

Fla. voter registration law thrown out

by UPI

GAINESVILLE, Fla. -- A U.S. federal judge has barred Florida from enforcing a voter registration law that requires matches with driver's license and Social Security data bases. U.S. District Judge Stephan Mickle ruled Tuesday that enforcing the law has caused "actual harm to real individuals" by rejecting applications from people who are entitled to vote, the Miami Herald reported. The NAACP and other organizations argued that members of minority groups were disproportionately likely to be denied voter registration. Witnesses testified that hyphenated names were likely to be rejected. Haitians are likely to have hyphenated first names and Hispanics hyphenated last names. They also argued that blacks are more likely to spell names in non-traditional ways. Lawyers for the state argued that the system is needed to counter voter fraud. "The disenfranchisement, however unintentional, causes damage to the election system that cannot be repaired after the election has passed," Mickle wrote.

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