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Voting
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ACRU Election Integrity Bulletin

LEAD STORY

Judge Rules in Favor of Broward Elections Office in Voter Fraud Lawsuit

A federal judge Friday cleared Broward Elections Supervisor Brenda Snipes in a lawsuit that accused her office of facilitating voter fraud. U.S. District Judge Beth Bloom concluded that Snipes had a program in place “that makes a reasonable effort to remove the names of ineligible voters from the official lists of eligible voters by reason of death or change of address.” Bloom said the American Civil Rights Union, which filed suit against Snipes because of the potential for voter fraud, had not proven that the Broward elections office violated the National Voting Rights Act. The ACRU and other conservative organizations have accused more than 140 elections offices nationwide of not doing a good enough job purging their rolls, with many having more registered voters than eligible voting-age residents. The groups want the elections offices to be more aggressive in removing ineligible voters, including non-citizens and people who move, die, become felons or become mentally incapacitated. Logan Churchwell, spokesman for the Public Interest Legal Foundation that represented the ACRU, said his side was reviewing the opinion and assessing its options. “We’re disappointed in the ruling,” Churchwell said. “The evidence that we presented and the causes that led to them, they’re still there.”

<http://www.sun-sentinel.com/local/broward/fl-reg-broward-elections-supervisor-prevails-over-acru-20180330-story.html>

FEDERAL

NBC: White House Stands by Decision to Include Citizenship Question on Census

Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders claims the citizenship question has been included in almost every census since 1965, and says the data from such a question is “necessary for the Department of Justice to protect voters.”

<https://www.nbcnews.com/video/white-house-stands-by-decision-to-include-citizenship-question-on-census-1196231235509>

Free Beacon: DNC Chairman Equates Census Citizenship Question to Voter Suppression

DNC chairman Tom Perez equated the question regarding citizenship on the U.S. Census to voter suppression during an MSNBC interview on Tuesday. Democrats have been opposed to plans by the Trump administration to reinsert a question as to whether or not the respondent was a United States citizen. “They want to change it to count the number of U.S. citizens so that they can engage in very not subtle voter suppression,” Perez said. “That is illegal and that is totally inconsistent with what the North Star of the census in Republican and Democratic administrations have been... This is just another divide-and-conquer effort. This is a first cousin of these voter ID laws sought to make sure that African Americans and Latinos can’t vote,” he added. “This is not who we are as a nation. This is not why people died for the passage of the Voting Rights Act.”

<http://freebeacon.com/politics/dnc-chairman-equates-census-citizenship-question-voter-suppression/>

The Hill: Blue States Sue Trump over Census Citizenship Question

Democratic attorneys general in several states said they would bring legal action to stop the Trump administration from adding a question on citizenship to the next U.S. census, a question they said would lead to serious undercounts that could reverberate for years to come.

<http://thehill.com/homenews/state-watch/380458-blue-states-sue-trump-over-census-citizenship-question>

Rasmussen Reports Polling: Americans Strongly Support Citizenship Status on Census

A new Rasmussen Reports national telephone and online survey finds that 89% of American Adults agree it's at least somewhat important for the government to get as accurate a count of the U.S. population as possible in the U.S. Census, including 69% who say it's very important.

http://www.rasmussenreports.com/public_content/lifestyle/general_lifestyle/march_2018/americans_strongly_support_citizenship_status_on_census

Thiessen: Citizenship a Valid Question for Census

So why are many on the left up in arms over a question that should be relatively uncontroversial? Answer: Money and power. Democrats are worried that adding a citizenship question will dampen participation in the census by illegal immigrants, reducing the total population count in the Democratic-leaning metropolitan areas where illegal immigrants are largely concentrated. This is a losing issue for Democrats. They are effectively arguing that sanctuary cities should be rewarded with more federal money for interfering with the federal enforcement of our immigration laws and turning themselves into magnets for illegal immigrants. And Democrats, who claim to be deeply concerned about foreign interference in our democracy, seem to have no problem with foreign interference when it comes to noncitizens in the United States illegally affecting the distribution of seats in Congress. If Democrats want to make that argument to the American people, go for it. It will further alienate millions of voters who abandoned the Democratic Party in the 2016 election.

http://www.bostonherald.com/opinion/op_ed/2018/04/thiessen_citizenship_a_valid_question_for_census

STATES

Arkansas: State Asks High Court to Intervene in Voter ID Lawsuit

Arkansas is asking the state's Supreme Court to compel a judge to decide whether to block enforcement of a voter ID law. In a motion, Secretary of State Mark Martin asked the court to require Pulaski County Circuit Judge Alice Gray to rule whether she'll grant a motion to block the law's enforcement in Arkansas' May 22 primary. The motion is part of a lawsuit filed by a voter who contends the law, enacted last year, circumvents a 2014 Arkansas Supreme Court ruling that struck down a previous voter ID measure. Gray says she expects to rule several days before April 6. But Martin's attorneys say a ruling is needed well before then because further delays could affect Arkansas' ability to send out absentee ballots before the primary.

<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/arkansas/articles/2018-03-29/arkansas-asks-high-court-to-intervene-in-voter-id-lawsuit>

New Hampshire: Secretary of State to Release Voter Fraud Data

Now that New Hampshire has been comparing its voter checklists with registration rolls in 30 other states for the past year, Secretary of State Bill Gardner has a new trove of information on voter fraud that he hopes to present to the public at some point this spring or summer. The state Legislature approved New Hampshire's participation in the Interstate Voter Registration Crosscheck Program in 2016, and Gardner provided data from the 2016 election. The program, which started in Kansas, has been steadily enlisting other states since 2006, when four Midwestern states began to share voter data.

<http://www.govtech.com/data/New-Hampshire-Secretary-of-State-to-Release-Voter-Fraud-Data.html>

(more)

New Mexico: New Investigations, Tighter Restrictions for Woman in Voter Fraud Case

The New Mexico Attorney General's Office has filed a motion to revoke an Española woman's conditions of release from jail while a voter fraud case against her is pending, claiming she contacted a witness after being ordered not to discuss the case with anyone who may be called to testify. The complaint also says Laura Seeds, the wife of Española City Councilor Robert Seeds, is being investigated on suspicion of new crimes tied to the city's March elections. Laura Seeds and her husband's former campaign assistant, Dyon Herrera, were indicted earlier this year on multiple felony counts alleging they committed voter fraud during Española's 2016 election, in which Robert Seeds was elected to his council seat by a two-vote margin. Robert Seeds lost a bid to become mayor in this year's election but retained his council seat. His wife faces 13 counts in the voter fraud case, including 10 counts of unlawful possession of absentee ballots, falsifying election documents, conspiracy to violate the municipal election code and making false statements relative to the municipal election code.

http://www.santafenewmexican.com/news/local_news/new-investigations-tighter-restrictions-for-woman-in-voter-fraud-case/article_7d852ebb-5147-534d-b9cd-decb08d17050.html

New Mexico: Democrat Secretary of State: Voters Are Too Stupid to Fill Out Ballots

Democratic secretary of state in New Mexico thinks voters are incapable of filling out their ballot without help. Maggie Toulouse Oliver penned an editorial in the Albuquerque Journal advocating for the return of straight-ticket voting, which would allow voters to check one box, such as Democrat, and vote for every Democrat on the ballot... The true problem, Oliver explains, is voters cannot understand ballots. "Ballots can be long and complicated, often discouraging some voters—particularly the elderly and those with disabilities—from participating in the process," she said. "The straight party option eases the burden on these voters, making the ballot more accessible overall," Oliver added. "The practice is also logical from an administrative standpoint because voters spend less time at the voting booth when they choose the straight party option, reducing wait times at polling places." Very few states have straight ticket voting, and the New Mexico legislature first

abolished the practice in 2001. Secretaries of state, until Duran, unilaterally implemented straight party voting until 2010. Duran abolished the practice in 2012, "noting that it had been repealed by the legislature."

<http://freebeacon.com/politics/democrat-voters-stupid-fill-ballots/>

Texas: Election Contested on Allegations of Voter Fraud, Corruption, and Paid 'Ballot Harvesting'

In an election won by one vote has now been contested in a lawsuit filed in Kaufman County—alleging widespread voter fraud, corruption, and paid "ballot harvesting." The election challenge lawsuit filed candidate Tracy Booker Gray also alleges "systematic, fraudulent use of the ballot system" in the use of absentee ballots "possibly illegally facilitated by members of the [Ballot] Board."

https://www.inforney.com/politics/election-contested-on-allegations-of-voter-fraud-corruption-and-paid/article_121067f8-3207-11e8-9bda-b31b33b276a8.html

Texas: Woman Sentenced to Five Years for Illegally Voting in 2016 Election

A Texas woman has been sentenced to five years in prison for voting illegally in the 2016 presidential election. Crystal Mason, 43, is a convicted felon for tax fraud and illegally voted while on supervised release, the *Dallas Morning News* reported. Texas law prohibits felons from voting until they complete their full sentence, including supervised release. According to the prosecutor in the case, Mason was well aware that she was not allowed to vote in 2016. Because her name was not on a registered voter list, the election judge offered her the option of signing an affidavit so she could vote provisionally. The affidavit specifically stated that the voter must not be a felon or must have served their entire sentence. "The affidavit was a stop sign in front of her face," Tarrant County prosecutor Matt Smid said.

<http://dailycaller.com/2018/03/30/woman-sentenced-to-five-years-for-illegally-voting-in-2016-election/>

(more)

REDISTRICTING

The Supreme Court Struggles with Partisan Redistricting

The problem, as Justice Alito showed, is that the Supreme Court has always held that states have a wide berth in deciding how to draw their district lines. “Hasn’t this court said time and again you can’t take all consideration of partisan advantage out of districting?” Under the First Amendment retaliation theory, “I really don’t see how any legislature will ever be able to redistrict”, he said. So there is the dilemma. If the Supreme Court concludes that the First or 14th Amendment bars excessive partisanship in redistricting, it will have to lay out what would qualify as an acceptable level of partisanship that won’t get states into constitutional trouble.

<https://www.economist.com/blogs/democracyinamerica/2018/03/slippery-gerrymanders>