

FORUM

On the 50th anniversary of the voting rights act, Republicans make zero references to voting rights

How Republican candidates stack up on voting rights

Jeb Bush signed a law limiting early voting and restricting voting locations. "Early voting proved to be so popular in its first test in Florida last year that election supervisors wanted to expand the hours and add more locations. But the Republican-controlled Legislature rejected both requests, and on Monday Gov. Jeb Bush signed a law limiting the hours of early voting and confining it to election offices, city halls and libraries. The new law limits early voting to no more than eight hours a day, changing the old law that allowed early voting at least eight hours a day. Early voting also cannot be held more than eight hours on any weekend, and it must end the Sunday before the election." [St. Petersburg Times, 6/21/05]

Rubio suggesting slashing Florida's early voting period in half — removing the first week — saying that first week "was really not cost effective." RUBIO: "But we also know, for example, that in the early stages of the — of campaigns, we used to have a two-week voting period in Florida. The cost-benefit analysis of the first week of voting was really not — was really not cost effective. In essence, the number of people voting versus the cost to local governments to comply or to carry out that voting were — the turnout just didn't justify the expenditure in the first week." [The Buzz, Tampa Bay Times, 6/13/12]

Scott Walker signed a bill requiring voters to show photo identification at the polls. "Ending a decade-long quest by GOP officials, Gov. Scott Walker signed a bill Wednesday

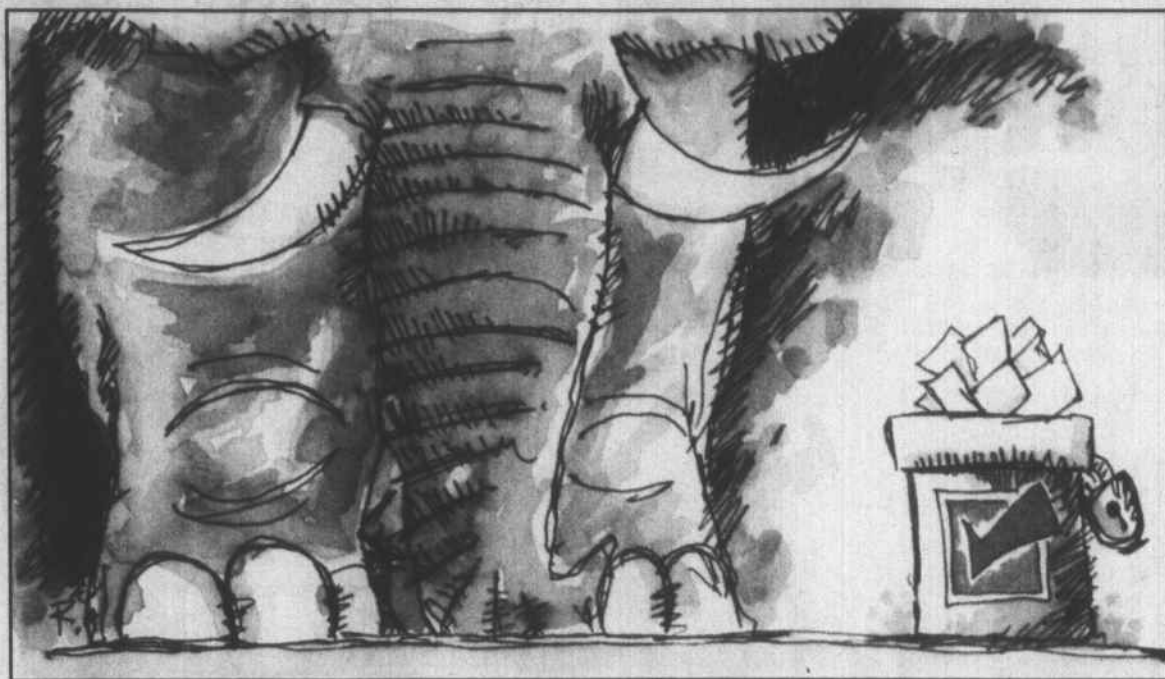
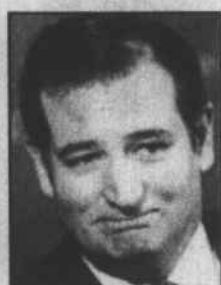


Illustration by Ron Rogers for the Chronicle



Bush



Cruz



Paul



Rubio



Walker

requiring voters to show photo identification at the polls." [Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel, 5/25/11]

Politifact: Wisconsin's voter ID law was one of the nation's strictest. "Gov. Scott Walker has signed a photo ID requirement for Wisconsin elections starting in 2012. ... Even in its new form, Wisconsin's law is one of the most restrictive, based on our research on acceptable IDs and voting procedures for those without IDs." [Politifact Wisconsin, 6/12/11]

Ted Cruz touted his defense of voter ID laws. "Voter fraud is a serious problem threatening the integrity of our democratic

process. Ted Cruz has successfully defended laws requiring voters to show identification and other voter fraud prevention laws that are vital to preserve the integrity of our elections." [Ted Cruz for Senate, accessed 8/13/12]

Ted Cruz said he would file an amendment that would allow states to require proof of citizenship to register to vote. "In an effort to counteract a Supreme Court decision Monday, Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) said he intends to file an amendment to immigration reform legislation that allows states to require proof of citizenship to register to vote. He billed his amendment as a response to the 7-2 decision in

Arizona v. Inter Tribal Council, which struck down an Arizona law that required people to prove their citizenship in order to register to vote. The Court held that the state law was in violation of federal law." [Talking Points Memo, 6/17/13]

Rand Paul dismissed the need for the voting rights act, saying we're "beyond that now" adding: "we have an African-American president." "The Supreme Court on Tuesday struck down a key part of the Voting Rights Act — the map that determines which states and localities must get federal permission before they change their voting laws. 'I haven't seen the decision

yet so I can't give you a thorough answer other than to say it was a time in our country when the color of your skin did need to factor into voting, but we've really gotten beyond that now," Paul observes. "We have an African-American president. African-Americans are voting at a higher percentage in the last election than whites. There doesn't seem to be any sort of systemic problem like there was in the South with precluding blacks from voting. So we're at a point in time in our history where the color of your skin should not be taken into account with voting." [Newsmax, 6/25/13]

A vision for Ferguson, Baltimore, L.A. and Everywhere



Gloria Walton

Guest Columnist

This month, the nation will acknowledge two political milestones. On Aug. 9, we marked the one-year anniversary of the unrest in Ferguson, Missouri. Two days later, we marked the 50th anniversary of the uprising in Watts. A third civil disturbance, located in time between these two, offers lessons learned from the failures of 1965.

It provides a blueprint for how we might begin to rebuild Ferguson and the many American communities that look like Ferguson. That third milestone is the 1992 unrest in South Los Angeles.

In April 1992, L.A. erupted, sparked by the acquittal of police accused of beating an unarmed Black man named Rodney King. The violence that followed cast a national spotlight on South Los Angeles and other impoverished L.A. neighborhoods in which liquor stores substituted for supermarkets and check-cashing joints served as surrogate banks.

In the aftermath of the unrest, it became clear that

government and private-sector responses would be woefully inadequate to the need. Grassroots community leaders working in L.A.'s lowest income communities had little option but to do for themselves. That's when the organization I now lead, Strategic Concepts for Organizing & Policy Education (SCOPE), was founded.

For more than 20 years, L.A. community organizations like ours banded together with residents to elevate the voices of people of color and strengthen their power. We have forged strong alliances with labor and grassroots groups that advocate for people of color. We engage sophisticated "inside/outside strategies."

We understand that elected officials have powerful forces pushing them and often settle for what's possible instead of what's needed. Independent community power helps keep elected representatives accountable to the needs and interests of neighborhoods and residents.

As a result, community organizations in L.A. today are a force to be reckoned with. That's why L.A. recently became the largest city in the country to raise the minimum wage and L.A. County, with 10 million residents, following suit. The raise in the mini-

1,000 RIOT IN L.A. Police and Motorists Attacked



DAY OF PROTESTS

HUNDREDS GATHER TO MOURN UNARMED TEEN WHO WAS KILLED BY POLICE.

NIGHT OF FRENZY

AS THE HOURS WEAR ON, SOME IN FERGUSON TURN TO LOOTING, VIOLENCE.



LA Times, St. Louis Post Dispatch

mum wage is one of many victories that could not have been won without the strength and power of grassroots community organizations, our partners in organized labor and the support of our allies.

In the last 20 years, SCOPE has emerged as a local laboratory for L.A. From day one, we were pushing the envelope. Experimenting. How do we build community power and influence? How do we elevate equity in all policies?

We believe if you start by building a program for people with the most bur-

dens, facing the greatest barriers, who come from the poorest communities, if you start there and build a program for those communities to succeed, then you have a program that will benefit everyone.

SCOPE's 20-year-old jobs model does that. Our model couples entry-level jobs with job-training and apprenticeships to create real career pathways into good-paying union jobs in entertainment, health care and the green economy. These programs go the extra mile by providing paid on-the-job training, mentoring by experienced senior workers and tutoring

to help pass certification exams and tests.

SCOPE pioneered a neighborhood-based precinct model to engage voters and turn out the vote. We have neighbors talk to neighbors on the phones and at their doors, because we know that's the most effective way to mobilize voters. We also invested in predictive dialing, an automated dialing program that allows us to reach an exponentially greater number of new and occasional voters. We do sustained engagement over time, during and between electoral cycles, because that's what it takes to turn "new and occasional voters" to an "always voter." Engage. Educate. Turn them out.

We call it "integrated voter engagement." With it, SCOPE and our allies have won two recent, tide-turning initiatives. Proposition 30 generated \$9 billion for education and social services. Proposition 47 reclassified certain nonviolent felonies to misdemeanors, reversing decades of investment in prisons and redirecting resources to treatment and support.

There is still more work to be done. The South L.A. neighborhood where SCOPE is located has a high percentage of working families struggling to make ends meet and high rates of

violence. L.A.'s economy is obscenely out of balance with per capita income in Bel Air topping \$128,000 while comparable South L.A. income is just \$13,243.

But we have made progress and we will continue. South L.A. didn't always look like the neighborhood that's become infamous in news stories and movies. Sixty years ago, South L.A. was a vibrant middle-class neighborhood.

Many African-Americans bought their first homes here. L.A. was a major industrial center for the country. South L.A. was the heart of that industry. Men and women had jobs that supported families. Children graduated high school and many of them went on to college. That is SCOPE's vision for the new Los Angeles.

It is the vision that our grassroots community counterparts in Ferguson, Baltimore and numerous other American cities hold for the future.

Walton is president and CEO of Los Angeles-based Strategic Concepts in Organizing & Policy Education (SCOPE), which works on social and economic justice issues. This op-ed first appeared in Equal Voice News.