

## Denial of Voter-Registration Efforts

*Goodwin v. Meyer*

*(William F. Downes, D. Wyo. 1:04-cv-256)*

A federal complaint challenged state proscriptions on voter-registration drives. The district judge determined that the plaintiffs had failed to show irreparable injury because voter-registration forms were available on the internet.

*Subject:* Registration procedures. *Topic:* Registration procedures.

Three citizens of Wyoming and 40 Doe plaintiffs filed a federal complaint in Wyoming's Casper courthouse on September 23, 2004, against Wyoming's secretary of state, three county clerks, and 20 unknown government officials, challenging Wyoming's proscriptions on voter-registration drives.<sup>1</sup> Each of the named plaintiffs apparently was refused a voter-registration form in one of the named counties.<sup>2</sup> Five days later, the plaintiffs filed a motion for a preliminary injunction and expedited hearing.<sup>3</sup> The court set a hearing for three days after that.<sup>4</sup>

Attorneys for the plaintiffs and the secretary appeared at the hearing in person, and attorneys for the counties appeared by telephone.<sup>5</sup> Three days later, Judge William F. Downes denied the injunction by telephone.<sup>6</sup> Ten days after that, Judge Downes issued a written ruling, concluding that the plaintiffs failed to show irreparable injury because voter-registration forms were available on the internet.<sup>7</sup> On November 12, Judge Downes granted the plaintiffs a voluntary dismissal.<sup>8</sup>

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1. Complaint, *Goodwin v. Meyer*, No. 1:04-cv-256 (D. Wyo. Sept. 23, 2004), D.E. 1.

2. *Id.* at 3–4.

3. Motion, *id.* (Sept. 28, 2004), D.E. 3.

4. Notice, *id.* (Sept. 30, 2004), D.E. 6.

5. Minutes, *id.* (Oct. 1, 2004), D.E. 18.

6. Minutes, *id.* (Oct. 4, 2004), D.E. 19; see Ilene Olson, *Tort Reform in Wyoming Attracts Out-of-Town Attorney*, *Wyo. Trib.-Eagle*, Oct. 5, 2004.

Judge Downes retired on July 24, 2011. Federal Judicial Center Biographical Directory of Article III Federal Judges, [www.fjc.gov/history/judges](http://www.fjc.gov/history/judges).

7. Order, *Goodwin*, No. 1:04-cv-256 (D. Wyo. Oct. 14, 2004), D.E. 24.

8. Order, *id.* (Nov. 15, 2004), D.E. 31.