

08-322 NORTHWEST AUSTIN MUN. UTIL. V. HOLDER

DECISION BELOW: 573 F. Supp. 2d 221

LOWER COURT CASE NUMBER: 06-1384

QUESTION PRESENTED:

1. Whether §4(a) of the Voting Rights Act, which permits "political subdivisions" of a State covered by §5's requirement that certain jurisdictions preclear changes affecting voting with the federal government to bail out of §5 coverage if they can establish a ten-year history of compliance with the VRA, must be available to any political subunit of a covered State when the Court's precedent requires "political subdivision" to be given its ordinary meaning throughout most of the VRA and no statutory text abrogates that interpretation with respect to §4(a).

2. Whether, under the Court's consistent jurisprudence requiring that remedial legislation be congruent and proportional to substantive constitutional guarantees, the 2006 enactment of the §5 preclearance requirement can be applied as a valid exercise of Congress's remedial powers under the Reconstruction Amendments when that enactment was founded on a congressional record demonstrating no evidence of a persisting pattern of attempts to evade court enforcement of voting-rights guarantees in jurisdictions covered only on the basis of data 35 or more years old, or even when considered under a purportedly less stringent rational-basis standard

EXPEDITED BRIEFING SCHEDULE.

CERT. GRANTED 1/9/2009