

RELEASE: SCOTUS affirms children and other non-voters have a voice in *Evenwel* decision

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 4, 2016

Contact: Kristen Muthig
(o) 202-331-0114
(c) 419-706-3431
kmuthig@fairelectionsnetwork.com

Supreme Court affirms children and other non-voters have a voice in *Evenwel* decision

Washington, DC – This morning the U.S. Supreme Court decision in [Evenwel v. Abbott](#) ruled in favor of democracy by affirming that states may use total population when drawing legislative districts. The decision states, “By ensuring that each representative is subject to requests and suggestions from the same number of constituents, total-population apportionment promotes equitable and effective representation.”

Fair Elections Legal Network, in conjunction with the Children’s Defense Fund and the Union for Reform Judaism & Central Conference of American Rabbis, [filed an amicus brief in support of the appellees in the case of *Evenwel v. Abbott*](#) in 2015. Attorneys from the Fair Elections Legal Network and the law firm Sidley Austin LLP participated as legal counsel. The brief focused on the importance of including children in the population base for redistricting purposes. Including minors in apportionment plans is critical from a representational standpoint and essential to determining resource allocation for services for children. The need for children to be considered when drawing legislative lines was noted several times in the decision.

“The unanimous decision from the Supreme Court is a victory for voters and the future of redistricting across the country,” said Robert Brandon, President of the Fair Elections Legal Network. “Even though they may not be able to participate in elections, children, non-citizens and other non-voters have a stake in the decisions elected representatives make and must be considered when legislative districts are created. Our legislators must represent all residents in their districts and this decision will help ensure that will be the case.”

“We are gratified that the Supreme Court has reaffirmed that children and other non-voters do indeed count and should be counted in the way we design our legislative districts. In Texas, a state that consistently ranks near the bottom in measures of child well-being, children’s concerns need more – not less – weight in state policy and budgeting decisions,” said Patrick Bresette, Executive Director for the Children’s Defense Fund – Texas.

###