

subsection (b) of this section or in any political subdivision with respect to which such determinations have been made as a separate unit, unless the United States District Court for the District of Columbia in an action for a declaratory judgment brought by such State or subdivision against the United States has determined that no such test or device has been used during the ten years preceding the filing of the action for the purpose or with the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color, or in contravention of the guarantees set forth in subsection (f)(2) of this section: *Provided*, That no such declaratory judgment shall issue with respect to any plaintiff for a period of ten years after the entry of a final judgment of any court of the United States, other than the denial of a declaratory judgment under this section, whether entered prior to or after the enactment of this paragraph, determining that denials or abridgments of the right to vote on account of race or color, or in contravention of the guarantees set forth in subsection (f)(2) of this section through the use of tests or devices have occurred anywhere in the territory of such plaintiff.

“An action pursuant to this subsection shall be heard and determined by a court of three judges in accordance with the provisions of section 2284 of title 28 and any appeal shall lie to the Supreme Court. The court shall retain jurisdiction of any action pursuant to this subsection for five years after judgment and shall reopen the action upon motion of the Attorney General alleging that a test or device has been used for the purpose or with the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color, or in contravention of the guarantees set forth in subsection (f)(2) of this section.

“If the Attorney General determines that he has no reason to believe that any such test or device has been used during the seventeen years preceding the filing of an action under the first sentence of this subsection for the purpose or with the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color, he shall consent to the entry of such judgment.

“If the Attorney General determines that he has no reason to believe that any such test or device has been used during the ten years preceding the filing of an action under the second sentence of this subsection for the purpose or with the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color, or in contravention of the guarantees set forth in subsection (f)(2) of this section, he shall consent to the entry of such judgment.”

Subsec. (f)(4). Pub. L. 97-205, §2(c), inserted “or in the case of Alaskan Natives and American Indians, if the predominate language is historically unwritten”.

1975—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 94-73, §§101, 201, 206, in first par., substituted “seventeen years” for “ten years” in two places, and “determinations have been made under the first two sentences of subsection (b)” for “determinations have been made under subsection (b)”, inserted provisions that no citizen shall be denied the right to vote in any Federal, State, or local election because of his failure to comply with any test or device in any state with respect to which the determinations have been made under the third sentence of subsection (b) of this section or in any political subdivision with respect to which such determinations have been made as a separate unit, unless the United States District Court for the District of Columbia in an action for a declaratory judgment brought by such state or subdivision against the United States has determined that no such test or device has been used during the ten years preceding the filing of the action for the purpose or with the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color, or in contravention of the guarantees set forth in subsection (f)(2) of this section with the proviso that no such declaratory judgment shall issue with respect to any plaintiff for a period of ten years after the entry of final judgment of any court of the United States, other than the denial of a declaratory judgment under this section, whether entered

prior to or after the enactment of this paragraph, determining that denials or abridgments of the right to vote on account of race or color, or in contravention of the guarantees set forth in subsection (f)(2) of this section through the use of tests or devices have occurred anywhere in the territory of such plaintiff, in second par., substituted “on account of race or color, or in contravention of the guarantees set forth in subsection (f)(2) of this section” for “on account of race or color”, in third par., substituted “seventeen years preceding the filing of an action under the first sentence of this subsection” for “ten years preceding the filing of the action”, and added fourth par.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 94-73, §202, inserted provisions that on and after August 6, 1975, in addition to any State or political subdivision of a State determined to be subject to subsection (a) pursuant to the previous two sentences, the provisions of subsection (a) shall apply in any State or any political subdivision of a State which the Attorney General determines maintained on November 1, 1972, any test or device, and with respect to which the Director of the Census determines that less than 50 per centum of the citizens of voting age were registered on November 1, 1972, or that less than 50 per centum of such persons voted in the Presidential election of November, 1972.

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 94-73, §206, substituted “on account of race or color or in contravention of the guarantees set forth in section 1973b(f)(2) of this title” for “on account of race or color”.

Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 94-73, §203, added subsec. (f). 1970—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 91-285, §3, substituted “ten” for “five” years in first and third pars.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 91-285, §4, inserted provision respecting the making of factual determinations concerning maintenance of any test or device on Nov. 1, 1968, registration of less than 50 per centum of persons of voting age on Nov. 1, 1968, and voting by less than 50 per centum of such persons in the presidential election of November 1968.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1982 AMENDMENT

Amendment by section 2(a), (c) of Pub. L. 97-205 effective June 29, 1982, see section 6 of Pub. L. 97-205, set out as a note under section 1973 of this title.

Section 2(b) of Pub. L. 97-205 provided that the amendment made by that section is effective on and after Aug. 5, 1984.

§ 1973c. Alteration of voting qualifications; procedure and appeal; purpose or effect of diminishing the ability of citizens to elect their preferred candidates

(a) Whenever a State or political subdivision with respect to which the prohibitions set forth in section 1973b(a) of this title based upon determinations made under the first sentence of section 1973b(b) of this title are in effect shall enact or seek to administer any voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting different from that in force or effect on November 1, 1964, or whenever a State or political subdivision with respect to which the prohibitions set forth in section 1973b(a) of this title based upon determinations made under the second sentence of section 1973b(b) of this title are in effect shall enact or seek to administer any voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting different from that in force or effect on November 1, 1968, or whenever a State or political subdivision with respect to which the prohibitions set forth in section 1973b(a) of this title based upon determinations made under the third sentence of section 1973b(b) of this title are in effect shall

enact or seek to administer any voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting different from that in force or effect on November 1, 1972, such State or subdivision may institute an action in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia for a declaratory judgment that such qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure neither has the purpose nor will have the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color, or in contravention of the guarantees set forth in section 1973b(f)(2) of this title, and unless and until the court enters such judgment no person shall be denied the right to vote for failure to comply with such qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure: *Provided*, That such qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure may be enforced without such proceeding if the qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure has been submitted by the chief legal officer or other appropriate official of such State or subdivision to the Attorney General and the Attorney General has not interposed an objection within sixty days after such submission, or upon good cause shown, to facilitate an expedited approval within sixty days after such submission, the Attorney General has affirmatively indicated that such objection will not be made. Neither an affirmative indication by the Attorney General that no objection will be made, nor the Attorney General's failure to object, nor a declaratory judgment entered under this section shall bar a subsequent action to enjoin enforcement of such qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure. In the event the Attorney General affirmatively indicates that no objection will be made within the sixty-day period following receipt of a submission, the Attorney General may reserve the right to reexamine the submission if additional information comes to his attention during the remainder of the sixty-day period which would otherwise require objection in accordance with this section. Any action under this section shall be heard and determined by a court of three judges in accordance with the provisions of section 2284 of title 28 and any appeal shall lie to the Supreme Court.

(b) Any voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting that has the purpose of or will have the effect of diminishing the ability of any citizens of the United States on account of race or color, or in contravention of the guarantees set forth in section 1973b(f)(2) of this title, to elect their preferred candidates of choice denies or abridges the right to vote within the meaning of subsection (a) of this section.

(c) The term "purpose" in subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall include any discriminatory purpose.

(d) The purpose of subsection (b) of this section is to protect the ability of such citizens to elect their preferred candidates of choice.

(Pub. L. 89-110, title I, § 5, Aug. 6, 1965, 79 Stat. 439; renumbered title I and amended Pub. L. 91-285, §§ 2, 5, June 22, 1970, 84 Stat. 314, 315; Pub. L. 94-73, title II, §§ 204, 206, title IV, § 405, Aug. 6,

1975, 89 Stat. 402, 404; Pub. L. 109-246, § 5, July 27, 2006, 120 Stat. 580.)

AMENDMENTS

2006—Pub. L. 109-246 designated existing provisions as subsec. (a), substituted "neither has the purpose nor will have the effect" for "does not have the purpose and will not have the effect", and added subsecs. (b) to (d).

1975—Pub. L. 94-73 inserted "or whenever a State or political subdivision with respect to which the prohibitions set forth in section 1973b(a) of this title based upon determinations made under third sentence of section 1973b(b) of this title are in effect shall enact or seek to administer any voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting different from that in force or effect on November 1, 1972," after 1968, substituted "or upon good cause shown, to facilitate an expedited approval within sixty days after such submission, the Attorney General has affirmatively indicated that such objection will not be made. Neither an affirmative indication by the Attorney General that no objection will be made, nor the Attorney General's failure to object," for "except that neither the Attorney General's failure to object", and "on account of race or color, or in contravention of the guarantees set forth in section 1973b(f)(2) of this title" for "on account of race or color", and inserted provisions that in the event the Attorney General affirmatively indicates that no objection will be made within the sixty-day period following receipt of a submission, the Attorney General may reserve the right to examine the submission if additional information comes to his attention during the remainder of the sixty-day period which would otherwise require objection in accordance with this section.

1970—Pub. L. 91-285 inserted "based upon determinations made under the first sentence of section 1973b(b) of this title" after "section 1973b(a) of this title" and "or whenever a State or political subdivision with respect to which the prohibitions set forth in section 1973b(a) of this title based upon determinations made under the second sentence of section 1973b(b) of this title are in effect shall enact or seek to administer any voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting different from that in force or effect on November 1, 1968," after "1964,".

§§ 1973d, 1973e. Repealed. Pub. L. 109-246, § 3(c), July 27, 2006, 120 Stat. 580

Section 1973d, Pub. L. 89-110, title I, § 6, Aug. 6, 1965, 79 Stat. 439; renumbered title I, Pub. L. 91-285, § 2, June 22, 1970, 84 Stat. 314; amended Pub. L. 94-73, title II, §§ 205, 206, Aug. 6, 1975, 89 Stat. 402; 1978 Reorg. Plan No. 2, § 102, eff. Jan. 1, 1979, 43 F.R. 36037, 92 Stat. 3783; Pub. L. 103-94, § 5, Oct. 6, 1993, 107 Stat. 1005, related to appointment of Federal voting examiners.

Section 1973e, Pub. L. 89-110, title I, § 7, Aug. 6, 1965, 79 Stat. 440; renumbered title I, Pub. L. 91-285, § 2, June 22, 1970, 84 Stat. 314; amended 1978 Reorg. Plan No. 2, § 102, eff. Jan. 1, 1979, 43 F.R. 36037, 92 Stat. 3783, related to examination of applicants for registration.

§ 1973f. Use of observers

(a) Assignment

Whenever—

(1) a court has authorized the appointment of observers under section 1973a(a) of this title for a political subdivision; or

(2) the Attorney General certifies with respect to any political subdivision named in, or included within the scope of, determinations made under section 1973b(b) of this title, unless a declaratory judgment has been rendered under section 1973b(a) of this title, that—

(A) the Attorney General has received written meritorious complaints from resi-