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ACRU Election Integrity Bulletin

LEAD STORY

***The Hill*: Holder Redistricting Effort Aims to Break GOP Statehouse Control**

Former Attorney General Eric Holder is ramping up his efforts to reshape Republican-drawn congressional district maps. Holder's plan focuses on "trifectas"—states where Republicans control both the governor's mansion and both legislative chambers, giving them total control over the redistricting process. Holder's vehicle for his vision is the National Democratic Redistricting Committee (NDRC), which he's been setting up since Trump took office. The group has raised more than \$16 million, and aims to collect \$30 million before the 2018 midterms. Republicans currently hold 26 state "trifectas." Holder and the NDRC want to give Democrats at least partial control of those statehouses, while building up Democratic redistricting power through related reforms, advocacy and litigation.

<http://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/372853-holder-redistricting-effort-aims-to-break-gop-statehouse-control>

FEDERAL

***Christian Science Monitor*: In Democrats' Strategic Strike Against Gerrymandering, Holder Leads the Charge**

Democrats are laying plans for a political reset—and, they hope, a more level playing field—with an impact that would reach all the way to 2031. Leading the

charge is a perhaps-unlikely figure: Eric Holder, attorney general under former President Barack Obama. With Mr. Obama's help, he's tackling the seemingly dry issue of redistricting, the drawing of boundaries for state and federal legislative districts. In fact, it's a hot topic, with the 2020 Census coming soon, followed by redistricting in 2021, and three cases at the Supreme Court. Only four states—Arizona, California, Idaho, and Washington—use an independent commission to draw congressional districts. In 37 states, the state legislature draws the boundaries, and in most, the governor must approve the map.

https://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Politics/monitor_breakfast/2018/0207/In-Democrats-strategic-strike-against-gerrymandering-Holder-leads-the-charge

STATES

Arkansas: Lawsuit Filed Over Arkansas' Revamped Voter ID Law

An Arkansas resident asked a judge Wednesday to strike down a new state law requiring voters show photo identification before casting a ballot, arguing the measure causes the same problems as a nearly identical state voter ID law struck down four years ago. Republican Gov. Asa Hutchinson said in a statement he hadn't seen the lawsuit, but continued to support the voter ID measure, which he signed into law. The new law was one of two efforts approved by the Legislature last year to revive the voter ID requirement. Lawmakers also voted to put a proposed constitutional amendment imposing the requirement on the November ballot.

<http://wreg.com/2018/02/08/lawsuit-filed-over-arkansas-revamped-voter-id-law/>

Idaho: Dem Lawmaker Says Idaho Should Leave Program That Searches for Signs of Voter Fraud

A Democratic lawmaker says he has nothing against Idaho comparing its voter roll with others across the country to identify people who are registered in, and possibly voting in, multiple states. What he does have a problem with is using an insecure computer system that could be hacked, and one that misidentifies duplicate voters, causing them to be erroneously kicked off the rolls. House Minority Leader Mat Erpelding, D-Boise, proposed legislation Friday to end Idaho's participation in the Interstate Voter Registration Crosscheck Program run by the Kansas Secretary of State's Office.

<http://www.idahostatesman.com/news/politics-government/state-politics/article199378604.html>

Illinois: Early Voting Delayed by Hiccup in Whose Names Will Go on the Ballot

A hang-up in the race for Illinois attorney general along with another case filed to the state elections board have thrown a wrench into early voting activities in St. Clair County. Early voting was set to begin in the county on Thursday, but officials are delaying the vote until judges make decisions in the two cases.

<http://www.bnd.com/news/local/article198970069.html>

Iowa: Eastern Iowans Experience First Elections with Voter ID Changes

Hundreds of voters took to the polls in Lisbon where they were asked to show their ID. Linn County Auditor Joel Miller said only a few did not have identification. "Based on this election, it seems that everyone has got the word that they need to bring their ID," Miller said. "We had a satellite about a week ago, and 250 people voted early, and there was only two people that didn't bring their driver's license." If a voter does not have their ID they will be asked to sign an oath of identification. Miller said it certifies that the voter has an ID and will bring it the next time they

visit the polls. He said it's not slowing things down at the polls.

<http://www.kcrg.com/content/news/Eastern-Iowans-experience-first-elections-with-voter-ID-changes-473015173.html>

Nebraska: Senator Chambers Threatens Filibuster Over Voter ID Bill

The legislative session quickly turned into a war of words. Sen. Ernie Chambers took aim at a voter identification bill, a move that he said would hurt people who look like him and keep them away from polling places. "You think I forgot where I came from," Chambers asked on the floor. "Give me an opportunity to get my revenge, to take my pound of flesh." State Sen. John Murante responded outside the unicameral. He said Nebraskans want voter ID. "They understand it's a common-sense proposal. The time for filibustering has come to an end, let's put this issue on the ballot and let the people vote on it," he said.

<http://www.ketv.com/article/senator-chambers-threatens-filibuster-over-voter-id-bill/16768390>

Texas: Another Arrest Made in Starr County Voter Fraud Case

A third person has been arrested in Starr County's ongoing investigation into voter fraud. Belinda Garcia, 45, turned herself in to the Starr County Special Crimes Unit, confirmed District Attorney Omar Escobar. Garcia was charged with one count of election fraud and one count of fraudulent application for ballot by mail. Escobar said this was another case of an application for a mail-in ballot indicating the voter is disabled. However in Garcia's case, the district attorney said more than one voter was identified so more charges could be forthcoming.

www.brownsvilleherald.com/news/local/another-arrest-made-in-starr-county-voter-fraud-case/article_2a610fca-0c81-11e8-bc91-2719993ff519.html

(more)

Wisconsin: Wisconsin Dems: Obtaining Voter ID Is “Free and Easy”

The Democratic Party of Wisconsin on Monday admitted it is “free and easy” for Wisconsin voters to obtain a photo ID despite arguing in the past that voter ID laws suppress minority voters and disenfranchise “so many people.”

www.freebeacon.com/politics/wisconsin-dems-obtaining-voter-id-free-easy/

REDISTRICTING

North Carolina: Partial Stay for Republican Legislators in North Carolina Redistricting Case

Republican legislators scored a partial victory on redistricting last night as the Supreme Court agreed to block part of a decision by a three-judge federal court invalidating the state’s legislative maps. The lower court had ruled that several state legislative districts were the product of racial gerrymandering, while others violated state law, but yesterday the justices put part of that ruling on hold while the legislators appeal the merits of the lower court’s decision.

<http://www.scotusblog.com/2018/02/partial-stay-republican-legislators-north-carolina-redistricting-case/>

Ohio: Ohio Lawmakers Approve Redistricting Reform Proposal for Voters

Ohio lawmakers approved redistricting reform on Tuesday aimed at curbing gerrymandering by changing how electoral district boundaries are drawn to ensure they do not favor one political party over another. At least four states including Ohio, Michigan, Missouri and South Dakota are expected to put redistricting initiatives on ballots this year to curtail partisan gerrymandering, the manipulation of the composition of legislative districts to amplify the voting power of one party at the expense of another.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ohio-redistricting/ohio-lawmakers-approve-redistricting-reform-proposal-for-voters-idUSKBN1FR00N>

Texas: New Effort Launched by National Democrats to Impact Legislative Elections in Texas, 10 Other States

Former President Barack Obama and members of his administration are ready to take another shot at chipping away at Republican domination in Texas. A new group headed by former Attorney General Eric Holder and with the public backing of Obama himself is targeting Texas among 11 states in which they are determined to change the redistricting process to assure more competitive state House and Senate races in the future.

<https://www.chron.com/news/houston-texas/houston/article/Can-Obama-s-influence-help-change-Texas-12582766.php>