

## NC: Battleground in 2012?

Michael Sean Winters | May. 31, 2011 | Distinctly Catholic

[The Washington Post](#) looks [1] at the forthcoming presidential contest in, of all places, North Carolina, land of Sen. Jesse Helms and a state that, until Obama's surprise, narrow victory in 2008, had voted for the GOP presidential candidate everytime since Jimmy Carter won the state in 1976.

The article also notes that North Carolina is another state in which GOP-dominated legislatures are seeking to pass laws that make it harder to vote. This is, in a word, revolting. Every state has a chief election officer, usually the Secretary of State, who is constitutionally charged with trying to increase voter turnout. After all, one of the more frightening indicators of the ill health of American democracy is low level of participation in elections. We should be bending over backwards to encourage turnout.

Instead, the GOP is trying to set up roadblocks, and not just any roadblocks, but the kind that will make it more difficult for poor, elderly and uneducated voters to gain access to the franchise. This is anti-small-d democratic. Claims that the measures are designed to prevent voter fraud are unbelievable - America does not have a problem with voter fraud.

The Voting Rights Act gives the Justice Department wide latitude to require states to not engage in shenanigans for political gain. I hope they will find grounds to challenge these new rules and that judges of both political parties will understand the need to increase voter turnout, not restrict it.

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### Links:

[1] [http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/republicans-brace-for-tough-2012-fight-against-obama-in-unlikely-place--nc/2011/05/20/AGi7lzEH\\_story.html?hpid=z2](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/republicans-brace-for-tough-2012-fight-against-obama-in-unlikely-place--nc/2011/05/20/AGi7lzEH_story.html?hpid=z2)