



October 16, 2017

# ACRU Election Integrity Bulletin

## LEAD STORY

### After Noncitizen Voting Scandal, Top Pennsylvania Election Official Suddenly Resigns

Pedro Cortes, Pennsylvania's secretary of state, abruptly resigned three weeks after his agency came under criticism for a glitch that may have allowed thousands of ineligible immigrants statewide to vote. His departure comes a week after State Rep. Daryl Metcalfe, chairman of the House State Government Committee, and 15 of his colleagues sent Cortes a letter "to express our dire concerns" about the disclosure three weeks ago that legal resident noncitizens in Pennsylvania had been offered the chance to register to vote while applying for or renewing drivers' licenses at PennDot service centers. Metcalfe, a Butler County Republican who has been preparing to hold a hearing on the issue before the Nov. 7 general election, said he received a phone call from the governor's office Wednesday to inform him Cortes was stepping down. He said he and his colleagues are still waiting on an answer to their questions in last week's letter. "I'm not sure why [Cortes resigned] or what's going on, but we're hopeful to get answers to very important questions," Metcalfe said. "We were hoping to hold [the hearing] to get answers to questions that are important to Pennsylvania voters about how these foreign nationals have gotten onto the voter rolls."

<http://www.philly.com/philly/news/politics/pedro-cortes-resigns-pennsylvania-secretary-of-state-voters-20171011.html>

## FEDERAL

### DHS and Top Election Officials Meet on 'Critical Infrastructure' Designation

Top election officials from around the country met this weekend to create the formal organization to hash out what powers and lines of communications the Department of Homeland Security should have after the department designated voting systems in the states and territories as "critical infrastructure" earlier this year. By voting to adopt a charter for a "Government Coordinating Council," the secretaries of state now have a group that has an official channel and a single "voice" to communicate with DHS.

The move marks the first major step in the coming together between the nonpartisan National Association of Secretaries of State, or NASS, and DHS, amidst a contentious and sometimes mistrusting year. "The other importance of the coordinating council actually being formed, is that there is so much activity on the federal level regarding legislation, I think this will give us, hopefully, a venue to help us inform members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives that states are taking an active role and we are doing a lot to prepare ourselves for the 2018 elections and beyond," said NASS President and Indiana Secretary of State Connie Lawson.

<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/dhs-and-top-election-officials-finally-meet-to-begin-hashing-out-critical-infrastructure-designation/article/2637588>

## Von Spakovsky in USA Today: Russian Hacking Didn't Alter Election

Donald Trump won the 2016 election — and it wasn't because of the Russians. After more than a year of extensive investigations, there is not one iota of evidence the election results were hacked or otherwise successfully manipulated by the Russians or anyone else. One week after the election, Jeh Johnson, President Obama's secretary of Homeland Security, admitted that our election system had not been hacked and that no ballot counts had been changed. Recently, the Department of Homeland Security had to retract a claim that Russian hackers had gone after voter-registration systems in places such as California and Wisconsin after they said their systems hadn't been targeted.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2017/10/12/russian-hacking-no-credible-evidence-editorials-debates/106566026/>

### STATES

## North Carolina: Legislature Returning this Week for Veto Override

The North Carolina General Assembly is returning to Raleigh to consider an override of Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper's veto of a bill that would cancel primaries for judicial elections in 2018 only. The measure, approved in largely party-line votes with veto-proof margins, also pushed back candidate filing for trial and appeals courts from February to June and permanently eased thresholds that all unaffiliated candidates and third parties must meet to get on ballots.

<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/north-carolina/articles/2017-10-13/n-carolina-legislature-returning-monday-for-veto-override>

## Missouri: Voter ID Options Explained

Representatives from Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft's office attended the Tuesday morning St. Francois County Commission meeting to briefly go over the

state's new Show It 2 Vote program. Last November, 63 percent of Missourians voted for photo ID to go into effect and the discussion centered on implementing legislation that puts that into place. [http://dailyjournalonline.com/news/local/voter-id-options-explained/article\\_6f9d34f4-8c9e-5497-a296-e737ccb2015a.html](http://dailyjournalonline.com/news/local/voter-id-options-explained/article_6f9d34f4-8c9e-5497-a296-e737ccb2015a.html)

## Nebraska: Murante Says Election Concerns Argue for Voter Photo ID

With a federal commitment in hand to help states manage risks to their election infrastructure, Sen. John Murante of Gretna said he will step up his efforts to establish voter photo identification requirements in Nebraska. "The people of Nebraska absolutely support and demand voter identification," Murante said during a Capitol news conference. "Properly crafted voter ID laws do not suppress voter turnout," he said. "This can be done without turning a single voter away." Murante already has a proposal pending in the Legislature that would seek a vote of the people on a constitutional amendment to establish voter ID requirements in Nebraska. Senators could resume discussion of that item when they launch their 2018 session in January. The measure (LR1CA) was trapped at first-stage floor consideration by a filibuster last spring, falling seven votes short of the 33 senators required to end debate. Murante's motion to invoke cloture failed on a 26-17 count.

[http://journalstar.com/legislature/murante-says-election-concerns-argue-for-voter-photo-id/article\\_4d8d82fc-c007-5fa8-83c0-79d36f2390b6.html](http://journalstar.com/legislature/murante-says-election-concerns-argue-for-voter-photo-id/article_4d8d82fc-c007-5fa8-83c0-79d36f2390b6.html)

## New Jersey: Noncitizen Registered to Vote — Three Different Times

Recent research by an elections watchdog group has turned up evidence that Kassiah Kamara, who lives in the state's largest city, Newark, registered to vote in May 2004 and then again — with his first and last name transposed — in October of that year. He registered a third time in October 2008.

<http://www.lifezette.com/polizette/non-citizen-registered-to-vote-in-jersey-three-different-times/>

## REDISTRICTING

### **Federal Court Tosses Alabama Redistricting Lawsuit**

Federal judges have thrown out lawsuits challenging the new redistricting plan for the state of Alabama, which effectively clears the way for the new districts to be used in next year's election cycle. Judges say the plaintiffs failed to provide any standard by which it could be determined that the districts being challenged were gerrymandered on either a racial or partisan basis.

<http://apr.org/post/federal-court-tosses-redistricting-lawsuit>

### **Fight over Gerrymandering Is Year's Most Important Court Case**

On the second day of its 2017-18 term, the U.S. Supreme Court heard a case likely to determine the balance of power between Republicans and Democrats for decades to come. The Court is considering the issue of partisan gerrymandering — the process of drawing legislative district lines to entrench one party's political power. This is deeply and imminently important because, in the endless election cycles that dominate American politics, the 2018 midterms are just around the corner. Democrats are emphasizing the need to “win back the House.” Republicans highlight the importance of keeping their majority in Congress.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/fight-over-gerrymandering-year-s-most-important-court-case-ncna810221>