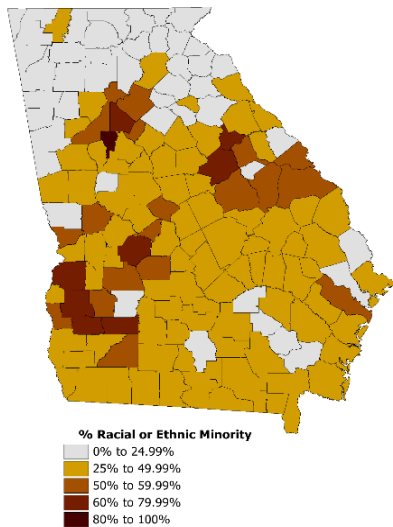


Georgia Fact Sheet:

Voter Purges and Precinct Consolidations Impact Black Voters

Hancock County Voter Purges Targets Black Voters: On November 3, 2015, the Georgia State Conference of the NAACP, the Georgia Coalition for the Peoples' Agenda and five black Hancock County voters represented by the Lawyers' Committee, along with local *pro bono* co-counsel, [filed a voting rights lawsuit](#) against the Hancock County election officials that challenges the purging of black voters from the Hancock County voter registration lists in advance of the November 2015 City of Sparta municipal election. Plaintiffs contend that the actions were intended to suppress the African American vote. According to the suit, almost 17 percent of eligible Sparta voters were challenged and **nearly all of the 53 voters purged were Black voters. Since the lawsuit was filed, following a U.S. District Court order, Hancock officials have reinstated 15 of the 53 voters.**



Hancock County- Precinct Consolidations Create Travel Burdens for Black Rural Voters: Hancock's Board of Elections (BOE) planned to close all but one precinct located in downtown Sparta, despite the relatively high voter turnout in the County in 2008 and 2012. While cost-savings was given as a rationale, the BOE did not release data justifying this harsh plan. Precincts proposed for closure were 10.9-16.9 miles from the one remaining precinct, presenting a travel burden for voters living in the majority Black precincts in the mostly poor and rural areas of the County who don't have access to regularly scheduled transportation. **After organized opposition led by the Georgia State Conference of the NAAC, Georgia Coalition for the People's Agenda and the Lawyers' Committee, the BOE decided to close only one of the ten precincts in the district.**

Macon- Bibb County: Polling Place Reduction Plan- In January 2015, the Macon-Bibb Board of Elections proposed a plan to reduce or consolidate the County's 40 precincts down to 26, allegedly as a cost saving device. Most of the proposed precinct reductions and consolidations in the original plan targeted majority Black precincts. Under that plan, some of the majority Black precincts had over 5000 and 6000 voters. By contrast, no majority white precincts had more than 5,000 voters and, in most cases, had thousands fewer voters than the proposed consolidated precincts in the majority Black communities. In response to **organized opposition by community organizations, the BOE reduced the number of precinct closures, but the majority of these closures disproportionately impact Black precincts. The County has failed to explain how it will staff and equip the larger consolidated Black precincts and we will be monitoring the impact of these closures on voters when they attempt to cast ballots in the 2016 elections.**

