

Marcia F. Johnson

Co-Director, Voting Rights Project, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law

Marcia Johnson is the Co-director of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law's Voting Rights Project. The Lawyers' Committee was founded in 1963 when President John Kennedy called members of the private bar to the White House and asked for their help in the fight for civil rights. An outcome of that meeting was the creation of the Lawyers' Committee. Marcia co-directs the organization's Voting Rights Project, its largest programmatic unit. As Co-director, she manages the Project's voter engagement and advocacy portfolios which include overseeing the work of Election Protection, the nation's largest non-partisan voter protection coalition; promoting engagement in the census and the redistricting process; researching the history of discrimination in voting; advocating for the restoration of the full protections of the Voting Rights Act and promoting national and state-based electoral reform legislation that ensure access to the ballot; and advocating for the restoration of voting rights for those with felony convictions.

Marcia began her career as a voting rights lawyer when she joined the Lawyers' Committee in 2004 to be part of the team organizing the first Election Protection Program during a Presidential Election. Since then, Marcia has been working with national and state partners to educate voters about their voting rights; build programs to provide real time help so that voters can cast ballots that will be counted; and provides support to litigation that challenges suppressive laws or practices. Beginning in 2005, she organized the first of two national commissions that researched and documented the record of discrimination in voting. This research has been part of the record used by Congress to support the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act in 2006. In 2014, the second national commission updated the research of voting discrimination to support the call for legislation to restore the full protections of the Voting Rights Act. That advocacy continues. Additionally, she served on and supported the litigation team defending the first challenge to the constitutionality of the 2006 reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act.

Marcia also coordinates the Lawyer's Committee's international human rights initiatives including monitoring U.S. compliance with its treaty obligations under the Convention for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Marcia is a national speaker on voting rights. She has testified before Congress and has appeared in national media discussing voting rights challenges and solutions. She is featured in the international documentary, *Democracy Maybe*, a series exploring the challenges faced by democracies across the globe.

Marcia received her Juris Doctor from Villanova University School of Law and her Bachelor of Science in Linguistics from Georgetown University.