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Institute

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ACRU Election Integrity Bulletin

LEAD

Time: DHS Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen Says Russia Isn't Targeting Midterms Like 2016

The U.S. homeland security secretary said on Saturday there are no signs that Russia is targeting this year's midterm elections with the same "scale or scope" it targeted the 2016 presidential election. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen spoke at a convention of state secretaries of state, an event that's usually a low-key affair highlighting voter registration, balloting devices and election security issues that don't get much public attention. But coming amid fresh allegations into Russia's attempts to sway the 2016 election, the sessions on election security have a higher level of urgency and interest. Nielsen said her agency will help state and local election officials prepare their systems for cyberattacks from Russia or elsewhere.

<http://time.com/5338899/homeland-security-nielsen-russia-midterm-elections/>

White House: President Donald J. Trump Is Protecting Our Elections and Standing Up to Russia's Malign Activities

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has taken the lead in working with all 50 states, local governments, and private companies to improve election security and integrity. In March of 2018, Congress provided the Election Assistance Commission with \$380 million in funding for election assistance grants to States.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trump-protecting-elections-standing-russias-malign-activities/>

FEDERAL

Adams: We Need to Keep Both Russia and Washington Out of State Elections

When the Founders designed the election system for our country, they prevented any one central authority from having power over the outcome. They were concerned about domestic threats to the sanctity of the process. State control over elections free from federal meddling, and having localities within those states conduct the elections, makes it difficult to manipulate outcomes or usurp authority. Some want to change our presumption of local control. As usual in Washington, money is sweetening the pot. Federal dollars devoted to "critical infrastructure" have produced the familiar buzz of contractors swarming to a honey pot of cash. Bureaucrats at the Department of Homeland Security, eager to increase their own job security, have risen to the occasion in classic Washington style, seeking to "fix" a problem that does not exist. Remember that it was the federal government that could not prevent the massive data breach at the Office of Personnel Management. Washington should get its own house in order first.

<http://thehill.com/opinion/campaign/398172-we-need-to-keep-both-russia-and-washington-out-of-state-elections>

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UVA Poll: Only Half of Americans Believe Elections Are Fair and Open

As America turns its attention to the upcoming midterm elections, a new national poll from the University of Virginia's Center for Politics shows that only about half of American adults surveyed believe U.S. elections are fair and open. The poll was conducted in partnership with research organization Ipsos. The Ipsos poll, which surveyed more than 1,000 American adults on July 5 and 6, found 51 percent of the respondents agreed with the statement that "American elections are fair and open." Agreement was higher among Republican respondents—68 percent agreed—than Democrats (43 percent).

<https://news.virginia.edu/content/only-half-americans-believe-elections-are-fair-and-open-uva-poll-shows>

STATES

Alabama: Voter Fraud Investigations Underway in Two Counties

Alabama Secretary of State John Merrill confirmed Thursday that voter fraud investigations are underway in Wilcox and Perry Counties. Although Merrill confirmed the investigations were launched prior to Tuesday's primary runoff elections over allegations of "intentional illegality over absentee participation," the investigation seems even more relevant in light of voter turnout figures.

<http://www.wsfa.com/story/38687642/voter-fraud-investigations-underway-in-2-al-counties>

Alabama: Secretary of State: Human Error Responsible for John Knight Voting Snafu

An investigation by the secretary of state's office concluded that human error is to blame after at least 22 Montgomery County voters—including Rep. John Knight (D - Montgomery)—found themselves listed under the wrong party at the polls Tuesday, Secretary of State John Merrill said. The errors, which initially prevented Knight from voting Tuesday, were made in

the Montgomery County Board of Registrars office as voter rolls were being scanned between the June 5 primary elections and Tuesday's runoff, Merrill said. "When people signed in and they were scanning people's names, they mis-scanned at least 22 who we know of that were misidentified, and John Knight just happened to be one of them," Merrill said. "The worst part of it is there was no accountability."

<https://www.montgomeryadvertiser.com/story/news/2018/07/19/secretary-state-human-error-responsible-john-knight-voting-snafu/801722002/>

California: Citizenship Is No Longer Required to Vote in San Francisco School Board Elections

Noncitizens can vote in San Francisco's Board of Education elections after the city's Department of Elections ruled Monday to do away with citizenship requirements. Noncitizens seeking to vote in San Francisco's Board of Education elections must be at least 18 years old and residents of the city, CBS SF Bay Area reported Monday. They must also be parents, caregivers, or legal guardians of children under 19 years old who reside in the city. Those serving time for a felony conviction, as well as those persons on parole for a felony, cannot vote in the city's Board of Education elections. Those deemed by the court to be mentally incompetent are also barred from voting in the elections. The new requirement comes after San Francisco voters passed local Proposition N, allowing noncitizens to vote in education elections. The proposal passed 54 percent to 46 percent and will continue taking effect until 2022, when the Board of Supervisors will have to decide whether to preserve or abandon the law.

<https://www.dailysignal.com/2018/07/17/citizenship-is-no-longer-required-to-vote-in-san-francisco-education-elections/>

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Oregon: Oregon Voters to Decide ‘Sanctuary State’ Status in November

Voters in Oregon will have the opportunity this November to decide the future of a decades-old sanctuary state law. The Oregon secretary of state’s office on Tuesday qualified an initiative for the 2018 election ballot that would repeal a 1987 law that limits the “use of state [and] local law enforcement resources to enforce federal immigration laws,” according to *The Oregonian*. The initiative—which qualified to appear on the November ballot with 97,762 signatures, well above the 88,184-signature threshold required—was the culmination of a year-long signature-gathering petition by Oregonians for Immigration Reform (OFIR), an advocacy group seeking to curb immigration to levels that are “environmentally sustainable.” OFIR’s petition collected over 110,000 signatures and was supported by a \$183,000 contribution from the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), a national non-partisan group advocating a stronger U.S. border control policy

<https://freebeacon.com/issues/oregon-voters-decide-sanctuary-state-status-november/>

Minnesota: Voter Records Tussle Headed to Higher Court

A legal battle over Minnesota voting records will head to higher court. Ramsey County District Judge Jennifer Frisch, who previously ordered Secretary of State Steve Simon to turn over the voter records to a nonprofit political group, agreed to stay her own ruling to give Simon a chance to appeal it. The Minnesota Voters Alliance asked for the voting records, in hopes of proving a theory that thousands of ineligible voters register on Election Day and then vote before their identity and eligibility is verified. If their eligibility is challenged after the fact, their vote has already been counted. The group wants list of active voters and inactive voters, and records of whether they were challenged as ineligible and forced to take extra steps in order to vote. “That should be a really easy way for the Minnesota Voters Alliance to audit whether the Secretary of State’s Office is preventing ineligible people from voting,” Erick Kaardal, the attorney for the group, told KARE. “If

someone fills out a certificate that says I’m eligible to vote, and they may be unwittingly voting while ineligible. But it’s the same damage to our voting, to our election outcomes.”

<https://www.kare11.com/article/news/voter-records-tussle-headed-to-higher-court/89-574980639>

Tennessee: Prosecutor Rules No Criminal Charges in Williamson Voter Fraud Case

A special prosecutor said this week there was no case to file criminal charges against two Williamson County candidates running for office. In late April, the Williamson County Election Commission sent forward allegations of voter fraud against House District 63 candidate Bill Peach and county commission candidate Anne McGraw. Both candidates voted in the Republican primary in May and will appear as Democratic candidates on the August ballot. District Attorney General Pro Temp Kent Chitwood wrote, “...If a political party suspects that a member of another political party is voting in its primary, it may challenge that person at the polling place.”

<https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/local/williamson/2018/07/20/williamson-voter-fraud-bill-peach-anne-mcgraw-prosecutor-rules-no-criminal-charges-election/806571002/>

Texas: AG Opens Another Voter Fraud Investigation in Rio Grande Valley

The Office of the Texas Attorney General is investigating a voter fraud complaint which allegedly occurred during a recent water utility company board election in the Rio Grande Valley.

<https://www.breitbart.com/texas/2018/07/17/texas-opens-another-voter-fraud-investigation-in-rio-grande-valley/>

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Texas: Border City Mayor Blames Election Loss on ‘Voter Fraud’

The longstanding former mayor of a Texas border city contends that voter fraud and bribery cost him another term in a June runoff race. Now, he is suing his opponent and asking the Hidalgo County District Court for a new election. Norberto “Beto” Salinas, who served as Mission mayor since 1998, lost by 157 votes to Armando “Doc” O’Caña in the June 9 contest. The ousted mayor accused O’Caña and his campaign team of harvesting mail-in ballots, “illegal voting,” and bribing voters in a petition filed Wednesday.

<https://www.breitbart.com/texas/2018/07/20/texas-border-city-mayor-blames-election-loss-on-voter-fraud/>

Wisconsin: Elections Data Reveals What Voters Should Be Concerned About, and It’s Not Voter ID

In the city of Milwaukee there were 44,797 same-day registrations, and 2,563 postcards bounced back. That’s nearly 6 percent of all same-day registrants’ addresses that were wrong when the person cast their ballot. Elections Commission data reported by the MacIver Institute raises serious, real-world questions about the integrity of same-day voter registrations. The way many Wisconsin localities, particularly Milwaukee and Madison, handled a mountain of same-day voter registration irregularities is a legitimate concern. As first reported by MacIver, out of 368,392 verification postcards mailed to people statewide who registered to vote on election day in November 2016, 10,461 came back as undeliverable. Election day registration irregularities are clearly a larger concern. The hard data shows that it’s not voter ID that the voting public should be concerned about. They should be much more concerned about the surprisingly casual approach to managing the state’s voter registration rolls that puts the critical concept of one person, one vote in jeopardy.

<http://www.maciverinstitute.com/2018/07/elections-data-reveals-what-wisconsin-voters-should-be-concerned-about-and-its-not-voter-id/>

REDISTRICTING

Michigan Radio: Attorney General Schuette Talks Trump Endorsement and Gerrymandering Case

“Voters do have their say on elections and state reps, state Senate, members of Congress, and governor, what have you. Voters do have their say. What Michigan has done in terms of redistricting is follow strict standards that have been vetted and approved by the courts over the span of time. This issue is about the constitutionality of how you amend Michigan’s constitution, and the fact is, this is a wholesale approach. It’s almost a massive rewriting of Michigan’s constitution that can only be, according to Michigan’s constitution, by a convention.”

<http://michiganradio.org/post/attorney-general-schuette-talks-trump-endorsement-line-5-and-gerrymandering-case>