 referenda to male voters; 480 campaigns to get  
281 Legislatures to submit suffrage amendments to voters;  
282 47 campaigns to get State constitutional conventions  
283 to write woman suffrage into state constitutions; 277  
284 campaigns to get State party conventions to include  
285 woman suffrage planks in party platforms, and 19  
286 campaigns with 19 successive Congresses." Carrie  
287 Chapman Catt and Nettie Rogers Shuler, *Women Suffrage*  
288 *and Politics* 107 (New York, Chas. Scribners Sons,  
289 1923).

290  
291 Peaceful change is possible only if the democratic process  
292 is permitted to operate on a non-discriminatory basis. A  
293 temporary majority may not defend its privileges by making it  
294 impossible for the government to respond to the minority.

295  
296 **II. WHEN CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENTS BEGIN TO ACHIEVE VICTORIES, THE**  
297 **MAJORITY OFTEN RESPONDS BY ATTEMPTING TO MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT**  
298 **FOR MINORITIES TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS THROUGH THE DEMOCRATIC**  
299 **PROCESS**

300 When a movement for civil rights begins to make progress  
301 and accumulates victories in the legal and legislative arenas,  
302 the majority of the public pushes back and resists the  
303 minority's claims for equal opportunity. Favorable court  
304 decisions may be reversed and civil rights laws may be repealed.

305 This back-and-forth interaction, the slow and halting pace of  
306 human progress, is to be expected within any adversarial system  
307 of justice or democratic political process. It is of course  
308 legitimate for the majority to assert its views both in the  
309 courts and before political bodies in seeking to persuade  
310 judges, legislators, and other public officials that the  
311 minority should not be granted the rights or opportunities they  
312 seek.

313         However, there is another common tactic - an illegitimate  
314 one - that is often utilized by members of a then-existing  
315 majority who resist reform. That is to distort the political  
316 process to make it more difficult for the minority than it is  
317 for the temporary majority to obtain the passage of laws or  
318 adoption of policies that reflect its views or interests. These  
319 tactics take many forms: restrictions on freedom of speech,  
320 denial of voting rights, or laws that constrain the authority of  
321 governmental institutions to enact reforms sought by the  
322 minority. Proposal 2 was declared unconstitutional by the panel  
323 because it is an example of the third type of illegitimate  
324 tactic.

325         It was measures like Proposal 2 that led to the Civil War.  
326 The Civil War erupted in part because the southern states  
327 adopted amendments to their state constitutions that made it  
328 impossible to limit or abolish slavery through the democratic

329 process. As a result, the conflict over slavery was transformed  
330 from a social, political, and economic contest into a military  
331 confrontation. The Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth  
332 Amendment was adopted to overrule these types of barriers to the  
333 political success of minorities, and to prohibit these types of  
334 laws from being enacted in the future.

335

336 **III. DURING THE ANTEBELLUM PERIOD, SUPPORTERS OF SLAVERY**  
337 **ADOPTED LAWS AND STATE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS THAT MADE IT**  
338 **IMPOSSIBLE FOR SLAVERY TO BE ABOLISHED THROUGH THE DEMOCRATIC**  
339 **PROCESS, THUS LEADING TO THE CIVIL WAR**

340 The purpose of the Fourteenth Amendment becomes more clear  
341 when we consider the nature of the political crisis that led to  
342 the Civil War.

343 Many people in the antislavery movement hoped to persuade  
344 the people of the south to reject slavery. To achieve that  
345 purpose, antislavery advocates published works intended to stoke  
346 debate and stimulate democratic action. See, e.g., Angelina  
347 Grimke, *Appeal to the Christian Women of the South* (1836)  
348 (contending that slavery is contrary to moral and religious  
349 teachings); Hinton Helper, *The Impending Crisis In the South*  
350 (1857) (addressed to the non-slaveholding whites of the south  
351 and contending that slavery was harmful to their economic  
352 interests). However, instead of generating a robust debate on

353 slavery in the south, these works were banned and burned. See  
354 e.g., An Act to Suppress the Circulation of Incendiary  
355 Publications, ch. 66, 1836 Va. Acts 44-45 (outlawing antislavery  
356 books and speeches); Shannon D. Gilreath, *The Technicolor*  
357 *Constitution: Popular Constitutionalism, Ethical Norms, and*  
358 *Legal Pedagogy*, 9 Tex. J. Civ. Lib. & Civ. Rts. 23, 34 fn. 63  
359 (2003) (Grimke's *Appeal* publicly burned by South Carolina  
360 postmasters). The censorship of dissent over the issue of  
361 slavery precluded the use of the democratic process to abolish  
362 the institution. State constitutional amendments prohibiting  
363 the abolition of slavery had a similar effect.

364 The southern states had not always prohibited public  
365 discussion about the merits of slavery. In January and February  
366 of 1832, in the wake of the Nat Turner rebellion, the Virginia  
367 General Assembly earnestly debated a bill that would have  
368 instituted a plan of gradual emancipation of slaves within the  
369 state. The bill was defeated by a margin of 73-58. See Michael  
370 Kent Curtis, *The 1859 Crisis Over Hinton Helper's Book, The*  
371 *Impending Crisis: Free Speech, Slavery, and Some Light on the*  
372 *Meaning of the First Section of the Fourteenth Amendment*, 68  
373 Chi-Kent L. Rev. 1113, 1128 (1993). It was the last time that a  
374 state that would eventually secede from the Union submitted the  
375 issue of slavery to the political process.

376 In the 1830s and 1840s southern attitudes towards slavery  
377 hardened and a number of laws were adopted that would make it  
378 impossible to resolve the continued existence of slavery through  
379 the democratic process. Free negroes lost the right to vote  
380 (see North Carolina History Project, Constitution of 1835, at  
381 <http://www.northcarolinahistory.org/commentary/32/entry>; and  
382 NCPedia, John C. Sanders, NC Constitutional History 1776-1866,  
383 at <http://ncpedia.org/government/constitution1776>); it was  
384 forbidden to teach slaves to read and write (Curtis, *The 1859*  
385 *Crisis, supra* at 1123); and, finally, it became illegal to  
386 promote the abolition of slavery. (See Michael Kent Curtis,  
387 *Free Speech, "The People's Darling Privilege": Struggles for*  
388 *Freedom of Expression in American History* (2000), pages 131-154  
389 (describing the efforts of southern states to make public  
390 opposition to slavery illegal); *id.* at 194-215 (describing legal  
391 theories supporting suppression of slavery agitation); *id.* at  
392 271-299 (describing the southern response to Helper's *Impending*  
393 *Crisis* and the trials of Daniel Worth in North Carolina for  
394 circulating it). Even at the federal level laws and policies  
395 were adopted to silence antislavery views. The "Gag Rule" was  
396 adopted in Congress, and the Post Office refused to carry  
397 antislavery newspapers or other materials advocating  
398 emancipation into the southern states. (See Curtis, *Free*

399 *Speech*, pages 155-181 (describing federal efforts to silence  
400 opposition to slavery).

401       Foremost among the legal changes withdrawing slavery from  
402 the political process were amendments to the constitutions of  
403 many of the states that later formed the Confederacy. Those  
404 amendments withdrew the power of the state legislatures to  
405 abolish slavery. The Virginia Constitution of 1851 provided:

406       The general assembly shall not emancipate any slave,  
407       or the descendant of any slave, either before or after  
408       the birth of such descendant. (Vir. Const. of 1851,  
409       art. IV, § 21)

410  
411 This constitution also granted the state legislature the power  
412 to "impose such restrictions and conditions as they shall deem  
413 proper on the power of slave-owners to emancipate their slaves  
414 ..." (Vir. Const. of 1851, art. IV, § 20). According to  
415 historian Kenneth Stampp, "Most southern constitutions  
416 prohibited the legislatures from emancipating slaves without  
417 both the consent of the owners and the payment of a full  
418 equivalent in money." Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Peculiar*  
419 *Institution: Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South* 198 (1956). See,  
420 e.g., Ala. Const. of 1819, art. VI, § 1; Ark. Const. of 1836,  
421 art. VII, § 1; Fla. Const. of 1838, art. XVI, § 1; Miss. Const.  
422 of 1817, art. VI, § 1; Tenn. Const. of 1834, art. II, sec. 31;  
423 Tex. Const. of 1845, art. VIII, § 1.

424 Abraham Lincoln condemned these state constitutional  
425 amendments in his famous "Hundred Keys" speech in Springfield,  
426 Illinois, on June 26, 1857. Lincoln observed that most  
427 Americans of the revolutionary generation believed that slavery  
428 was wrong and expected its eventual extinction, but that the  
429 present generation had enacted laws - including amendments to  
430 their state constitutions - that made slavery a virtual "prison  
431 house." Speaking of the Revolutionary period, Lincoln said:

432 In those days, as I understand, masters could, at  
433 their own pleasure, emancipate their slaves; but since  
434 then, such legal restraints have been made upon  
435 emancipation, as to amount almost to prohibition. In  
436 those days, Legislatures held the unquestioned power  
437 to abolish slavery in their respective States; but now  
438 it is becoming quite fashionable for State  
439 Constitutions to withhold that power from the  
440 Legislatures. 2 *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* 404  
441 (Roy P. Basler, ed. 1953).

442  
443 Lincoln employed a powerful metaphor to express the fact  
444 that the purpose of these state constitutional amendments  
445 was to make it impossible to abolish slavery:

446  
447 They have him in his prison house; they have searched  
448 his person, and left no prying instrument with him.  
449 One after another they have closed the heavy iron  
450 doors upon him, and now they have him, as it were,  
451 bolted in with a lock of a hundred keys, which can  
452 never be unlocked without the concurrence of every  
453 key; the keys in the hands of a hundred different men,  
454 and they scattered to a hundred different and distant  
455 places; and they stand musing as to what invention, in  
456 all the dominions of mind and matter, can be produced  
457 to make the impossibility of his escape more complete  
458 than it is. *Id.*  
459

460 The Civil War is the central tragedy of American history  
461 and the central failure of American democracy. Why were our  
462 ancestors unable to resolve the question of slavery peacefully?  
463 Why were we unable to abolish slavery through the democratic  
464 process?

465 Contemporaries believed that democracy failed because it  
466 was not given the opportunity to succeed. In a letter to John  
467 C. Calhoun, Francis Lieber wrote:

468 "If you fear discussion, if you maintain that the  
469 South cannot afford it, then you admit at the same  
470 time that the whole institution is to be kept up by  
471 violence only, and is against the spirit of the times  
472 and unameliorable, which means, in other words, that  
473 violence supports it, and violence will be its end."  
474 Curtis, *Free Speech*, at 193.

475  
476 In an 1864 editorial Harper's Weekly drew a similar conclusion  
477 about the cause of the war:

478 "It was the knowledge that, if the right of free speech,  
479 guaranteed by the Constitution, were tolerated in the  
480 South, slavery would be destroyed by the common-sense of  
481 the Southern people, which made Calhoun and all his school  
482 insist upon suppressing it. Consequently, in its most  
483 important provision, the Constitution has been a dead  
484 letter in every slave State for more than thirty years."  
485 "The Truth Confessed," Harper's Wkly., Jan. 16, 1864, at 34  
486 in Richard L. Aynes, 18 *Journal of Contemporary Legal*  
487 *Issues* 77, *Enforcing the Bill of Rights Against the States:*  
488 *The History and the Future* (2009).

489  
490 Present-day historians agree. Michael Curtis states:

491 "Vocal domestic Southern opposition to slavery reached  
492 a brief high water mark in the 1830s and thereafter  
493 began to recede in much of the South. Southern laws  
494 and vigilance committees silenced abolition expression  
495 and did their best to take opposition to slavery off



496 the Southern political agenda. As a result, the  
497 institution could only be dislodged by violence."  
498 Curtis, *Free Speech*, at 192-193.

499  
500 Avery Craven says, "The most significant thing about  
501 the American Civil War is that it represents a complete  
502 breakdown of the democratic process." Avery Craven, *The*  
503 *1840's and the Democratic Process*, *Journal of Southern*  
504 *History* XVI (1950), pp. 161-76, in Kenneth M. Stamp, *The*  
505 *Causes of the Civil War* 195 (Simon & Schuster 1991).  
506 Michael Holt agrees: "The Civil War represented an utter  
507 and unique breakdown of the normal democratic political  
508 process." Michael F. Holt, *The Political Crisis of the*  
509 *1850s* 1 (Norton, 1978).

510 In the absence of the Fourteenth Amendment, the antebellum  
511 courts were powerless to protect the democratic process against  
512 state laws and practices that prevented citizens and legislators  
513 from addressing the evils of slavery, and this judicial  
514 powerlessness led directly to the Civil War. A leading  
515 objective of the newly-formed Republican Party was to  
516 incorporate the principles of the Declaration into the  
517 Constitution because this was "essential to the preservation of  
518 our republican institutions." See Plank 2 of the 1860  
519 Republican Party Platform in John Wooley and Gerhard Peters, *The*  
520 *American Presidency Project*, *The Republican Platform of 1860*, at  
521 <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29620#axzzl1alRmV>

522 7UZ. Following the war under the leadership of Republicans in  
523 Congress the nation adopted the Fourteenth Amendment which was  
524 designed, intended, and understood to prohibit interference with  
525 the democratic operation of the political process. Despite  
526 this, however, for many decades the states continued to adopt  
527 anti-democratic laws and state constitutional amendments that  
528 were intended to make it impossible for minorities to achieve  
529 progress through the democratic process. Nearly a century  
530 passed before the Supreme Court fulfilled its duty under the  
531 Fourteenth Amendment and declared these laws unconstitutional.

532  
533 **IV. FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY AFTER THE CIVIL WAR THE OPPONENTS OF**  
534 **CIVIL RIGHTS AND RACIAL INTEGRATION SOUGHT TO REMOVE THESE**  
535 **SUBJECTS FROM CONSIDERATION BY THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS. THE**  
536 **SUPREME COURT EVENTUALLY STUCK DOWN THESE LAWS AND**  
537 **CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS THAT DISTORTED THE POLITICAL PROCESS.**

538 For more than a century after the Civil War similar  
539 illegitimate tactics were employed to distort the political  
540 process and delay the attainment of equal rights for black  
541 citizens and to block integration. These tactics included  
542 restrictions on freedom of speech, impediments to the right to  
543 vote, and super-majoritarian barriers to government action. As  
544 before the Civil War, these tactics both limited discussion of  
545 the issues and interfered with the democratic process. These

546 tactics have come to be known as the "Mississippi Plan." C.  
547 Vann Woodward describes the three stages of the Mississippi  
548 Plan, which were widely copied across the south. In 1875, white  
549 mobs terrorized African-American candidates and voters; in 1890,  
550 state laws and constitutional amendments enacting poll taxes,  
551 literacy tests, and property qualifications were adopted to  
552 deprive African-Americans of the right to vote; and in 1954 the  
553 Citizens Councils were formed "to wage unrelenting war in  
554 defense of segregation." C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career*  
555 *of Jim Crow* 152 (Oxford University Press 1966). In 1898 the  
556 Supreme Court upheld the amendments to the Mississippi  
557 constitution that were used to bar African-Americans from  
558 exercising the franchise. *Williams v. Mississippi*, 170 U.S. 213  
559 (1898). These tactics were successful in depriving African-  
560 Americans of the opportunity to participate in the political  
561 process. For example, in 1896, there were 130,334 African-  
562 Americans registered to vote in the State of Louisiana; in 1904,  
563 there were only 1,342. Woodward, at 85. In the 1950's, only  
564 two percent of adult African-Americans in the State of  
565 Mississippi were registered to vote. Woodward, at 174. State  
566 constitutions from this era also required the separation of  
567 children by race in public schools. See, e.g., Ala. Const. of  
568 1901, Art. XIV, § 256 ("Separate schools shall be provided for  
569 white and colored children, and no child of either race shall be

570 permitted to attend a school of the other race."); Geo. Const.  
571 of 1877, art. VIII, § 1 ("The schools shall be free to all  
572 children of the State, but separate schools shall be provided  
573 for the white and colored races.")

574 Just as during the antebellum period the southern states  
575 made changes to their constitutions limiting the power of their  
576 state legislatures to abolish slavery, and during the Jim Crow  
577 era states adopted laws and constitutional amendments limiting  
578 the franchise, during the civil rights era a number of states  
579 enacted laws and constitutional amendments that were intended to  
580 thwart the ruling of the Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of*  
581 *Education* by making it impossible for their public institutions  
582 to comply with *Brown*. See e.g., Ala. Const., art. XIV, § 256  
583 amend. 111 (1956) (eliminating the requirement that the state  
584 provide every child a free public education and permitting the  
585 state to turn over land and buildings to private educational  
586 institutions); Opinion of the Justices No. 333, 624 So. 2d 107  
587 (Ala. 1993), referencing *Alabama Coalition for Equity, et al. v*  
588 *Hunt*, CV-90-883 (striking down Amendment 111 because it was  
589 enacted for a discriminatory purpose); Virginia Pupil Placement  
590 Act, VA Code. §22-232.1 et seq. (1950), repealed in 1966  
591 (divesting local school boards of authority to assign children  
592 to particular schools and placing that authority in a State  
593 Pupil Placement Board who without exception assigned children to

594 separate schools based upon their race); see generally 1958  
595 *American Jewish Year Book* pp.44-68, available at  
596 [http://www.ajcarchives.org/AJC DATA/Files/1958 4 USCivicPolitica](http://www.ajcarchives.org/AJC_DATA/Files/1958_4_USCivicPolitica)  
597 [1.pdf](#), (describing the laws and constitutional amendments  
598 adopted in several states to oppose racial integration of the  
599 public schools); *id.* at 69 (table entitled "Major Types of  
600 Legislation Adopted in Eleven Southern States Since 1952  
601 Designed to Prevent or Control Desegregation," reprinted from  
602 *Southern School News*, September 1957). These types of laws,  
603 like Proposal 2, are unconstitutional under the Equal Protection  
604 Clause because they prohibit state-supported educational  
605 institutions from exercising their discretion to choose to adopt  
606 policies of racial integration.

607       After 1938 the Supreme Court began to address many of the  
608 abuses that had accumulated during the Jim Crow era. In a  
609 series of cases, the Court struck down barriers to minorities'  
610 freedom of expression and the right to vote, as well as barriers  
611 to the adoption of anti-discrimination laws and policies of  
612 racial integration. A theme that is common to many of these  
613 cases is that the Court was restoring democracy by striking down  
614 laws that interfered with the right of minorities and their  
615 allies to seek justice through the normal political process.  
616 These decisions are consonant with what John Hart Ely has called  
617 "representation-reinforcement" - the role of the courts as the

618 guardian of democracy. John Hart Ely, *Democracy and Distrust: A*  
619 *Theory of Judicial Review* 87-104 (1980).

620 The first series of cases upheld the First Amendment  
621 rights of minorities to advocate in the political process. In  
622 *NAACP v. Alabama*, 357 U.S. 449 (1958) and *NAACP v. Button*, 371  
623 U.S. 415 (1963) the Court struck down Alabama and Virginia laws  
624 that were intended to hinder the operation of the nation's  
625 leading civil rights organization. In *Edwards v. South*  
626 *Carolina*, 372 U.S. 229 (1963) and *Cox v. Louisiana*, 379 U.S. 536  
627 (1964) the Court upheld the right of citizens to engage in  
628 peaceful protests in support of civil rights. And in *New York*  
629 *Times v. Sullivan*, 376 U.S. 254 (1964) the Court prohibited the  
630 states from using the law of libel to silence newspapers from  
631 covering the civil rights movement.

632 The second set of cases reaffirmed and protected the right  
633 to vote and the effectiveness of those votes. In *Smith v.*  
634 *Allwright*, 321 U.S. 649 (1944) the Supreme Court abolished white  
635 primaries, thus opening the nomination process to African-  
636 Americans. See also *Reynolds v. Sims*, 377 U.S. 533 (1964)  
637 (striking down malapportionment of the Alabama legislature);  
638 *Harper v. Virginia Board of Elections*, 383 U.S. 663 (1966)  
639 (striking down Virginia poll tax); and *Rogers v. Lodge*, 458 U.S.  
640 615 (1982) (striking down an at-large representation scheme in a  
641 rural Georgia county). In *Hunter v. Underwood*, 471 U.S. 222

642 (1985), the Supreme Court considered the constitutionality of an  
643 Alabama constitutional provision adopted in 1901 that barred  
644 felons from voting. The Court found this provision to be  
645 unconstitutional because it was adopted for the purpose of  
646 disenfranchising African-Americans. *Id.* at 229 (stating, "the  
647 Alabama Constitutional Convention of 1901 was part of a movement  
648 that swept the post-Reconstruction South to disenfranchise  
649 blacks."). In all of these cases the Supreme Court removed  
650 impediments to voting and protected the rights of all citizens,  
651 regardless of race, to participate in the political process on  
652 an equal basis.

653 In a third set of cases, most closely analogous to the  
654 issue at hand, the Court invalidated barriers to minorities  
655 achieving success in the political process, including  
656 constitutional amendments like Proposal 2. The Supreme Court  
657 considered the constitutionality of three such popularly-enacted  
658 laws and found them all to be invalid. In the first case, the  
659 Court struck down a California constitutional amendment that  
660 prohibited the state legislature from enacting fair housing  
661 laws. *Reitman v. Mulkey*, 387 U.S. 369 (1967). In a second  
662 case, the Court struck down an amendment to the city charter of  
663 Akron that made it more difficult to enact fair housing laws.  
664 *Hunter v. Erickson*, 393 U.S. 395 (1969). In a third case, the  
665 Court rejected a statewide initiative prohibiting school

666 districts from voluntarily busing children for integration.  
667 *Washington v. Seattle School District No. 1*, 458 U.S. 457  
668 (1982). In all of these cases, the laws had a similar effect to  
669 Proposal 2 - blocking minorities from using the democratic  
670 process to secure the adoption of anti-discrimination measures  
671 or policies promoting racial integration. Accordingly, in all  
672 of these cases the laws were declared unconstitutional.

673 In *Romer v. Evans*, 517 U.S. 620 (1996) the Supreme Court  
674 announced a simple guiding principle that explains the decisions  
675 in *Reitman*, *Seattle School District*, and *Hunter*. In *Romer* the  
676 Court stated:

677 A law declaring that in general it shall be more  
678 difficult for one group of citizens than for all  
679 others to seek aid from the government is itself a  
680 denial of equal protection of the laws in the most  
681 literal sense. 517 U.S., at 633.

682  
683 In all of these cases the Supreme Court properly  
684 struck down state laws that interfered with the equal right  
685 of minority groups to end discrimination and promote  
686 integration.

687  
688 **V. PROPOSAL 2 IS SIMILAR TO OTHER STATE CONSTITUTIONAL**  
689 **AMENDMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN PROPERLY DECLARED UNCONSTITUTIONAL**

690 Michigan Proposal 2 makes it more difficult for public  
691 universities to integrate their institutions and makes it more  
692 difficult for African-Americans and other racial minorities to



693 "seek aid from the government" in their admission to state  
694 universities. The fact that Proposal 2 is a product of direct  
695 democracy does not diminish the fact that it is profoundly anti-  
696 democratic. It is but one example of the long history of  
697 discriminatory state constitutional amendments and other laws  
698 adopted by a temporary majority to prevent the minority from  
699 being able to make progress in civil rights through normal  
700 governmental channels. The closest analogy to Proposal 2 is the  
701 statewide initiative struck down in *Washington v. Seattle School*  
702 *District* that prohibited school districts from voluntarily  
703 adopting programs of busing to integrate the public schools.

704 Throughout American history movements for civil rights have  
705 sought to transform their goals into law by pursuing justice in  
706 the courts and the adoption of legislation and official policies  
707 through the political process. While it is legitimate for a  
708 majority to refuse to adopt civil rights policies or to repeal  
709 policies that have already been adopted, it is illegitimate for  
710 a temporary majority to enact constitutional amendments such as  
711 Proposal 2 that distort the political process to make it more  
712 difficult for the minority to achieve its goals.

713

714

**CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE**

715 In accordance with Fed. R. App. P.32(a)(7)(C), I hereby  
716 certify that the foregoing brief is in 12 point monospaced

717 Courier New type. According to the word processing system used  
718 to prepare this brief (Microsoft Word), this brief contains  
719 3,963 words in 461 lines of text, not including the Corporate  
720 Disclosure Statement, Table of Contents, Table of Authorities,  
721 Interest of the Amici Curiae, Certificate of Service, and this  
722 Certificate of Compliance.

723

724 **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

725 On this 25th day of October, 2011, and as directed by the  
726 Court's en banc coordinator, I hereby certify that this  
727 COMMITTEE OF LAW PROFESSORS AND CONSTITUTIONAL HISTORIANS AMICUS  
728 BRIEF IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS-APPELLANTS TO THE ATTORNEY  
729 GENERAL'S REHEARING EN BANC has been transmitted by email this  
730 day to the coordinator for service on all parties of record.

731

732 s/ Wilson R. Huhn  
733 Wilson R. Huhn (223698)  
734 University of Akron School of Law  
735 150 University Avenue  
736 Akron, OH 44325  
737 (330) 972-6791  
738 whuhn@uakron.edu

739 Dated: October 25, 2011

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