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### Attorneys Should Turn Attention to State Legislative Races

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By [Jerry H. Goldfeder](#)

It is very heartening that so many attorneys volunteered their time on Election Day to assist voters to navigate the obstacle-laden procedures increasingly imposed by many states. (“Firms Step Up Election Volunteering as Voter Suppression Fears Rise,” N.Y.L.J., Nov. 6.) Since the 2000 presidential election fiasco, I have had the privilege of training literally thousands of attorneys in New York and other states on “election protection” efforts. So I am keenly aware of the importance of watchful eyes during elections.

As critical as these efforts are, however, it would be more efficacious for attorneys to channel expertise and enthusiasm into state legislative elections throughout the country. The states regulate our elections, including those for president and Congress, and their legislatures impose the very restrictive procedures that we seek to address on Election Day. Thus, in addition to providing after-the-fact palliative care, attorneys should also train their efforts on thwarting

voter suppression by helping to elect voter-friendly state legislatures, secretaries of state and governors. After all, it is the outcome of state races that determine how easy or difficult it is for Americans to vote.

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