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ACRU Election Integrity Bulletin

FEDERAL

Dems Announce Massive Ad Campaign to Fight Voter Laws

A Democratic voter rights group, Let America Vote, has announced a three-state offensive. The group said in a string of fundraising emails that it planned to launch its first ad campaign but could only afford to target one, and used a poll to determine which state users wanted to target first.

<http://dailycaller.com/2017/04/02/dems-announce-massive-ad-campaign-to-fight-voter-laws/>

State and Local Officials Wary Of Federal Government's Election Security Efforts

The federal government's focus has state and local election officials, who are very protective of how they do things now, extremely nervous. They're mainly concerned that the federal government will tell them how to run their elections — even down to where polling sites should be located — in the name of security. Denise Merrill, Connecticut's secretary of state and president of the National Association of Secretaries of State, said this could jeopardize the best protection the nation already has against outside manipulation of elections. "Because our system is highly decentralized there's no way to disrupt the voting process in any large-scale meaningful way through cyber-attacks because there's no national system to attack," she said last Tuesday at a hearing before the U.S. Election Assistance Commission on the impact of the critical infrastructure designation.

Merrill noted that while two states — Arizona and Illinois — had their voter registration systems infiltrated last year by Russian hackers, no records were deleted or changed. And she said no actual votes were affected, despite signs that Russia had scanned election systems in at least 20 states. "The voting process itself was not hacked, manipulated or rigged in any way," said Merrill.

<http://wknofm.org/post/state-and-local-officials-wary-federal-governments-election-security-efforts>

Questions Continue to Swirl around DHS involvement with Election Security

At an April 4 Election Assistance Commission public hearing, a senior Department of Homeland Security official sought to stress one thing: The designation of election systems as critical infrastructure doesn't cut into states' autonomy. Concerns over DHS control have simmered since then-Secretary Jeh Johnson first suggested the critical infrastructure designation last summer. Yet, Neil Jenkins, DHS' director of the Enterprise Performance Management Office, said at the EAC hearing that his agency sees the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) Election Cybersecurity Task Force as the main point of contact for deciding when DHS system-scanning tools are needed. Jenkins also said he sees the EAC as a critical point of contact for local officials who may be interested in utilizing DHS scanning and security products.

<https://gcn.com/articles/2017/04/04/election-systems-security.aspx>

DHS Looks to Reboot Relationship with Election Officials

The Homeland Security Department plans to meet with a task force of state election officials in the next few months in an effort to iron out disagreements over DHS' designation of election systems as critical infrastructure, a department official said. That designation, made weeks after the 2016 presidential election was roiled by Russian-government backed data breaches, sparked an angry backlash from state election leaders who considered it a federal power grab. The National Association of Secretaries of State passed a resolution condemning the move in February. The association also, however, formed a task force of 27 secretaries of state—the state official responsible for managing state and local elections—focused on election cybersecurity and sharing information about cyber threats.

<http://www.defenseone.com/technology/2017/03/dhs-looks-reboot-relationship-election-officials/136593/>

Election Assistance Commission Hearing on DHS Designation of Elections as Critical Infrastructure

Video of hearing:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZbDX2fZqMo>

STATES

Ballot Selfies Allowed as U.S. Supreme Court Rebuffs New Hampshire

Voters in New Hampshire are free to take selfies with their election ballots and post the photos online after the U.S. Supreme Court refused to revive a state ban on the practice. The justices, without comment, left intact a federal appeals court ruling that struck down the ban on free-speech grounds in September. The 2014 law subjected violators to fines of up to \$1,000. New Hampshire officials argued that the measure was a legitimate effort to prevent vote-buying in the digital

age. The appeals court rejected that contention, saying the law was far broader than necessary to address that concern.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/politics/articles/2017-04-03/ballot-selfies-allowed-as-u-s-high-court-rebuffs-new-hampshire>

North Carolina Elections Temp Worker Charged with Fraud over Registrations

A former temporary elections worker has been charged with fraud after allegations that she tried to change North Carolina voter registrations of about 250 convicted felons so they could cast ballots in last year's election. Documents show 41-year-old Joy Yvette Wilkerson of Henderson was charged with three counts — two of them felonies. Wilkerson was released on bond and faces an April 17 court appearance.

<http://www.newsobserver.com/news/state/north-carolina/article142968414.html>

REDISTRICTING

Maryland to Pennsylvania (and four other states): We'll Redistrict When You Do

After voting down Republican Governor Larry Hogan's proposal to redraw congressional districts, Maryland Democrats have offered a plan of their own: a six-state regional pact. If Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Virginia and North Carolina agree to create independent commissions to redraw congressional districts more fairly by 2020, Maryland will too. The idea is that these six state would even each other out — some would go redder while others would go more blue.

<http://www.newsworks.org/index.php/local/item/102723-maryland-to-pennsylvania-and-four-other-states-well-redistrict-when-you-do?!=mt>

Virginia Judge Upholds Lines of 11 Assembly Districts

A judge has upheld 11 Virginia House and Senate districts that challengers argued violated the state's constitution. Richmond Circuit Court Judge W. Reilly Marchant ruled against redistricting advocacy group One Virginia 2021 on March 31. The group had argued that lawmakers during the 2011 redistricting process violated the requirement that election districts must be compact. It claimed the lines were drawn to protect incumbents and help political parties. Marchant said the constitutional validity of the map is "fairly debatable." In that case, he said lawmakers' action must be upheld.

<http://valawyersweekly.com/2017/03/31/judge-upholds-11-assembly-districts/>

VOTER ID

Texas Voter ID Case Delayed Until After Legislative Session

A federal judge mulling whether Texas passed its voter ID law with the intent to discriminate has agreed to delay the case until after the state's legislative session ends.

<https://lasvegassun.com/news/2017/apr/03/texas-voter-id-case-delayed-until-after-legislativ/#.WOQZ4MdmZrM.twitter>

Iowa Paper: Election Bill Will Strengthen Voting System

"As an additional layer of protection for the integrity of elections in this state, we long have supported a requirement that voters show some form of identification before casting a ballot. We are not alone on this within or outside Iowa," says an editorial in the Sioux City Journal.

"A February Des Moines Register/Mediacom Iowa Poll showed 69 percent of Iowans support such a requirement. Voter ID requirements vary from state to

state, but 34 states have passed laws requiring voters to produce a form of identification at the polls, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures."

http://siouxcityjournal.com/news/opinion/editorial/our-opinion-election-bill-will-strengthen-system-of-voting-in/article_d8429259-cf37-5b5e-a38b-0120a2260a27.html