

- Knowingly soliciting or encouraging a person who is not qualified to vote in an election;
- Knowingly challenging a person's right to vote without probable cause or on fraudulent grounds, or engaging in mass, indiscriminate, and groundless challenging of voters solely for the purpose of preventing voter from voting or to delay the process of voting;
- As an employer, attempting by coercion, intimidation, threats to discharge or to lessen the remuneration of an employee, to influence his/her vote in any election, or who requires or demands an examination or inspection by himself/herself or another of an employee's ballot;
- Soliciting, accepting, or agreeing to accept money or other valuable thing in exchange for signing or refraining from signing a petition proposing an initiative;
- Inducing or attempting to induce an election official to fail in the official's duty by force, threat, intimidation, or offers of reward;
- Directly or through any other person advancing, paying, soliciting, or receiving or causing to be advanced, paid, solicited, or received, any money or other valuable consideration to or for the use of any person in order to induce a person not to become or to withdraw as a candidate for public office; and
- Soliciting, accepting, or agreeing to accept money or other thing of value in exchange for registering to vote.

***Acts of Damage or Destruction***

- Destroying completed voter registration applications;
- Removing or destroying any of the supplies or other conveniences placed in the voting booths or compartments;
- Removing, tearing down, or defacing election materials, instructions or ballots;
- Fraudulently altering or changing the vote of any elector, by which such elector is prevented from voting as the person intended;
- Knowingly removing, altering, defacing or covering any political sign of any candidate for public office for a prescribed period prior to and following the election;
- Intentionally changing, attempting to change, or causing to be changed an official election document including ballots, tallies, and returns; and
- Intentionally delaying, attempting to delay, or causing to be delayed the sending of certificate, register, ballots, or other materials whether original or duplicate, required to be sent by jurisdictional law.

***Failure or Refusal to Act***

- Intentionally failing to perform an election duty, or knowingly committing an unauthorized act with the intent to effect the election;
- Knowingly permitting, making, or attempting to make a false count of election returns;
- Intentionally concealing, withholding, or destroying election returns or attempts to do so;

- Marking a ballot by folding or physically altering the ballot so as to recognize the ballot at a later time;
- Attempting to learn or actually and unlawfully learning how a voter marked a ballot;
- Distributing or attempting to distribute election material knowing it to be fraudulent;
- Knowingly refusing to register a person who is entitled to register under the rules of that jurisdiction;
- Knowingly removing the eligibility status of a voter who is eligible to vote; and
- Knowingly refusing to allow an eligible voter to cast his/her ballot.

### **What is not an Election Crime for Purposes of this Study**

There are some actions or inactions that may constitute crimes or civil wrongs that we do not include in our definition of “election crimes.” All criminal or civil violations related to campaign finance contribution limitations, prohibitions, and reporting either at the state or federal level are not “election crimes” for purposes of this study and any future study conducted by EAC. Similarly, criminal acts that are unrelated to elections, voting, or voter registration are not “election crimes,” even when those offenses occur in a polling place, voter registration office, or a candidate’s office or appearance. For example, an assault or battery that results from a fight in a polling place or at a candidate’s office is not an election crime. Similarly, violations of ethical provisions such as the Hatch Act are not “election crimes,” and actions that do not rise to the level of criminal activity, such as a misdemeanor, relative felony or felony, are not “election crimes.”

## **RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW TO STUDY ELECTION CRIMES**

As a part of its study, EAC sought recommendations on ways that EAC can research the existence of election crimes. EAC consultants, the working groups and some of the persons interviewed as a part of this study provided the following recommendations.

### ***Recommendation 1: Conduct More Interviews***

Future activity in this area should include conducting additional interviews. In particular, more election officials from all levels of government, parts of the country, and political parties should be interviewed. It would also be especially beneficial to talk to law enforcement officials, specifically federal District Election Officers (“DEOs”) and local district attorneys, as well as civil and criminal defense attorneys.

### ***Recommendation 2: Follow Up on Media Research***

The media search conducted for this phase of the research was based on a list of search terms agreed upon by EAC consultants. Thousands of articles were reviewed and hundreds analyzed. Many of the articles contained allegations of fraud or intimidation. Similarly, some of the articles contained information about investigations into such

activities or even charges brought. Additional media research should be conducted to determine what, if any, resolutions or further activity there was in each case.

***Recommendation 3: Follow Up on Allegations Found in Literature Review***

Many of the allegations made in the reports and books that were analyzed and summarized by EAC consultants were not substantiated and were certainly limited by the date of publication of those pieces. Despite this, such reports and books are frequently cited by various interested parties as evidence of fraud or intimidation. Further research should include follow up on the allegations discovered in the literature review.

***Recommendation 4: Review Complaints Filed With “MyVote1” Voter Hotline***

During the 2004 election and the statewide elections of 2005, the University of Pennsylvania led a consortium of groups and researchers in conducting the MyVote1 Project. This project involved using a toll-free voter hotline that voters could call for poll locations, be transferred to a local hotline, or leave a recorded message with a complaint. In 2004, this resulted in more than 200,000 calls received and more than 56,000 recorded complaints.

Further research should be conducted using the MyVote1 data with the cooperation of the project leaders. While perhaps not a fully scientific survey given the self-selection of the callers, the information regarding 56,000 complaints may provide insight into the problems voters may have experienced, especially issues regarding intimidation or suppression.

***Recommendation 5: Further Review of Complaints Filed With U.S. Department of Justice***

According to a recent GAO report, the Voting Section of the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice has a variety of ways it tracks complaints of voter intimidation. Attempts should be made to obtain relevant data, including the telephone logs of complaints and information from the Interactive Case Management (ICM) system. Further research should also include a review and analysis of the DOJ/OPM observer and “monitor field reports” from Election Day.

***Recommendation 6: Review Reports Filed By District Election Officers***

Further research should include a review of the reports that must be filed by every District Election Officer to the Public Integrity Section of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice. The DEOs play a central role in receiving reports of voting fraud and investigating and pursuing them. Their reports back to the Department would likely provide tremendous insight into what actually transpired during the last several elections. Where necessary, information could be redacted or made confidential.

***Recommendation 7: Attend Ballot Access and Voting Integrity Symposium***

Further activity in this area should include attending the next Ballot Access and Voting Integrity Symposium. At this conference, prosecutors serving as District Election Officers in the 94 U.S. Attorneys' Offices obtain annual training on fighting election fraud and voting rights abuses. These conferences are sponsored by the Voting Section of the Civil Rights Division and the Public Integrity Section of the Criminal Division, and feature presentations by Civil Rights officials and senior prosecutors from the Public Integrity Section and the U.S. Attorneys' Offices. By attending the symposium researchers could learn more about the following: how District Election Officers are trained; how information about previous election and voting issues is presented; and how the Voting Rights Act, the criminal laws governing election fraud and intimidation, the National Voter Registration Act, and the Help America Vote Act are described and explained to participants.

***Recommendation 8: Conduct Statistical Research***

EAC should measure voting fraud and intimidation using interviews, focus groups, and a survey and statistical analysis of the results of these efforts. The sample should be based on the following factors:

- Ten locations that are geographically and demographically diverse where there have been many reports of fraud and/or intimidation;
- Ten locations (geographically and demographically diverse) that have not had many reports of fraud and/or intimidation;

EAC should also conduct a survey of elections officials, district attorneys, and district election officers. The survey sample should be large in order to be able to get the necessary subsets, and it must include a random set of counties where there have and have not been a large number of allegations.

***Recommendation 9: Explore Improvements to Federal Law***

Future researchers should review federal law to explore ways to make it easier to impose either civil or criminal penalties for acts of intimidation that do not necessarily involve racial animus and/or a physical or economic threat.

***Recommendation 10: Use Observers to Collect Data on Election Day***

Use observers to collect data regarding fraud and intimidation at the polls on Election Day. There may be some limitations to the ability to conduct this type of research, including difficulty gaining access to polling places for the purposes of observation, and concerns regarding how the observers themselves may inadvertently or deliberately influence the occurrence of election crimes.

***Recommendation 11: Study Absentee Ballot Fraud***

Because absentee ballot fraud constitutes a large portion of election crimes, a stand-alone study of absentee ballot fraud should be conducted. Researchers should look at actual cases to see how absentee ballot fraud schemes are conducted in an effort to provide recommendations on more effective measures for preventing fraud when absentee ballots are used.

***Recommendation 12: Use Risk Analysis Methodology to Study Fraud***

Conduct an analysis of what types of fraud people are most likely to commit. Researchers will use that risk analysis to rank the types of fraud based on the “ease of commission” and the impact of the fraud.

***Recommendation 13: Conduct Research Using Database Comparisons***

Researchers should compare information on databases to determine whether the voter rolls contain deceased persons and felons. In addition, the voter rolls can then be compared with the list of persons who voted to determine whether a vote was recorded by someone who is deceased or if felons are noted as having voted.

***Recommendation 14: Conduct a Study of Deceptive Practices***

The working group discussed the increasing use of deceptive practices, such as flyers and phone calls with false and/or intimidating information, to suppress voter participation. A number of groups, such as the Department of Justice, the EAC, and organizations such as the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights, keep phone logs regarding complaints of such practices. These logs should be reviewed and analyzed to see how and where such practices are being conducted and what can be done about them.

***Recommendation 15: Study Use of HAVA Administrative Complaint Procedure as Vehicle for Measuring Fraud and Intimidation***

EAC should study the extent to which states are utilizing the administrative complaint procedure mandated by HAVA. In addition, the EAC should study whether data collected through the administrative complaint procedure can be used as another source of information for measuring fraud and intimidation.

***Recommendation 16: Examine the Use of Special Election Courts***

Given that many state and local judges are elected, it may be worth exploring whether special election courts should be established to handle fraud and intimidation complaints before, during, and after Election Day. Pennsylvania employs such a system and could investigate how well that system is working.

### **Accepted Recommendations**

There has never been a comprehensive, national study that gathered data regarding all claims, charges, and prosecutions of voting crimes. EAC feels that a comprehensive study is the most important research that it can offer the election community and the public. As such, EAC has adopted all or a part of six of the 16 recommendations made by EAC consultants and the working group.

While several of the other recommendations could be used to obtain more anecdotal information regarding election crimes, EAC believes that what is needed is a comprehensive survey and study of the information available from investigatory agencies, prosecutorial bodies and courts on the number and types of complaints, charges and prosecutions of election crimes. Additional media reviews, additional interviews and the use of observers to collect information from voters on Election Day will only serve to continue the use of anecdotal data to report on election crimes. Hard data on complaints, charges and prosecutions exists and we should gather and use that data, rather than rely on the perceptions of the media or the members of the public as to what might be fraud or intimidation.

Some of the recommendations are beyond the scope of the current study. While election courts may be a reasonable conclusion to reach after we determine the volume and type of election crimes being reported, charged or prosecuted, it is premature to embark on an analysis of that solution without more information. Last, some of the recommendations do not support a comprehensive study of election crimes. While a risk analysis might be appropriate in a smaller scale study, EAC desires to conduct a broader survey to avoid the existing problem of anecdotal and limited scope of information.

In order to further its goal of developing a comprehensive data set regarding election crimes and the laws and procedures used to identify and prosecute them, EAC intends to engage in the following research activities in studying the existence and enforcement of election crimes:

#### ***Survey Chief Election Officers Regarding Administrative Complaints***

Likely sources of complaints concerning election crimes are the administrative complaint processes that states were required to establish to comply with Section 402 of HAVA. These complaint procedures were required to be in place prior to a state receiving any funds under HAVA. Citizens are permitted to file complaints alleging violations of HAVA Title III provisions under these procedures with the state's chief election official. Those complaints must be resolved within 60 days. The procedures also allow for alternative dispute resolution of claims. Some states have expanded this process to include complaints of other violations, such as election crimes.

In order to determine how many of these complaints allege the commission of election crimes, EAC will survey the states' chief election officers regarding complaints that have been filed, investigated, and resolved since January 1, 2004. EAC will use the definition

of election crimes provided above in this report in its survey so that data regarding a uniform set of offenses will be collected.

***Survey State Election Crime Investigation Units Regarding Complaints Filed and Referred***

Several chief state election officials have developed investigation units focused on receiving, investigating, and referring complaints of election crimes. These units were established to bolster the abilities of state and local law enforcement to investigate allegations of election crimes. California, New York and Florida are just three examples of states that have these types of units.

EAC will use a survey instrument to gather information on the numbers and types of complaints that have been received by, investigated, and ultimately referred to local or state law enforcement by election crime investigation units since January 1, 2004. These data will help us understand the pervasiveness of perceived fraud, as well as the number of claims that state election officials felt were meritorious of being referred to local and state law enforcement or prosecutorial agencies for further action.

***Survey Law Enforcement and Prosecutorial Agencies Regarding Complaints and Charge of Voting Crimes***

While voters, candidates and citizens may call national hotlines or the news media to report allegations of election crimes, it is those complaints that are made to law enforcement that can be investigated and ultimately prosecuted. Thus, it is critical to the study of election crimes to obtain statistics regarding the number and types of complaints that are made to law enforcement, how many of those complaints result in the perpetrator being charged or indicted, and how many of those charges or indictments result in pleas or convictions.

Thus, EAC will survey law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies at the local, state and federal level to determine the number and types of complaints, charges or indictments, and pleas or convictions of election crimes since January 1, 2004. In addition, EAC will seek to obtain an understanding of why some complaints are not charged or indicted and why some charges or indictments are not prosecuted.

***Analyze Survey Data in Light of State Laws and Procedures***

Once a reliable data set concerning the existence and enforcement of election crimes is assembled, a real analysis of the effectiveness of fraud prevention measures can be conducted. For example, data can be analyzed to determine if criminal activities related to elections are isolated to certain areas or regions of the country. Data collected from the election official surveys can be compared to the data regarding complaints, charges and prosecutions gathered from the respective law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies in each jurisdiction. The effect and/or effectiveness of provisions such as voter identification laws and challenger provisions can be assessed based on hard data from

areas where these laws exist. Last, analyses such as the effectiveness of enforcement can be conducted in light of the resources available to the effort.

## CONCLUSION

Election crimes are nothing new to our election process. The pervasiveness of these crimes and the fervor with which they have been enforced has created a great deal of debate among academics, election officials, and voters. Past studies of these issues have been limited in scope and some have been riddled with bias. These are issues that deserve comprehensive and nonpartisan review. EAC, through its clearinghouse role, will collect and analyze data on election crimes throughout the country. These data not only will tell us what types of election crimes are committed and where fraud exists, but also inform us of what factors impact the existence, prevention, and prosecution of election crimes.

## EAC Statement on Future Study of Voter Identification Requirements

### Background

The Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) authorizes the United States Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to conduct periodic studies of election administration issues. In May 2005 EAC entered into a contract with the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey and the Moritz College of Law at the Ohio State University to perform a review and legal analysis of state legislation, administrative procedures and court cases, and to perform a literature review on other research and data available on the topic of voter identification requirements. Further, the contractor was to analyze the problems and challenges of voter identification, to hypothesize alternative approaches and recommend various policies that could be applied to these approaches.

**Comment [GH1]:** We should state the same entity precisely as it is named in the contract. We could then name which institutions performed the work, were subcontractors, etc.

The contractor performed a statistical analysis of the relationship of various requirements for voter identification to voter turnout in the 2004 election. Using two sets of data-- aggregate turnout data at the county level for each state, and reports of individual voters collected in the November 2004 Current Population Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau-- the contractor arrived at a series of findings, conclusions and subsequent recommendations for further research into the topic.

**Comment [GH2]:** In respect to the last sentence in paragraph one above, it is my opinion that it would have been reasonable for Eagleton to have considered the statistical analysis they conducted as being covered by that task. Therefore, I recommend striking the word "also" from this sentence.

The contractor presented testimony summarizing its findings from this statistical and data analysis at a February 8, 2007 public meeting of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission. The contractor's testimony and its summary of voter identification requirements by State, summary of court decisions and literature on voter identification and related issues, an annotated bibliography on voter identification issues and a summary of state statutes and regulations affecting voter identification are attached to this report and can also be found on EAC's website: [www.EAC.gov](http://www.EAC.gov).

### EAC Recommendations for further study and next steps

EAC finds the contractor's summary of States' voter identification requirements and summary of state laws, statutes, regulations and litigation surrounding the implementation of voter identification requirements, to be an important first step in the Commission's consideration of voter identification requirements.

However, EAC has concerns regarding the research and statistical methodology the contractor chose to employ in order to analyze voter identification requirements. Therefore, EAC will engage in a longer-term, more systematic review of voter identification requirements and the potential variation in turnout rates based on the types of voter identification requirements. EAC is not adopting the contractor's full report that was submitted and is not releasing this report. EAC's additional study on the topic will include more than one Federal election cycle, examine additional environmental and political factors that effect voter participation, and consider the numerous changes in state

laws and regulations related to voter identification requirements that have occurred since 2004.

EAC will undertake the following activities on an ongoing basis.

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- A state-by-state review, reporting and tracking of voter identification requirements. This will include tracking states' requirements which require a voter to state his or her name, to sign his or her name, to match his or her signature to a signature on file, to provide photo or non-photo identification or to swear an affidavit affirming his or her identify.
- Using some of the information collected by Eagleton and assembling data from states, EAC will establish a baseline of information on voter participation that will include what factors may affect or influence Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP) voter participation, various voter identification requirements, the competitiveness of a race and other environmental or political factors.
- Analysis of this and other data to begin to determine what, if any impact, voter identification requirements have voter turnout, registration, and fraud.

Comment [GH3]: I cannot craft the word

Other activities to enhance EAC research on the correlation between identification requirements and various aspects of voter participation will include:

- Convening a working group by mid-2007 of advocates, academics, research methodologists and election officials to discuss EAC's next study of voter identification. Topics to be discussed include specific issues to be covered in the study, research and statistical methodologies to be employed and timelines for completing an EAC study on voter identification.
- A study of how certain voter identification provisions that have been in place for two or more Federal elections have had an impact on voter turnout, voter registration figures, and fraud. Included in this study would be an examination of the relationship between voter turnout and race and gender;
- Publication of a series of best practice case studies which detail a particular state's or jurisdiction's experiences with educating pollworkers and voters about various voter identification requirements. Included in the case studies would be detail on the policies and practices used to educate and inform pollworkers and voters;
- A state-by-state tracking of early voting, absentee voting, and vote-by-mail policies and procedures. The data collected through this tracking would then be compared to the various state voter identification policies and procedures described above.

DRAFT

**Deliberative Process  
Privilege**



**U.S. ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION**

**Status Report on the  
Voting Fraud-Voter Intimidation Research  
Project**

**May 17, 2006**

007371

## INTRODUCTION

Section 241 of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) requires EAC to conduct research on election administration issues. Among the tasks listed in the statute is the development of:

- nationwide statistics and methods of identifying, deterring, and investigating voting fraud in elections for Federal office [section 241(b)(6)]; and
- ways of identifying, deterring, and investigating methods of voter intimidation [section 241(b)(7)].

EAC's Board of Advisors recommended that the agency make research on these matters a high priority.

## FOCUS OF CURRENT RESEARCH

In September 2005, the Commission hired two consultants with expertise in this subject matter, Job Serebrov and Tova Wang, to:

- develop a comprehensive description of what constitutes voting fraud and voter intimidation in the context of Federal elections;
- perform background research (including Federal and State administrative and case law review), identify current activities of key government agencies, civic and advocacy organizations regarding these topics, and deliver a summary of this research and all source documentation;
- establish a project working group, in consultation with EAC, composed of key individuals and representatives of organizations knowledgeable about the topics of voting fraud and voter intimidation;
- provide the description of what constitutes voting fraud and voter intimidation and the results of the preliminary research to the working group, and convene the working group to discuss potential avenues for future EAC research on this topic; and
- produce a report to EAC summarizing the findings of the preliminary research effort and working group deliberations that includes recommendations for future research, if any;

As of the date of this report, the consultants have drafted a definition of election fraud, reviewed relevant literature and reports, interviewed persons from government and private sectors with subject matter expertise, analyzed news reports of alleged election fraud, reviewed case law, and established a project working group.

## DEFINITION OF ELECTION FRAUD

The consultants drafted a definition of election fraud that includes numerous aspects of voting fraud (including voter intimidation, which is considered a subset of voting fraud) and voter registration fraud, but excludes campaign finance violations and election administration mistakes. This draft will be discussed and probably refined by the project working group, which is scheduled to convene on May 18, 2006.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The consultants found many reports and books that describe anecdotes and draw broad conclusions from a large array of incidents. They found little research that is truly systematic or scientific. The most systematic look at fraud appears to be the report written by Lori Minnite, entitled "Securing the Vote: An Analysis of Election Fraud". The most systematic look at voter intimidation appears to be the report by Laughlin McDonald, entitled "The New Poll Tax". The consultants found that books written about this subject all seem to have a political bias and a pre-existing agenda that makes them somewhat less valuable.

Moreover, the consultants found that reports and books make allegations but, perhaps by their nature, have little follow up. As a result, it is difficult to know when something has remained in the stage of being an allegation and gone no further, or progressed to the point of being investigated or prosecuted or in any other way proven to be valid by an independent, neutral entity. This is true, for example, with respect to allegations of voter intimidation by civil rights organizations, and, with respect to fraud, John Fund's frequently cited book, "Stealing Elections".

Consultants found that researchers agree that measuring something like the incidence of fraud and intimidation in a scientifically legitimate way is extremely difficult from a methodological perspective and would require resources beyond the means of most social and political scientists. As a result, there is much more written on this topic by advocacy groups than social scientists.

Other items of note:

- There is as much evidence, and as much concern, about structural forms of disenfranchisement as about intentional abuse of the system. These include felon disenfranchisement, poor maintenance of databases and identification requirements.
- There is tremendous disagreement about the extent to which polling place fraud, e.g. double voting, intentional felon voting, noncitizen voting, is a serious problem. On balance, more researchers find it to be less of a problem than is commonly described in the political debate; but some reports say it is a major problem, albeit hard to identify.

- There is substantial concern across the board about absentee balloting and the opportunity it presents for fraud.
- Federal law governing election fraud and intimidation is varied and complex and yet may nonetheless be insufficient or subject to too many limitations to be as effective as it might be.
- Deceptive practices, e.g. targeted flyers and phone calls providing misinformation, were a major problem in 2004.
- Voter intimidation continues to be focused on minority communities, although the American Center for Voting Rights uniquely alleges it is focused on Republicans.

### **Recommendations**

The consultants recommend that subsequent EAC research include a follow up study of allegations made in reports, books and newspaper articles. They also suggest that the research should focus on filling the gap between the lack of reports based on methodical studies by social or political scientists and the numerous, but less scientific, reports published by advocacy groups.

### **INTERVIEWS**

The consultants jointly selected experts from the public and private sector for interviews. The consultants' analysis of their discussions with these members of the legal, election official, advocacy, and academic communities follows.

### **Common Themes**

- There is virtually universal agreement that absentee ballot fraud is the biggest problem, with vote buying and registration fraud coming in after that. The vote buying often comes in the form of payment for absentee ballots, although not always. Some absentee ballot fraud is part of an organized effort; some is by individuals, who sometimes are not even aware that what they are doing is illegal. Voter registration fraud seems to take the form of people signing up with false names. Registration fraud seems to be most common where people doing the registration were paid by the signature.
- There is widespread but not unanimous agreement that there is little polling place fraud, or at least much less than is claimed, including voter impersonation, "dead" voters, noncitizen voting and felon voters. Those few who believe it occurs often enough to be a concern say that it is impossible to show the extent to which it happens, but do point to instances in the press of such incidents. Most people believe that false registration forms have not resulted in polling place fraud,

although it may create the perception that vote fraud is possible. Those who believe there is more polling place fraud than reported/investigated/prosecuted believe that registration fraud does lead to fraudulent votes. Jason Torchinsky from the American Center for Voting Rights is the only interviewee who believes that polling place fraud is widespread and among the most significant problems in the system.

- Abuse of challenger laws and abusive challengers seem to be the biggest intimidation/suppression concerns, and many of those interviewed assert that the new identification requirements are the modern version of voter intimidation and suppression. However there is evidence of some continued outright intimidation and suppression, especially in some Native American communities. A number of people also raise the problem of poll workers engaging in harassment of minority voters. Other activities commonly raised were the issue of polling places being moved at the last moment, unequal distribution of voting machines, videotaping of voters at the polls, and targeted misinformation campaigns.
- Several people indicate that, for various reasons, DOJ is bringing fewer voter intimidation and suppression cases now, and has increased its focus on matters such as noncitizen voting, double voting, and felon voting. Interviews with DOJ personnel indicate that the Voting Section, Civil Rights Division, focuses on systemic patterns of malfeasance in this area. While the Election Crimes Branch, Public Integrity Section, continues to maintain an aggressive pursuit of systematic schemes to corrupt the electoral process (including voter suppression), it also has increased prosecutions of individual instances of felon, alien, and double voting.
- The problem of badly kept voter registration lists, with both ineligible voters remaining on the rolls and eligible voters being taken off, remains a common concern. A few people are also troubled by voters being on registration lists in two states. They said that there was no evidence that this had led to double voting, but it opens the door to the possibility. There is great hope that full implementation of the new requirements of HAVA – done well, a major caveat – will reduce this problem dramatically.

#### **Common Recommendations:**

- Many of those interviewed recommend better poll worker training as the best way to improve the process; a few also recommended longer voting times or voting on days other than election day (such as weekends) but fewer polling places so only the best poll workers would be employed.
- Many interviewed support stronger criminal laws and increased enforcement of existing laws with respect to both fraud and intimidation. Advocates from across the spectrum expressed frustration with the failure of the Department of Justice to pursue complaints.

- With respect to DOJ's Voting Section, Civil Rights Division, John Tanner indicated that fewer cases are being brought because fewer are warranted – it has become increasingly difficult to know when allegations of intimidation and suppression are credible since it depends on one's definition of intimidation, and because both parties are doing it. Moreover prior enforcement of the laws has now changed the entire landscape – race based problems are rare now. Although challenges based on race and unequal implementation of identification rules would be actionable, Mr. Tanner was unaware of such situations actually occurring and his office has not pursued any such cases.
- Craig Donsanto of DOJ's Election Crimes Branch, Public Integrity Section, says that while the number of election fraud related complaints have not gone up since 2002, nor has the proportion of legitimate to illegitimate claims of fraud, the number of cases DOJ is investigating and the number of indictments his office is pursuing are both up dramatically. Since 2002, in addition to pursuing systematic election corruption schemes, DOJ has brought more cases against alien voters, felon voters and double voters than ever before. Mr. Donsanto would like more resources so that his agency can do more and would like to have laws that make it easier for the federal government to assume jurisdiction over voter fraud cases.
- A couple of interviewees recommend a new law that would make it easier to criminally prosecute people for intimidation even when there is not racial animus.
- Several advocate expanded monitoring of the polls, including some associated with the Department of Justice.
- Almost everyone hopes that administrators will maximize the potential of statewide voter registration databases to prevent fraud.
- Challenge laws, both with respect to pre-election day challenges and challengers at the polls, need to be revised by all states to ensure they are not used for purposes of wrongful disenfranchisement and harassment.
- Several people advocate passage of Senator Barak Obama's "deceptive practices" bill.
- There is a split on whether it would be helpful to have nonpartisan election officials – some indicated they thought even if elections officials are elected as non partisan officials, they will carry out their duties in biased ways nonetheless. However, most agree that elections officials pursuing partisan agendas are a problem that must be addressed in some fashion. Suggestions included moving election responsibilities out of the secretary of states' office; increasing transparency in the process; and enacting conflict of interest rules.

- A few recommend returning to allowing use of absentee ballots “for cause” only if it were politically feasible.
- A few recommend enacting a national identification card, including Pat Rogers, an attorney in New Mexico, and Jason Torchinsky from ACVR, who advocates the proposal in the Carter-Baker Commission Report.
- A couple of interviewees indicated the need for clear standards for the distribution of voting machines

## NEWS ARTICLES

Consultants conducted a Nexis search of related news articles published between January 1, 2001 and January 1, 2006. A systematic, numerical analysis of the data collected during this review is currently being prepared. What follows is an overview of these articles provided by the consultants.

### Absentee Ballots

According to press reports, absentee ballots are abused in a variety of ways:

- Campaign workers, candidates and others coerce the voting choices of vulnerable populations, usually elderly voters.
- Workers for groups and individuals have attempted to vote absentee in the names of the deceased.
- Workers for groups, campaign workers and individuals have attempted to forge the names of other voters on absentee ballot requests and absentee ballots and thus vote multiple times.

It is unclear how often actual convictions result from these activities (a handful of articles indicate convictions and guilty pleas), but this is an area in which there have been a substantial number of official investigations and actual charges filed, according to news reports where such information is available. A few of the allegations became part of civil court proceedings contesting the outcome of the election.

While absentee fraud allegations turn up throughout the country, a few states have had several such cases. Especially of note are Indiana, New Jersey, South Dakota, and most particularly, Texas. Interestingly, there were no articles regarding Oregon, where the entire system is vote by mail.

## **Voter Registration Fraud**

According to press reports, the following types of allegations of voter registration fraud are most common:

- Registering in the name of dead people;
- Fake names and other information on voter registration forms;
- Illegitimate addresses used on voter registration forms;
- Voters being tricked into registering for a particular party under false pretenses; and
- Destruction of voter registration forms depending on the party the voter registered with.

There was only one self evident instance of a noncitizen registering to vote. Many of the instances reported included official investigations and charges filed, but few actual convictions, at least from the news reporting. There have been multiple reports of registration fraud in California, Colorado, Florida, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

## **Voter Intimidation and Suppression**

This is the area which had the most articles, in part because there were so many allegations of intimidation and suppression during the 2004 election. Most of these remained allegations and no criminal investigation or prosecution ensued. Some of the cases did end up in civil litigation.

This is not to say that these alleged activities were confined to 2004 – there were several allegations made during every year studied. Most notable were the high number of allegations of voter intimidation and harassment reported during the 2003 Philadelphia mayoral race.

A very high number of the articles were about the issue of challenges to voters' registration status and challengers at the polling places. There were many allegations that planned challenge activities were targeted at minority communities. Some of the challenges were concentrated in immigrant communities.

However, the tactics alleged varied greatly. The types of activities discussed also include the following:

- Photographing or videotaping voters coming out of polling places;
- Improper demands for identification;

- Poll watchers harassing voters;
- Poll workers being hostile to or aggressively challenging voters;
- Disproportionate police presence;
- Poll watchers wearing clothes with messages that seemed intended to intimidate; and
- Insufficient voting machines and unmanageably long lines.

Although the incidents reported on occurred everywhere, not surprisingly, many came from “battleground” states. There were several such reports out of Florida, Ohio, and Pennsylvania.

### **“Dead Voters and Multiple Voting”**

There were a high number of articles about people voting in the names of the dead and voting more than once. Many of these articles were marked by allegations of big numbers of people committing these frauds, and relatively few of these allegations turning out to be accurate according to investigations by the newspapers themselves, elections officials, and criminal investigators. Often the problem turned out to be a result of administrative error, poll workers mis-marking voter lists, a flawed registration list and/or errors made in the attempt to match names of voters on the list with the names of the people who voted. In a good number of cases, there were allegations that charges of double voting by political leaders were an effort to scare people away from the voting process.

Nonetheless there were a few cases of people actually being charged and/or convicted for these kinds of activities. Most of the cases involved a person voting both by absentee ballot and in person. A few instances involved people voting both during early voting and on Election Day, which calls into question the proper marking and maintenance of the voting lists. In many instances, the person charged claimed not to have voted twice on purpose. A very small handful of cases involved a voter voting in more than one county and there was one substantiated case involving a person voting in more than one state. Other instances in which such efforts were alleged were disproved by officials.

In the case of voting in the name of a dead person, the problem lay in the voter registration list not being properly maintained, i.e. the person was still on the registration list as eligible to vote, and a person took criminal advantage of that. In total, the San Francisco Chronicle found five such cases in March 2004; the AP cited a newspaper analysis of five such persons in an Indiana primary in May 2004; and a senate committee found two people to have voted in the names of the dead in 2005.

As usual, there were a disproportionate number of such articles coming out of Florida. Notably, there were three articles out of Oregon, which has one hundred percent vote-by-mail.

### **Vote Buying**

There were a surprising number of articles about vote buying cases. A few of these instances involved long-time investigations concentrated in three states (Illinois, Kentucky, and West Virginia). There were more official investigations, indictments and convictions/pleas in this area.

### **Deceptive Practices**

In 2004 there were numerous reports of intentional disinformation about voting eligibility and the voting process meant to confuse voters about their rights and when and where to vote. Misinformation came in the form of flyers, phone calls, letters, and even people going door to door. Many of the efforts were reportedly targeted at minority communities. A disproportionate number of them came from key battleground states, particularly Florida, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. From the news reports found, only one of these instances was officially investigated, the case in Oregon involving the destruction of completed voter registration applications. There were no reports of prosecutions or any other legal proceeding.

### **Non-citizen Voting**

There were surprisingly few articles regarding noncitizen registration and voting – just seven all together, in seven different states across the country. They were also evenly split between allegations of noncitizens registering and noncitizens voting. In one case, charges were filed against ten individuals. In another case, a judge in a civil suit found there was illegal noncitizen voting. Three instances prompted official investigations. Two cases, from this Nexis search, remained just allegations of noncitizen voting.

### **Felon Voting**

Although there were only thirteen cases of felon voting, some of them involved large numbers of voters. Most notably, of course, are the cases that came to light in the Washington gubernatorial election contest (see Washington summary) and in Wisconsin (see Wisconsin summary). In several states, the main problem was the large number of ineligible felons that remained on the voting list.

### **Election Official Fraud**

In most of the cases in which fraud by elections officials is suspected or alleged, it is difficult to determine whether it is incompetence or a crime. There are several cases of ballots gone missing, ballots unaccounted for and ballots ending up in a worker's possession. In two cases workers were said to have changed peoples' votes. The one

instance in which widespread ballot box stuffing by elections workers was alleged was in Washington State. The judge in the civil trial of that election contest did not find that elections workers had committed fraud. Four of the cases are from Texas.

### **Recommendation**

The consultants recommend that subsequent EAC research should include a Nexis search that specifically attempts to follow up on the cases for which no resolution is evident from this particular initial search.

## **CASE LAW RESEARCH**

After reviewing over 40,000 cases from 2000 to the present, the majority of which came from appeals courts, the consultants found comparatively few applicable to this study. Of those that were applicable, the consultants found that no apparent thematic pattern emerges. However, it appears to them that the greatest areas of fraud and intimidation have shifted from past patterns of stealing votes to present problems with voter registration, voter identification, the proper delivery and counting of absentee and overseas ballots, provisional voting, vote buying, and challenges to felon eligibility.

### **Recommendation**

Because so few cases provided a picture of these current problems, consultants suggest that subsequent EAC research include a review of state trial-level decisions.

## **PROJECT WORKING GROUP**

Consultants and EAC worked together to select members for the Voting Fraud-Voter Intimidation Working Group that included election officials and representatives of advocacy groups and the legal community who have an interest and expertise in the subject matter. (See Attachment A for a list of members.) The working group is scheduled to convene at EAC offices on May 18, 2006 to consider the results of the preliminary research and to offer ideas for future EAC activities concerning this subject.

## **FINAL REPORT**

After convening the project working group, the consultants will draft a final report summarizing the results of their research and the working group deliberations. This report will include recommendations for future EAC research related to this subject matter. The draft report will be reviewed by EAC and, after obtaining any clarifications or corrections deemed necessary, will be made available to the EAC Standards Board and EAC Board of Advisors for review and comment. Following this, a final report will be prepared.

**Attachment A**

**Voting Fraud-Voter Intimidation Project Working Group**

**The Honorable Todd Rokita**

Indiana Secretary of State

Member, EAC Standards Board and the Executive Board of the Standards Board

**Kathy Rogers**

Georgia Director of Elections, Office of the Secretary of State

Member, EAC Standards Board

**J.R. Perez**

Guadalupe County Elections Administrator, TX

**Barbara Arnwine**

Executive Director, Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law

Leader of Election Protection Coalition

*(To be represented at May 18, 2006 meeting by Jon M. Greenbaum, Director of the Voting Rights Project for the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law)*

**Robert Bauer**

Chair of the Political Law Practice at the law firm of Perkins Coie, DC

National Counsel for Voter Protection, Democratic National Committee

**Benjamin L. Ginsberg**

Partner, Patton Boggs LLP

Counsel to national Republican campaign committees and Republican candidates

**Mark (Thor) Hearne II**

Partner-Member, Lathrop & Gage, St Louis, MO

National Counsel to the American Center for Voting Rights

**Barry Weinberg**

Former Deputy Chief and Acting Chief, Voting Section, Civil Rights Division, U.S.

Department of Justice

*EAC Invited Technical Advisor:*

**Craig Donsanto**

Director, Election Crimes Branch, U.S. Department of Justice



Gracia Hillman /EAC/GOV  
07/11/2006 01:56 PM

To Gavin S. Gilmour/EAC/GOV@EAC  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Ethics Form (278)

Yes, both stocks lost value.

I don't remember what Schedule D is but thanks for the correction.

---

Sent from my BlackBerry Wireless Handheld  
Gavin S. Gilmour

**From:** Gavin S. Gilmour  
**Sent:** 07/11/2006 12:51 PM  
**To:** Gracia Hillman  
**Subject:** Ethics Form (278)

Commissioner,

I have completed a review of your OGE 278 Form. Its looks good, but I need some simple clarifications.

1) Two of your investments have decreased in value. (A) UAL: Schedule A, Pg3, line 7 and (B) Pharmaceutical Holders Trust: Schedule A, pg 8 line 3.  
No transaction (sale) is noted on schedule B. I assume that this is because the change in value reflects a change in the market. Please confirm this.

2) On Schedule D, Part II, I will remove the check mark on the none box as this section does not apply to you. (checking none suggests a responsive, negative reply).

Thanks

Gavin

Gavin S. Gilmour  
Deputy General Counsel  
United States Election Assistance Commission  
1225 New York Ave., NW, Ste 1100  
Washington, DC 20005  
(202) 566-3100

THIS MESSAGE IS FOR ITS INTENDED RECIPIENT ONLY. IT IS A PRIVILEGED DOCUMENT AND SHALL NOT BE RELEASED TO A THIRD PARTY WITHOUT THE CONSENT OF THE SENDER.

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Deliberative Process  
Privilege



"Job Serebrov"  
[REDACTED]

05/16/2006 09:25 AM

To psims@eac.gov, [REDACTED]

cc

Subject Re: Date Ranges for Research

Cases were from 2000 to the present.

--- psims@eac.gov wrote:

> Would you please refresh my memory about the date  
> ranges used for the  
> Nexis article research and the case law research?  
> I'm drawing a blank and  
> I don't see it in the summaries. I need it for this  
> mornings Commissioner  
> briefing. Thanks! --- Peggy

--- Forwarded by Margaret Sims/EAC/GOV on 04/30/2007 04:21 PM ---



"Job Serebrov"  
[REDACTED]

05/15/2006 09:56 AM

To psims@eac.gov

cc

Subject Re: Question

Did you find out whether I can use the Chairman's  
parking spot?

--- psims@eac.gov wrote:

> You will need to submit hotel and parking receipts.  
> You don't need to submit meal receipts. You don't  
> need to submit gas receipts because use of a  
> personally owned vehicle (POV) is reimbursed based  
> on mileage. I think I emailed the mileage rate to  
> you. If you need it again, I'll look it up when I am  
> at the office (this afternoon).  
> Peg

>  
> -----  
> Sent from my BlackBerry Wireless Handheld

>  
>  
> ----- Original Message -----

> From: "Job Serebrov" [REDACTED]  
> Sent: 05/12/2006 09:05 PM  
> To: psims@eac.gov  
> Subject: Question  
>

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> Peg:  
>  
> Since I am driving to DC, besides hotel receipts, do  
> you want me to keep my gas receipts or how will my  
> car  
> use be compensated? Also, I assume I don't have to  
> retain food receipts.  
>  
> Job  
>  
>  
>

----- Forwarded by Margaret Sims/EAC/GOV on 04/30/2007 04:21 PM -----

Margaret Sims/EAC/GOV

05/24/2006 04:57 PM

To "Tova Wang" [REDACTED]@GSAEXTERNAL

cc

Subject RE: presentation [REDACTED]

The Standards Board has the reputation of being crankier than the Board of Advisors. They beat up on the Commissioners last year.

"Tova Wang" <wang@tcf.org>



"Tova Wang"

[REDACTED]  
05/24/2006 04:50 PM

To psims@eac.gov

cc

Subject RE: presentation

Is such a roasting usual? I mean, do they think we did a bad job???

-----Original Message-----

**From:** psims@eac.gov [mailto:psims@eac.gov]

**Sent:** Wednesday, May 24, 2006 3:43 PM

**To:** wang@tcf.org

**Subject:** RE: presentation

You have most of the pieces of the report now. We absolutely need to put the statutory authority for the research up front. We need to add the definition. We also need to add a short piece addressing the approach for this preliminary research (including short statements on the pros and cons of information sources --- you began to address this in the literature review summary). I expect that the biggest project will be fleshing out the possible avenues for subsequent research in this area. It would be great if we could come up with cost estimates. If we can't, we need to at least identify what info we hope to get, what we are likely to miss, and any pitfalls.

Given today's roast, I will take another look at what we have now to highlight remarks that might

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needlessly tick board members off. We can discuss whether or not editing or removing the remark would be detrimental to or have no real effect on the final report. (An example of such a remark is the reference to the number of articles out of Florida. A local official from that State objected on the grounds that the number of articles does not reliably indicate the number of problems.) I know we can expect a challenge from Board of Advisors member Craig Donsanto regarding the focus of the Election Crimes Branch prosecutions.

Yes, we can discuss the organization and "look" of the report after Job returns. Yes, the Commissioners will want to review it and submit their changes before the report goes to the boards.

It is too early to tell what EAC efforts may be mounted in FY 2007. I doubt that fire from the Standards Board will prevent Commissioners from doing what they think is needed. But, given that it is an election year, appropriations legislation may not be signed until December or later -- so we won't know how much money we have for awhile. --- Peggy

"Tova Wang" 

05/24/2006 03:27 PM

To psims@eac.gov  
cc  
Subject RE: presentation

Yikes. It sounds like a lot of work after all. Should we talk over what the report should look like again, I guess when Job gets back? Will you help us write it in a way you think will satisfy? I guess it goes to the commissioners first anyway. Does this portend anything for phase 2?

Thanks Peg. Tova

-----Original Message-----

**From:** psims@eac.gov [mailto:psims@eac.gov]

**Sent:** Wednesday, May 24, 2006 2:16 PM

**To:** wang@tcf.org

**Subject:** Re: presentation

I'm glad it is over --- for now. One audience was a lot tougher than the other. The Standards Board was much more critical of the research than the Board of Advisors.

Of course, the Board of Advisors is the body that wanted EAC to place a high priority on the research. Its members were interested in sharing personal experiences (including problems with getting anyone to prosecute) and observations (that we need to expand the research to give Congress and political parties a better picture of how rare or prevalent are voting fraud and intimidation, that the HAVA-mandated statewide voter registration lists should help to prevent fraud, etc.). They also asked if EAC will look at specific opportunities for fraud (using cell phones

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in vote buying schemes to photograph the ballot being cast at the poll) and how the agency will research voter intimidation/suppression involving voters with disabilities (advocates want to pass on complaints received).

The members of the Standards Board focused much more on the scope of the research and the completeness and accuracy of the information gleaned. Some wanted to include campaign finance crimes in the mix; others understood why we did not. Several did not like the use of newspaper articles, or were defensive about references to the large number of articles about their State. They made the point that, given the vagaries of the press, EAC should not use the number of articles about a specific State or particular vote fraud/intimidation activity as a basis for determining the likelihood that problems will occur in a given State or the frequency with which certain activities occur. (I never said that we did, but some members thought it was at least implied.) Some members want more research on the topic (into prosecutions and/or unsuccessful referrals made by election officials to law enforcement agencies); others want us to "quit throwing away tax dollars" and to stop the research altogether. Although my first slide noted our statutory authority to conduct this study, several members challenged EAC's right to do so --- saying that DOJ, not EAC, should conduct such research.

The dueling approaches of these boards may give us heartburn when the time comes for them to review and comment on the draft. We will have to make a strong statement at the beginning, perhaps repeated at the end, that this is preliminary research. We also may need to thoroughly explain how choices were made regarding what to look at, who to interview, etc. We may need to clearly acknowledge both the strengths and weaknesses of the various sources of information used in the preliminary research. Finally, when reviewing ideas for subsequent research, we may need to discuss the pros and cons of each approach, what additional information we expect to retrieve, and, perhaps, the estimated cost.

By the way, I did clarify the polling place fraud bullet. --- Peg

"Tova Wang" 

05/24/2006 09:14 AM

To psims@eac.gov  
cc  
Subject presentation

How did it go? Were you able to verbally correct that discrepancy we talked about the other day?  
Thanks. Tova

Tova Andrea Wang  
Democracy Fellow  
**The Century Foundation**

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## **EAC ELECTION CRIMES STUDY: NEXT STEPS**

### **Background: Phase I**

Section 241 of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) requires the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to conduct research on election administration issues including nationwide statistics and methods of identifying, deterring, and investigating voting fraud in elections for Federal office [Section 241(b)(6)]; and ways of identifying, deterring, and investigating methods of voter intimidation [Section 241(b)(7)].

The EAC initiated its study of election crimes in 2005, issuing its first report, "Election Crimes: An Initial Review and Recommendations for Future Study" in December 2006. The EAC adopted all or part of six of the 16 recommendations made by EAC consultants and the working group in the 2006 Report. These recommendations include:

- Surveying state chief election officers regarding administrative complaint processes mandated by Section 402 of HAVA,
- Surveying state election crime investigation units regarding complaints filed and referred to local or state law enforcement,
- Surveying state law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies regarding complaints and charges of voting crimes, and
- Analyzing survey data in light of state laws and procedures.

### **Next Steps: Phase II**

As we look to initiate Phase II of this study and explore next steps for conducting a comprehensive survey of election crimes, the main aims of this phase should be:

- Identifying the methods by which states are capturing/identifying and investigating/prosecuting potential election crimes,
- Comparing the rates of election fraud in the context of these state laws/procedures, and
- Assessing the general scale of election crimes under various election systems and election crime enforcement methods.

### **Suggested Research Methodology:**

In order to identify and assess the magnitude and quality of the election crime enforcement methods currently utilized by the states, we would survey a sample of geographically and demographically diverse jurisdictions, juxtaposing states with substantial election crime allegations against those with limited election crime allegations. We would survey state election officials; state crime investigation units; and the local, state, and federal law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies. A project working group would be formed to review the research methodology and proposed survey contents. Researchers will collect data regarding state election crimes laws and election administration procedures in order to analyze the survey results in light of the

state election practices. After the research is conducted, the working group would reconvene to review the research results and provide input on the content and format of the resulting report.

Using the uniform definition of election crimes generated during Phase I, the surveys would be designed to capture specific data regarding the existence and enforcement of election crimes. The surveys will not only determine the magnitude and type of election crimes occurring amongst the states, but also explore best practices in an effort to find successful prevention and enforcement methods.

Three types of surveys would be conducted:

- A survey designed for the **state's chief election officials** would focus on election crime complaint procedures—assessing the volume and type of election crimes reported. Additionally, the survey would address the administrative complaint procedures required by Section 402 of HAVA in order to analyze the complaints that have been filed, investigated, and resolved via these procedures since January 1, 2004.
- A survey designed for **state crime investigation units** would focus on the state agencies/offices responsible for prosecuting election crimes — analyzing the number and type of complaints, charges or indictments, and pleas or convictions handled at the state level, or referred to the federal or local level.
- A survey of **local, state, and federal law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies** (e.g. district attorneys, state attorney generals, officials associated with the Department of Justice's Election Crimes Branch and Voting Section) to determine the number and types of complaints, charges or indictments, and pleas or convictions of election crimes since January 1, 2004. In addition, EAC will seek to obtain an understanding of why some complaints are not charged or indicted and why some charges or indictments are not prosecuted. Researchers would also review reports filed to the Public Integrity Section of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice.

#### **Criteria for States to be Sampled:**

In order to get a broad assessment of the current election crime enforcement landscape, our sample should include the following:

- States with multiple reports of **voter registration fraud** (e.g. California, Colorado, Florida, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Nevada),
- States with multiple reports of **voter intimidation and suppression**, (e.g. Florida, Ohio, South Carolina, and Pennsylvania),

- States with multiple reports of deceptive practices (e.g. Florida, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia),
- States with multiple reports of felons voting (e.g. Tennessee, Washington and Wisconsin),
- States with multiple reports of dead/multiple voters (e.g. Florida, Illinois, Tennessee, and Wisconsin),
- States with multiple reports of election official fraud (e.g. Washington and Texas), and
- States with multiple reports of absentee ballot fraud (e.g. Indiana, New Jersey, Kentucky, South Dakota, Virginia, Tennessee, and Texas).

In order to balance these locations, we would also sample from states which do not have multiple reports of these election crimes (e.g. Oregon which has few reported election crimes despite the entire system being conducted by mail).

Additionally, the sample should include states which have the following election system characteristics:

- States with longstanding statewide voter registration databases (e.g. Alaska, Kentucky, Michigan, South Carolina, and Virginia).
- States with longstanding election day registration experience (e.g. Minnesota and Wisconsin).
- States with election crime investigation units (e.g. California, New York, Louisiana and Florida), and
- States with special election courts (e.g. Pennsylvania).

#### **Suggested States:**

Based on these factors, the survey would include the following 10 states with substantial election crime allegations: California, Florida, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Washington, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas. The survey would also include states with limited election crime allegations such as Oregon, Kentucky, and Minnesota.

#### **Timelines and General Workplan:**

Below is a suggested timeframe in which we should accomplish Phase II of our election crimes research:

- Statement of Work developed by April 30, 2007
- Contractor to perform research identified by May 30, 2007
- Preliminary research findings delivered by August 15, 2007
- EAC report on initial findings on October 30, 2007

**Voting Fraud and Voter Intimidation**  
**Report to the**  
**U.S. Election Assistance Commission**  
**on**  
**Preliminary Research & Recommendations**

**By**

**Job Serebrov and Tova Wang**

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## Introduction

### **Charge Under HAVA**

Under the Help America Vote Act, Pub. L. No. 107-252, 116 Stat. 1666 (2002) (“HAVA”), the United States Election Assistance Commission is charged with developing national statistics on voter fraud and developing methods of deterring and investigating voter fraud. Also, the Commission is charged with developing methods of identifying, deterring, and investigating methods of voter intimidation.

### **Scope of Project**

The Commission employed a bipartisan team of legal consultants, Tova Wang and Job Serebrov to develop a preliminary overview work product to determine the quantity and quality of vote fraud and voter intimidation that is present on a national scale. The consultants’ work is neither comprehensive nor conclusive. This first phase of an envisioned two-phase project was constrained by both time and funding. The consultants’ conclusions and recommendations for phase II will be contained in this report.

The consultants, working without the aid of a support staff, divided most of the work. However, the final work product was mutually checked and approved. They agreed upon the steps that were taken needed and the method employed. For all of the documentary sources, the consultants limited the time period under review from January 1, 2001 to January 1, 2006. The research performed by the consultants included interviews, an extensive Nexis search, a review of existing literature, and case research.

**Interviews:** The consultants chose the interviewees by first coming up with a list of the categories of types of people they wanted to interview. Then the consultants separately, equally filled those categories with a certain number of people. Due to time and resource constraints, the consultants had to pare down this list substantially – for instance, they had to rule out interviewing prosecutors altogether – but still got a good range of people to talk to. The ultimate categories were academics, advocates, elections officials, lawyers and judges. Although the consultants were able to talk to most of the people they wanted to, some were unavailable and a few were not comfortable speaking to them, particularly judges. The consultants together conducted all of the interviews, either by phone or in person. Then the consultants split up drafting the summaries. All summaries were reviewed and mutually approved. Most of the interviews were extremely informative and the consultants found the interviewees to be extremely knowledgeable and insightful for the most part.

**Nexis:** Initially, the consultants developed an enormous list of possible Nexis search terms. It soon became obvious that it would be impossible to conduct the research that way. As a result, consultant Wang performed the Nexis search by finding search term combinations that would yield virtually every article on a particular subject from the last

five years. Consultant Serebrov approved the search terms. Then Wang created an excel spreadsheet in order to break down the articles in way in which they could be effectively analyzed for patterns. Each type of fraud is broken down in a separate chart according to where it took place, the date, the type of election it occurred in, what the allegation was, the publication it came from. Where there was a follow up article, any information that that suggested there had been some further action taken or some resolution to the allegation was also included. For four very complicated and long drawn out situations – Washington State, Wisconsin, South Dakota in 2004, and the vote buying cases in a couple of particular jurisdictions over the last several years –written summaries with news citations are provided.

**Existing Literature:** Part of the selections made by the consultants resulted from consultant Wang's long-term familiarity with the material while part was the result of a joint web search for articles and books on vote fraud and voter intimidation and suggestions from those interviewed by the consultants. The consultants reviewed a wide range of materials from government reports and investigations, to academic literature, to reports published by advocacy groups. The consultants believe that they covered the landscape of available sources.

**Cases:** In order to properly identify all applicable cases, the consultants first developed an extensive word search term list. A WestLaw search was performed and the first one hundred cases under each word search term were then gathered in individual files. This resulted in a total of approximately 44,000 cases. Most of these cases were federal as opposed to state and appellate as opposed to trial. Consultant Serebrov analyzed the cases in each file to determine if they were on point. If he found that the first twenty cases were inapplicable, Serebrov would sample forty to fifty other file cases at random to determine applicability. If the entire file did not yield any cases, the file would be discarded. All discarded word search terms were recorded in a separate file. Likewise, if the file only yielded a few applicable cases, it would also be discarded. However, if a small but significant number of cases were on point, the file was later charted. The results of the case search were stark because relatively few applicable cases were found.

## Working Definition of Fraud and Intimidation

*Note: The definition provided below is for the purposes of this EAC project. Most of the acts described come within the federal criminal definition of fraud, but some may not.*

Election fraud is any intentional action, or intentional failure to act when there is a duty to do so, that corrupts the election process in a manner that can impact on election outcomes. This includes interfering in the process by which persons register to vote; the way in which ballots are obtained, marked, or tabulated; and the process by which election results are canvassed and certified.

Examples include the following:

- falsifying voter registration information pertinent to eligibility to cast a vote, (e.g. residence, criminal status, etc.);
- altering completed voter registration applications by entering false information;
- knowingly destroying completed voter registration applications (other than spoiled applications) before they can be submitted to the proper election authority;
- knowingly removing eligible voters from voter registration lists, in violation of HAVA, NVRA, or state election laws;
- intentional destruction by election officials of voter registration records or balloting records, in violation of records retention laws, to remove evidence of election fraud;
- vote buying;
- voting in the name of another;
- voting more than once;
- coercing a voter's choice on an absentee ballot;
- using a false name and/or signature on an absentee ballot;
- destroying or misappropriating an absentee ballot;
- felons, or in some states ex-felons, who vote when they know they are ineligible to do so;
- misleading an ex-felon about his or her right to vote;
- voting by non-citizens who know they are ineligible to do so;
- intimidating practices aimed at vote suppression or deterrence, including the abuse of challenge laws;
- deceiving voters with false information (e.g.; deliberately directing voters to the wrong polling place or providing false information on polling hours and dates);
- knowingly failing to accept voter registration applications, to provide ballots, or to accept and count voted ballots in accordance with the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act;
- intentional miscounting of ballots by election officials;
- intentional misrepresentation of vote tallies by election officials;
- acting in any other manner with the intention of suppressing voter registration or voting, or interfering with vote counting and the certification of the vote.

Voting Fraud and Voter Intimidation – Preliminary Research & Recommendations

Voting fraud does not include mistakes made in the course of voter registration, balloting, or tabulating ballots and certifying results. For purposes of the EAC study, it also does not include violations of campaign finance laws.

DRAFT

## Summaries of Research Conducted

### Interviews

#### *Common Themes*

- There is virtually universal agreement that absentee ballot fraud is the biggest problem, with vote buying and registration fraud coming in after that. The vote buying often comes in the form of payment for absentee ballots, although not always. Some absentee ballot fraud is part of an organized effort; some is by individuals, who sometimes are not even aware that what they are doing is illegal. Voter registration fraud seems to take the form of people signing up with false names. Registration fraud seems to be most common where people doing the registration were paid by the signature.
- There is widespread but not unanimous agreement that there is little polling place fraud, or at least much less than is claimed, including voter impersonation, “dead” voters, noncitizen voting and felon voters. Those few who believe it occurs often enough to be a concern say that it is impossible to show the extent to which it happens, but do point to instances in the press of such incidents. Most people believe that false registration forms have not resulted in polling place fraud, although it may create the perception that vote fraud is possible. Those who believe there is more polling place fraud than reported/investigated/prosecuted believe that registration fraud does lead to fraudulent votes. Jason Torchinsky from the American Center for Voting Rights is the only interviewee who believes that polling place fraud is widespread and among the most significant problems in the system.
- Abuse of challenger laws and abusive challengers seem to be the biggest intimidation/suppression concerns, and many of those interviewed assert that the new identification requirements are the modern version of voter intimidation and suppression. However there is evidence of some continued outright intimidation and suppression, especially in some Native American communities. A number of people also raise the problem of poll workers engaging in harassment of minority voters. Other activities commonly raised were the issue of polling places being moved at the last moment, unequal distribution of voting machines, videotaping of voters at the polls, and targeted misinformation campaigns.
- Several people indicate – including representatives from DOJ -- that for various reasons, the Department of Justice is bringing fewer voter intimidation and suppression cases now and is focusing on matters such as noncitizen voting, double voting and felon voting. While the civil rights section continues to focus on systemic patterns of malfeasance, the public integrity section is focusing now on individuals, on isolated instances of fraud.
- The problem of badly kept voter registration lists, with both ineligible voters remaining on the rolls and eligible voters being taken off, remains a common concern. A few people are also troubled by voters being on registration lists in two states. They said that there was no evidence that this had led to double voting, but it opens the door to the possibility. There is great hope that full

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implementation of the new requirements of HAVA – done well, a major caveat – will reduce this problem dramatically.

### *Common Recommendations:*

- Many of those interviewed recommend better poll worker training as the best way to improve the process; a few also recommended longer voting times or voting on days other than election day (such as weekends) but fewer polling places so only the best poll workers would be employed
- Many interviewed support stronger criminal laws and increased enforcement of existing laws with respect to both fraud and intimidation. Advocates from across the spectrum expressed frustration with the failure of the Department of Justice to pursue complaints.
  - With respect to the civil rights section, John Tanner indicated that fewer cases are being brought because fewer are warranted – it has become increasingly difficult to know when allegations of intimidation and suppression are credible since it depends on one's definition of intimidation, and because both parties are doing it. Moreover prior enforcement of the laws has now changed the entire landscape – race based problems are rare now. Although challenges based on race and unequal implementation of identification rules would be actionable, Mr. Tanner was unaware of such situations actually occurring and the section has not pursued any such cases.
  - Craig Donsanto of the public integrity section says that while the number of election fraud related complaints have not gone up since 2002, nor has the proportion of legitimate to illegitimate claims of fraud, the number of cases the department is investigating and the number of indictments the section is pursuing are both up dramatically. Since 2002, the department has brought more cases against alien voters, felon voters and double voters than ever before. Mr. Donsanto would like more resources so it can do more and would like to have laws that make it easier for the federal government to assume jurisdiction over voter fraud cases.
- A couple of interviewees recommend a new law that would make it easier to criminally prosecute people for intimidation even when there is not racial animus.
- Almost everyone hopes that administrators will maximize the potential of statewide voter registration databases to prevent fraud. Of particular note, Sarah Ball Johnson, Executive Director of Elections for Kentucky, emphasized that having had an effective statewide voter registration database for more than thirty years has helped that state avoid most of the fraud problems that have been alleged elsewhere, such as double voting and felon voting.
- Several advocate expanded monitoring of the polls, including some associated with the Department of Justice.
- Challenge laws, both with respect to pre-election day challenges and challengers at the polls, need to be revised by all states to ensure they are not used for purposes of wrongful disenfranchisement and harassment

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- Several people advocate passage of Senator Barak Obama's "deceptive practices" bill
- There is a split on whether it would be helpful to have nonpartisan election officials – some indicated they thought even if elections officials are elected nonpartisanly they will carry out their duties in biased ways nonetheless. However, most agree that elections officials pursuing partisan agendas is a problem that must be addressed in some fashion. Suggestions included moving election responsibilities out of the secretary of states' office; increasing transparency in the process; and enacting conflict of interest rules.
- A few recommend returning to allowing use of absentee ballots "for cause" only if it were politically feasible.
- A few recommend enacting a national identification card, including Pat Rogers, an attorney in New Mexico, and Jason Torchinsky from ACVR, who advocates the scheme contemplated in the Carter-Baker Commission Report.
- A couple of interviewees indicated the need for clear standards for the distribution of voting machines

### **Nexis Research**

#### ***Absentee Ballot Fraud***

According to press reports, absentee ballots are abused in a variety of ways:

- Campaign workers, candidates and others coerce the voting choices of vulnerable populations, usually elderly voters
- Workers for groups and individuals have attempted to vote absentee in the names of the deceased
- Workers for groups, campaign workers and individuals have attempted to forge the names of other voters on absentee ballot requests and absentee ballots and thus vote multiple times

It is unclear how often actual convictions result from these activities (a handful of articles indicate convictions and guilty pleas), but this is an area in which there have been a substantial number of official investigations and actual charges filed, according to news reports where such information is available. A few of the allegations became part of civil court proceedings contesting the outcome of the election.

While absentee fraud allegations turn up throughout the country, a few states have had several such cases. Especially of note are Indiana, New Jersey, South Dakota, and most particularly, Texas. Interestingly, there were no articles regarding Oregon, where the entire system is vote by mail.

#### ***Voter Registration Fraud***

According to press reports, the following types of allegations of voter registration fraud are most common:

- Registering in the name of dead people
- Fake names and other information on voter registration forms
- Illegitimate addresses used on voter registration forms
- Voters being tricked into registering for a particular party under false pretenses
- Destruction of voter registration forms depending on the party the voter registered with

There was only one self evident instance of a noncitizen registering to vote. Many of the instances reported on included official investigations and charges filed, but few actual convictions, at least from the news reporting. There have been multiple reports of registration fraud in California, Colorado, Florida, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

### *Voter Intimidation and Suppression*

This is the area which had the most articles in part because there were so many allegations of intimidation and suppression during the 2004 election. Most of these remained allegations and no criminal investigation or prosecution ensued. Some of the cases did end up in civil litigation.

This is not to say that these alleged activities were confined to 2004 – there were several allegations made during every year studied. Most notable were the high number of allegations of voter intimidation and harassment reported during the 2003 Philadelphia mayoral race.

A very high number of the articles were about the issue of challenges to voters' registration status and challengers at the polling places. There were many allegations that planned challenge activities were targeted at minority communities. Some of the challenges were concentrated in immigrant communities.

However, the tactics alleged varied greatly. The types of activities discussed also include the following:

- Photographing or videotaping voters coming out of polling places.
- Improper demands for identification
- Poll watchers harassing voters
- Poll workers being hostile to or aggressively challenging voters
- Disproportionate police presence
- Poll watchers wearing clothes with messages that seemed intended to intimidate
- Insufficient voting machines and unmanageably long lines

Although the incidents reported on occurred everywhere, not surprisingly, many came from “battleground” states. There were several such reports out of Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

### *“Dead Voters and Multiple Voting”*

There were a high number of articles about people voting in the names of the dead and voting more than once. Many of these articles were marked by allegations of big numbers of people committing these frauds, and relatively few of these allegations turning out to be accurate according to investigations by the newspapers themselves, elections officials and criminal investigators. Often the problem turned out to be a result of administrative error, poll workers mis-marking of voter lists, a flawed registration list and/or errors made in the attempt to match names of voters on the list with the names of the people who voted. In a good number of cases, there were allegations that charges of double voting by political leaders were an effort to scare people away from the voting process.

Nonetheless there were a few cases of people actually being charged and/or convicted for these kinds of activities. Most of the cases involved a person voting both by absentee ballot and in person. A few instances involved people voting both during early voting and on Election Day, which calls into question the proper marking and maintenance of the voting lists. In many instances, the person charged claimed not to have voted twice on purpose. A very small handful of cases involved a voter voting in more than one county and there was one substantiated case involving a person voting in more than one state. Other instances in which such efforts were alleged were disproved by officials.

In the case of voting in the name of a dead person, the problem lay in the voter registration list not being properly maintained, i.e. the person was still on the registration list as eligible to vote, and a person taking criminal advantage of that. In total, the San Francisco Chronicle found 5 such cases in March 2004; the AP cited a newspaper analysis of five such persons in an Indiana primary in May 2004; and a senate committee found two people to have voted in the names of the dead in 2005.

As usual, there were a disproportionate number of such articles coming out of Florida. Notably, there were three articles out of Oregon, which has one hundred percent vote-by-mail.

### *Vote Buying*

There were a surprising number of articles about vote buying cases. A few of these instances involved long-time investigations in three particular jurisdictions as detailed in the vote buying summary. There were more official investigations, indictments and convictions/pleas in this area. All of these cases are concentrated in the Midwest and South.

### *Deceptive Practices*

In 2004 there were numerous reports of intentional disinformation about voting eligibility and the voting process meant to confuse voters about their rights and when and where to vote. Misinformation came in the form of flyers, phone calls, letters, and even people going door to door. Many of the efforts were reportedly targeted at minority communities. A disproportionate number of them came from key battleground states, particularly Florida, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. From the news reports found, only one of these instances was officially investigated, the case in Oregon involving the destruction of voter registration forms. There were no reports of prosecutions or any other legal proceeding.

### ***Non-citizen Voting***

There were surprisingly few articles regarding noncitizen registration and voting – just seven all together, in seven different states across the country. They were also evenly split between allegations of noncitizens registering and noncitizens voting. In one case charges were filed against ten individuals. In one case a judge in a civil suit found there was illegal noncitizen voting. Three instances prompted official investigations. Two cases, from this nexis search, remained just allegations of noncitizen voting.

### ***Felon Voting***

Although there were only thirteen cases of felon voting, some of them involved large numbers of voters. Most notably, of course, are the cases that came to light in the Washington gubernatorial election contest (see Washington summary) and in Wisconsin (see Wisconsin summary). In several states, the main problem has been the large number of ineligible felons that remained on the voting list.

### ***Election Official Fraud***

In most of the cases in which fraud by elections officials is suspected or alleged, it is difficult to determine whether it is incompetence or a crime. There are several cases of ballots gone missing, ballots unaccounted for and ballots ending up in a worker's possession. In two cases workers were said to have changed peoples' votes. The one instance in which widespread ballot box stuffing by elections workers was alleged was in Washington State. The judge in the civil trial of that election contest did not find that elections workers had committed fraud. Four of the cases are from Texas.

### **Existing Research**

There are many reports and books that describe anecdotes and draw broad conclusions from a large array of incidents. There is little research that is truly systematic or scientific. The most systematic look at fraud is the report written by Lori Minnite. The most systematic look at voter intimidation is the report by Laughlin McDonald. Books

written about this subject seem to all have a political bias and a pre-existing agenda that makes them somewhat less valuable.

Researchers agree that measuring something like the incidence of fraud and intimidation in a scientifically legitimate way is extremely difficult from a methodological perspective and would require resources beyond the means of most social and political scientists. As a result, there is much more written on this topic by advocacy groups than social scientists. It is hoped that this gap will be filled in the “second phase” of this EAC project.

Moreover, reports and books make allegations but, perhaps by their nature, have little follow up. As a result, it is difficult to know when something has remained in the stage of being an allegation and gone no further, or progressed to the point of being investigated or prosecuted or in any other way proven to be valid by an independent, neutral entity. This is true, for example, with respect to allegations of voter intimidation by civil rights organizations, and, with respect to fraud, John Fund’s frequently cited book. Again, this is something that it is hoped will be addressed in the “second phase” of this EAC project by doing follow up research on allegations made in reports, books and newspaper articles.

Other items of note:

- There is as much evidence, and as much concern, about structural forms of disenfranchisement as about intentional abuse of the system. These include felon disenfranchisement, poor maintenance of databases and identification requirements.
- There is tremendous disagreement about the extent to which polling place fraud, e.g. double voting, intentional felon voting, noncitizen voting, is a serious problem. On balance, more researchers find it to be less of a problem than is commonly described in the political debate, but some reports say it is a major problem, albeit hard to identify.
- There is substantial concern across the board about absentee balloting and the opportunity it presents for fraud.
- Federal law governing election fraud and intimidation is varied and complex and yet may nonetheless be insufficient or subject to too many limitations to be as effective as it might be.
- Deceptive practices, e.g. targeted flyers and phone calls providing misinformation, were a major problem in 2004.
- Voter intimidation continues to be focused on minority communities, although the American Center for Voting Rights uniquely alleges it is focused on Republicans.

## Cases

After reviewing over 40,000 cases, the majority of which came from appeals courts, I have found comparatively very few which are applicable to this study. Of those that are applicable, no apparent thematic pattern emerges. However, it seems that the greatest areas of fraud and intimidation have shifted from past patterns of stealing votes to present problems with voter registration, voter identification, the proper delivery and counting of absentee and overseas ballots, provisional voting, vote buying, and challenges to felon eligibility. But because so few cases provided a picture of these current problems, I suggest that case research for the second phase of this project concentrate on state trial-level decisions.

## Methodology

The following is a summary of interviews conducted with a number of political scientists and experts in the field as to how one might undertake a comprehensive examination of voter fraud and intimidation. A list of the individuals interviewed and their ideas are available, and all of the individuals welcome any further questions or explanations of their recommended procedures.

- In analyzing instances of alleged fraud and intimidation, we should look to criminology as a model. In criminology, experts use two sources: the Uniform Crime Reports, which are all reports made to the police, and the Victimization Survey, which asks the general public whether a particular incident has happened to them. After surveying what the most common allegations are, we should conduct a survey of the general public that ask whether they have committed certain acts or been subjected to any incidents of fraud or intimidation. This would require using a very large sample, and we would need to employ the services of an expert in survey data collection. (Stephen Ansolobhere, MIT)
- Several political scientists with expertise in these types of studies recommended a methodology that includes interviews, focus groups, and a limited survey. In determining who to interview and where the focus groups should be drawn from, they recommend the following procedure:
  - Pick a number of places that have historically had many reports of fraud and/or intimidation; from that pool pick 10 that are geographically and demographically diverse, and have had a diversity of problems
  - Pick a number of places that have not had many reports of fraud and/or intimidation; from that pool pick 10 places that match the geographic and demographic make-up of the previous ten above (and, if possible, have comparable elections practices)

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- Assess the resulting overall reports and impressions resulting from these interviews and focus groups, and examine comparisons and differences among the states and what may give rise to them.

In conducting a survey of elections officials, district attorneys, district election officers, they recommend that:

- The survey sample be large in order to be able to get the necessary subsets
- The survey must include a random set of counties where there have and have not been a large number of allegations

(Allan Lichtman, American University; Thad Hall, University of Utah; Bernard Grofman, UC – Irvine)

- Another political scientist recommended employing a methodology that relies on qualitative data drawn from in-depth interviews with key critics and experts on all sides of the debate on fraud; quantitative data collected through a survey of state and local elections and law enforcement officials; and case studies. Case studies should focus on the five or ten states, regions or cities where there has been a history of election fraud to examine past and present problems. The survey should be mailed to each state's attorney general and secretary of state, each county district attorney's office and each county board of elections in the 50 states. (Lorraine Minnite, Barnard College)
- The research should be a two-step process. Using LexisNexis and other research tools, a search should be conducted of news media accounts over the past decade. Second, interviews with a systematic sample of election officials nationwide and in selected states should be conducted. (Chandler Davidson, Rice University)
- One expert in the field posits that we can never come up with a number that accurately represents either the incidence of fraud or the incidence of voter intimidation. Therefore, the better approach is to do an assessment of what is most likely to happen, what election violations are most likely to be committed – in other words, a risk analysis. This would include an analysis of what it would actually take to commit various acts, e.g. the cost/benefit of each kind of violation. From there we could rank the likely prevalence of each type of activity and examine what measures are or could be effective in combating them. (Wendy Weiser, Brennan Center of New York University)
- Replicate a study in the United States done abroad by Susan Hyde of the University of California- San Diego examining the impact of impartial poll site observers on the incidence of election fraud. Doing this retrospectively would require the following steps:
  - Find out where there were federal observers
  - Get precinct level voting information for those places

- Analyze whether there was any difference in election outcomes in those places with and without observers, and whether any of these results seem anomalous.

Despite the tremendous differences in the political landscapes of the countries examined by Hyde in previous studies and the U.S., Hyde believes this study could be effectively replicated in this country by sending observers to a random sample of precincts. Rather than compare the incumbent's vote share, such factors such as voter complaints, voter turnout, number of provisional ballots used, composition of the electorate, as well as any anomalous voting results could be compared between sites with and without monitors.

For example, if intimidation is occurring, and if reputable monitors make intimidation less likely or voters more confident, then turnout should be higher on average in monitored precincts than in unmonitored precincts. If polling station officials are intentionally refusing to issue provisional ballots, and the polling station officials are more likely to adhere to regulations while being monitored, the average number of provisional ballots should be higher in monitored precincts than in unmonitored precincts. If monitors cause polling station officials to adhere more closely to regulations, then there should be fewer complaints (in general) about monitored than unmonitored precincts (this could also be reversed if monitors made voters more likely to complain).

Again, random assignment controls for all of the other factors that otherwise influence these variables.

One of the downsides of this approach is it does not get at some forms of fraud, e.g. absentee ballot fraud; those would have to be analyzed separately.

- Another political scientist recommends conducting an analysis of vote fraud claims and purging of registration rolls by list matching. Allegations of illegal voting often are based on matching of names and birth dates. Alleged instances of double voting are based on matching the names and birth dates of persons found on voting records. Allegations of ineligible felon (depending on state law), deceased, and of non-citizen voting are based on matching lists of names, birth dates, and sometimes addresses of such people against a voting records. Anyone with basic relational database skills can perform such matching in a matter of minutes.

However, there are a number of pitfalls for the unwary that can lead to grossly over-estimating the number of fraudulent votes, such as missing or ignored middle names and suffixes or matching on missing birth dates. Furthermore, there is a surprising statistical fact that a group of about three hundred people with the same first and last name are almost assured to share the exact same birth date, including year. In a large state, it is not uncommon for hundreds of Robert Smiths (and other common names) to have voted. Thus, allegations of vote fraud

or purging of voter registration rolls by list matching almost assuredly will find a large proportion of false positives: people who voted legally or are registered to vote legally.

Statistics can be rigorously applied to determine how many names would be expected to be matched by chance. A simulation approach is best applied here: randomly assign a birth date to an arbitrary number of people and observe how many match within the list or across lists. The simulation is repeated many times to average out the variation due to chance. The results can then be matched back to actual voting records and purge lists, for example, in the hotly contested states of Ohio or Florida, or in states with Election Day registration where there are concerns that easy access to voting permits double voting. This analysis will rigorously identify the magnitude alleged voter fraud, and may very well find instances of alleged fraud that exceed what might have otherwise happened by chance.

This same political scientist also recommends another way to examine the problem: look at statistics on provisional voting: the number cast might provide indications of intimidation (people being challenged at the polls) and the number of those not counted would be indications of "vote fraud." One could look at those jurisdictions in the Election Day Survey with a disproportionate number of provisional ballots cast and cross reference it with demographics and number of provisional ballots discarded. (Michael McDonald, George Mason University)

- Spencer Overton, in a forthcoming law review article entitled *Voter Identification*, suggests a methodology that employs three approaches—investigations of voter fraud, random surveys of voters who purported to vote, and an examination of death rolls provide a better understanding of the frequency of fraud. He says all three approaches have strengths and weaknesses, and thus the best studies would employ all three to assess the extent of voter fraud. An excerpt follows:

1. *Investigations and Prosecutions of Voter Fraud*

Policymakers should develop databases that record all investigations, allegations, charges, trials, convictions, acquittals, and plea bargains regarding voter fraud. Existing studies are incomplete but provide some insight. For example, a statewide survey of each of Ohio's 88 county boards of elections found only four instances of ineligible persons attempting to vote out of a total of 9,078,728 votes cast in the state's 2002 and 2004 general elections. This is a fraud rate of 0.00000045 percent. The Carter-Baker Commission's Report noted that since October 2002, federal officials had charged 89 individuals with casting multiple votes, providing false information about their felon status, buying votes, submitting false voter registration information, and voting improperly as a non-citizen. Examined in the context of the 196,139,871 ballots cast between October 2002 and

August 2005, this represents a fraud rate of 0.0000005 percent (note also that not all of the activities charged would have been prevented by a photo identification requirement).

A more comprehensive study should distinguish voter fraud that could be prevented by a photo identification requirement from other types of fraud — such as absentee voting and stuffing ballot boxes — and obtain statistics on the factors that led law enforcement to prosecute fraud. The study would demand significant resources because it would require that researchers interview and pour over the records of local district attorneys and election boards.

Hard data on investigations, allegations, charges, pleas, and prosecutions is important because it quantifies the amount of fraud officials detect. Even if prosecutors vigorously pursue voter fraud, however, the number of fraud cases charged probably does not capture the total amount of voter fraud. Information on official investigations, charges, and prosecutions should be supplemented by surveys of voters and a comparison of voting rolls to death rolls.

## *2. Random Surveys of Voters*

Random surveys could give insight about the percentage of votes cast fraudulently. For example, political scientists could contact a statistically representative sampling of 1,000 people who purportedly voted at the polls in the last election, ask them if they actually voted, and confirm the percentage who are valid voters. Researchers should conduct the survey soon after an election to locate as many legitimate voters as possible with fresh memories.

Because many respondents would perceive voting as a social good, some who did not vote might claim that they did, which may underestimate the extent of fraud. A surveyor might mitigate this skew through the framing of the question (“I’ve got a record that you voted. Is that true?”).

Further, some voters will not be located by researchers and others will refuse to talk to researchers. Photo identification proponents might construe these non-respondents as improper registrations that were used to commit voter fraud.

Instead of surveying all voters to determine the amount of fraud, researchers might reduce the margin of error by focusing on a random sampling of voters who signed affidavits in the three states that request photo identification but also allow voters to establish their identity through affidavit—Florida, Louisiana, and South Dakota. In

South Dakota, for example, only two percent of voters signed affidavits to establish their identity. If the survey indicates that 95 percent of those who signed affidavits are legitimate voters (and the other 5 percent were shown to be either fraudulent or were non-responsive), this suggests that voter fraud accounts for, at the maximum, 0.1 percent of ballots cast.

The affidavit study, however, is limited to three states, and it is unclear whether this sample is representative of other states (the difficulty may be magnified in Louisiana in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina's displacement of hundreds of thousands of voters). Further, the affidavit study reveals information about the amount of fraud in a photo identification state with an affidavit exception—more voter fraud may exist in a state that does not request photo identification.

### 3. *Examining Death Rolls*

A comparison of death rolls to voting rolls might also provide an estimate of fraud.

Imagine that one million people live in state A, which has no documentary identification requirement. Death records show that 20,000 people passed away in state A in 2003. A cross-referencing of this list to the voter rolls shows that 10,000 of those who died were registered voters, and these names remained on the voter rolls during the November 2004 election. Researchers would look at what percentage of the 10,000 dead-but-registered people who "voted" in the November 2004 election. A researcher should distinguish the votes cast in the name of the dead at the polls from those cast absentee (which a photo identification requirement would not prevent). This number would be extrapolated to the electorate as a whole.

This methodology also has its strengths and weaknesses. If fraudulent voters target the dead, the study might overestimate the fraud that exists among living voters (although a low incidence of fraud among deceased voters might suggest that fraud among all voters is low). The appearance of fraud also might be inflated by false positives produced by a computer match of different people with the same name. Photo identification advocates would likely assert that the rate of voter fraud could be higher among fictitious names registered, and that the death record survey would not capture that type of fraud because fictitious names registered would not show up in the death records. Nevertheless, this study, combined with the other two, would provide important insight into the magnitude of fraud likely to exist in the absence of a photo identification requirement.

**Recommendations for Further EAC Activity  
on Voting Fraud and Voter Intimidation**

**Consultants' Recommendations**

***Recommendation 1: Conduct More Interviews***

Time and resource constraints prevented the consultants from interviewing the full range of participants in the process. As a result, we recommend that any future activity in this area include conducting further interviews.

In particular, we recommend that more election officials from all levels of government, parts of the country, and parties be interviewed. These individuals have the most direct inside information on how the system works -- and at times does not work. They are often the first people voters go to when something goes wrong and are often responsible for fixing it. They are the ones who must carry out the measures that are designed to both prevent fraud and voter intimidation and suppression. They will most likely know what, therefore, is and is not working.

It would also be especially beneficial to talk to people in law enforcement, specifically federal District Election Officers ("DEOs") and local district attorneys, as well as civil and criminal defense attorneys.

The Public Integrity Section of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice has all of the 93 U.S. Attorneys appoint Assistant U.S. Attorneys to serve as DEOs for two years. DEOs are required to

- screen and conduct preliminary investigations of complaints, in conjunction with the FBI and PIN, to determine whether they constitute potential election crimes and should become matters for investigation;
- oversee the investigation and prosecution of election fraud and other election crimes in their districts;
- coordinate their district's (investigative and prosecutorial) efforts with DOJ headquarters prosecutors;
- coordinate election matters with state and local election and law enforcement officials and make them aware of their availability to assist with election-related matters;
- issue press releases to the public announcing the names and telephone numbers of DOJ and FBI officials to contact on election day with complaints about voting or election irregularities and answer telephones on election day to receive these complaints; and
- supervise a team of Assistant U.S. Attorneys and FBI special agents who are appointed to handle election-related allegations while the polls are open on election day.<sup>1</sup>

Given the great responsibilities of the DEOs, and the breadth of issues they must deal with, they undoubtedly are great resources for information and insight as to what types of fraud and intimidation/suppression are occurring in their districts.

In many situations, however, it is the local district attorneys who will investigate election fraud and suppression tactics, especially in local elections. They will be able to provide information on what has gone on in their jurisdictions, as well as which matters get pursued and why.

Finally, those who defend people accused of election related crimes would also be useful to speak to. They may have a different perspective on how well the system is working to detect, prevent, and prosecute election fraud.

***Recommendation 2: Follow Up on Nexis Research***

The Nexis search conducted for this phase of the research was based on a list of search terms agreed upon by both consultants. Thousands of articles were reviewed and hundreds analyzed. Many of the articles contain allegations of fraud or intimidation. Similarly, many of the articles contain information about investigations into such activities or even charges brought. However, without being able to go beyond the agreed search terms, it could not be determined whether there was any later determination regarding the allegations, investigation or charges brought. This leaves a gaping hole: it is impossible to know if the article is just reporting on “talk” or what turns out to be a serious affront to the system.

As a result, we recommend that follow up Nexis research be conducted to determine what, if any, resolutions or further activity there was in each case. This would provide a much more accurate picture of what types of activities are actually taking place.

***Recommendation 3: Follow Up on Allegations Found in Literature Review***

Similarly, many allegations are made in the reports and books that we analyzed and summarized. Those allegations are often not substantiated in any way and are inherently time limited by the date of the writing. Despite this, such reports and books are frequently cited by various interested parties as evidence of fraud or intimidation.

Therefore, we recommend follow up to the literature review: for those reports and books that make or cite specific instances of fraud or intimidation, a research effort should be made to follow up on those references to see if and how they were resolved.

***Recommendation 4: Review Complaints File With MyVote1 Project Voter Hotline***

During the 2004 election and the statewide elections of 2005, the University of Pennsylvania led a consortium of groups and researchers in conducting the MyVote1 Project. This project involved using a 1-800 voter hotline where voters could call for poll location, be transferred to a local hotline, or leave a recorded message with a complaint.

In 2004, this resulted in over 200,000 calls received and over 56,000 recorded complaints.<sup>ii</sup> The researchers in charge of this project have done a great deal of work to parse and analyze the data collected through this process, including going through the audio messages and categorizing them by the nature of the complaint. These categories include registration, absentee ballot, poll access, ballot/screen, coercion/intimidation, identification, mechanical, provisional (ballot).

We recommend that further research include making full use of this data with the cooperation of the project leaders. While perhaps not a fully scientific survey given the self-selection of the callers, the information regarding 200,000 complaints should provide a good deal of insight into the problems voters experienced, especially those in the nature of intimidation or suppression.

***Recommendation 5: Further Review of Complaints Filed With U.S. Department of Justice***

Although according to a recent GAO report the Voting Section of the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice has a variety in ways it tracks complaints of voter intimidation,<sup>iii</sup> the Section was extremely reluctant to provide the consultants with useful information. Further attempts should be made to obtain relevant data. This includes the telephone logs of complaints the Section keeps and information from the database – the Interactive Case Management (ICM) system – the Section maintains on complaints received and the corresponding action taken. We also recommend that further research include a review and analysis of the observer and monitor field reports from Election Day that must be filed with the Section.

***Recommendation 6: Review Reports Filed By District Election Officers***

Similarly, the consultants believe it would be useful for any further research to include a review of the reports that must be filed by every District Election Officer to the Public Integrity Section of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice. As noted above, the DEOs play a central role in receiving reports of voter fraud and investigating and pursuing them. Their reports back to the Department would likely provide tremendous insight into what actually transpired during the last several elections. Where necessary, information could be redacted or made confidential.

***Recommendation 7: Attend Ballot Access and Voting Integrity Symposium***

The consultants also believe it would be useful for any further activity in this area to include attendance at the next Ballot Access and Voting Integrity Symposium. According to the Department,<sup>iv</sup>

Prosecutors serving as District Election Officers in the 94 U.S. Attorneys' Offices are required to attend annual training conferences on fighting election fraud and voting rights abuses... These conferences are sponsored by the Voting Section of the Civil Rights Division and the Public Integrity

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Section of the Criminal Division, and feature presentations by Civil Rights officials and senior prosecutors from the Public Integrity Section and the U.S. Attorneys' Offices. As a result of these conferences, there is a nationwide increase in Department expertise relating to the prosecution of election crimes and the enforcement of voting rights.

By attending the symposium researchers could learn more about the following:

- How District Election Officers are trained, e.g. what they are taught to focus their resources on, how they are instructed to respond to various types of complaints
- How information about previous election and voting issues is presented
- How the Voting Rights Act, the criminal laws governing election fraud and intimidation, the National Voter Registration Act, and the Help America Vote Act are described and explained to participants

### ***Recommendation 8: Employ Academic or Individual to Conduct Statistical Research***

Included in this report is a summary of various methodologies political scientists and others suggested to measure voter fraud and intimidation. While we note the skepticism of the Working Group in this regard, we nonetheless recommend that in order to further the mission of providing unbiased data, further activity in this area include an academic institution and/or individual that focuses on sound, statistical methods for political science research.

### ***Recommendation 9: Explore Improvements to Federal Law***

Finally, consultant Tova Wang recommends that future researchers review federal law to explore ways to make it easier to impose either civil or criminal penalties for acts of intimidation that do not necessarily involve racial animus and/or a physical or economic threat.

According to Craig Donsanto, long-time Director of the Election Crimes Branch, Public Integrity Section, Criminal Division of the U.S. Department of Justice:

As with other statutes addressing voter intimidation, in the absence of any jurisprudence to the contrary, it is the Criminal Division's position that section 1973gg-10(1) applies only to intimidation which is accomplished through the use of threats of physical or economic duress. Voter "intimidation" accomplished through less drastic means may present violations of the Voting Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1973i(b), which are enforced by the Civil Rights Division through noncriminal remedies.'

Mr. Donsanto reiterated these points to us on several occasions, including at the working group meeting.

As a result, researchers should examine if there is some way in which current law might be revised or new laws passed that would reach voter intimidation that does not threaten the voter physically or financially, but rather threatens the voter's right to vote as a tangible value in itself. Such an amendment or law would reach all forms of voter intimidation, no matter if it is motivated by race, party, ethnicity or any other criteria. The law would then *potentially* cover, for example, letters and postcards with language meant to deter voters from voting and both pre-election and Election Day challengers that are clearly mounting challenges solely on illegitimate bases.

In the alternative to finding a way to criminalize such behavior, researchers might examine ways to invigorate measures to deter and punish voter intimidation under the civil law. For example, there might be a private right of action created for voters or groups who have been subjected to intimidation tactics in the voting process. Such an action could be brought against individual offenders; any state or local actor where there is a pattern of repeated abuse in the jurisdiction that such officials did not take sufficient action against; and organizations that intentionally engage in intimidating practices. As a penalty upon finding liability, civil damages could be available plus perhaps attorney's fees.

Another, more modest measure would be, as has been suggested by Ana Henderson and Christopher Edley,<sup>vi</sup> to bring parity to fines for violations under the Voting Rights Act. Currently the penalty for fraud is \$10,000 while the penalty for acts to deprive the right to vote is \$5,000.

### **Working Group Recommendations**

#### ***Recommendation 1: Employ Observers To Collect Data in the 2006 and/or 2008 Elections***

At the working group meeting, there was much discussion about using observers to collect data regarding fraud and intimidation at the polls in the upcoming elections. Mr. Ginsberg recommended using representatives of both parties for the task. Mr. Bauer and others objected to this, believing that using partisans as observers would be unworkable and would not be credible to the public.

There was even greater concern about the difficulties in getting access to poll sites for the purposes of observation. Most states strictly limit who can be in the polling place. In addition, there are already so many groups doing observation and monitoring at the polls, administrators might object. There was further concern that observers would introduce a variable into the process that would impact the outcome. The very fact that observers were present would influence behavior and skew the results.

Moreover, it was pointed out, many of the problems we see now with respect to fraud and intimidation does not take place at the polling place, e.g. absentee ballot fraud and deceptive practices. Poll site monitoring would not capture this activity. Moreover, with

increased use of early voting, poll site monitoring might have to go on for weeks to be effective, which would require tremendous resources.

Mr. Weinberg suggested using observers in the way they are utilized in international elections. Such observers come into a jurisdiction prior to the election, and use standardized forms at the polling sites to collect data.

***Recommendation 2: Do a Study on Absentee Ballot Fraud***

The working group agreed that since absentee ballot fraud is the main form of fraud occurring, and is a practice that is great expanding throughout the country, it would make sense to do a stand-alone study of absentee ballot fraud. Such a study would be facilitated by the fact that there already is a great deal of information on how, when, where and why such practices are carried out based on cases successfully prosecuted. Researchers could look at actual cases to see how absentee ballot fraud schemes are conducted in an effort to provide recommendations on more effective measures for preventing them.

***Recommendation 3: Use Risk Analysis Methodology to Study Fraud<sup>1</sup>***

Working group members were supportive of one of the methodologies recommended for studying this issue, risk analysis. As Mr. Bauer put it, based on the assumption that people act rationally, do an examination of what types of fraud people are most likely to commit, given the relative costs and benefits. In that way, researchers can rank the types of fraud that are the easiest to commit at the least cost with the greatest effect, from most to least likely to occur. This might prove a more practical way of measuring the problems than trying to actually get a number of acts of fraud and/or intimidation occurring. Mr. Greenbaum added that one would want to examine what conditions surrounding an election would be most likely to lead to an increase in fraud. Mr. Rokita objected based on his belief that the passions of partisanship lead people to not act rationally in an election.

***Recommendation 4: Conduct Research Using Database Comparisons***

Picking up on a suggestion made by Spencer Overton and explained in the suggested methodology section, Mr. Hearne recommended studying the issue using statistical database matching. Researchers should compare the voter roll and the list of people who actually voted to see if there are “dead” and felon voters. Because of the inconsistent quality of the databases, however, a political scientist would need to work in an appropriate margin of error when using such a methodology.

***Recommendation 5: Conduct a Study of Deceptive Practices***

The working group discussed the increasing use of deceptive practices, such as flyers with false and/or intimidating information, to suppress voter participation. A number of

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix C, and section on methodology

groups, including the Department of Justice, the EAC, and organizations such as the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights, keep phone logs regarding complaints of such practices, which may be available for review and analysis. This is also an area in which there is often tangible evidence, such as copies of the flyers and postcards themselves. All of this information should be reviewed and analyzed to see how such practices are being conducted and what can be done about them.

***Recommendation 6: Study Use of HAVA Administrative Complaint Procedure As Vehicle for Measuring Fraud and Intimidation***

The EAC should study the extent to which states are actually utilizing the administrative complaint procedure mandated by HAVA. In addition, the EAC should study whether data collected through the administrative complaint procedure can be used as another source of information for measuring fraud and intimidation.

***Recommendation 7: Examine the Use of Special Election Courts***

Given that many state and local judges are elected, it may be worth exploring whether special election courts that are running before, during and after election day would be an effective means of disposing with complaints and violations in an expeditious manner. Pennsylvania employs such a system, and the EAC should consider investigating how well it is working to deal with fraud and intimidation problems.

## Key Working Group Observations and Concerns

### Working Group Observations

1. ***The main problems today are structural barriers to voting and administrative error.*** Mr. Perez observed that, in accordance with the research, the biggest issues today are structural barriers to voting, not stealing votes. Election administrators share this view. Election fraud is negligible, and to the extent it occurs, it needs to be prosecuted with stronger criminal laws. The biggest problem is properly preparing people, which is the responsibility of election administrators.
2. ***Most fraud and intimidation is happening outside of the polling place.*** Mr. Greenbaum observed that with respect to both voter fraud and voter suppression, such as deceptive practices and tearing up voter registration forms, most of that is taking place outside of the polling place.
3. ***This issue cannot be addressed through one study or one methodology alone.*** Mr. Weinberg observed that since there is such a variety in types of fraud and intimidation, one solution will not fit all. It will be impossible to obtain data or resolve any of these problems through a single method.
4. ***The preliminary research conducted for this project is extremely valuable.*** Several of the working group members complimented the quality of the research done and although it is only preliminary, thought it would be useful and informative in the immediate future.
5. ***The Department of Justice is exploring expanding its reach over voter suppression activities.*** In the context of the conversation about defining voter intimidation, Mr. Donsanto pointed out that while voter intimidation was strictly defined by the criminal law, his section is beginning to explore the slightly different concept of vote suppression, and how to pursue it. He mentioned the phone-jamming case in New Hampshire as an initial success in this effort. He noted that he believes that vote suppression in the form of deceptive practices ought to be a crime and the section is exploring ways to go after it within the existing statutory construct. Mr. Bauer raised the example of a party sending people dressed in paramilitary outfits to yell at people as they go to the polls, telling them they have to show identification. Mr. Donsanto said that under the laws he has to work with today, such activity is not considered corrupt. He said that his lawyers are trying to “bend” the current laws to address aggravated cases of vote suppression, and the phone-jamming case is an example of that. Mr. Donsanto said that within the Department, the term vote “suppression” and translating it into a crime is a “work in progress.”

6. **Registration fraud does not translate into vote fraud.** Ms. Rogers, Mr. Donsanto and others stated that although phony voter registration applications turned in by people being paid by the form was a problem, it has not been found in their experience to lead to fraudulent voters at the polls. Ms. Rogers said such people were motivated by money, not defrauding the election.
7. **Handling of voter fraud and intimidation complaints varies widely across states and localities.** Ms. Rogers and others observed that every state has its own process for intake and review of complaints of fraud and intimidation, and that procedures often vary within states. The amount of authority secretaries of state have to address such problems also is different in every state. Mr. Weinberg stated he believed that most secretaries of state did not have authority to do anything about these matters. Participants discussed whether secretaries ought to be given greater authority so as to centralize the process, as HAVA has mandated in other areas.

### Working Group Concerns

1. Mr. Rokita questioned whether the purpose of the present project ought to be on assessing the level of fraud and where it is, rather than on developing methods for making such measurements. He believed that methodology should be the focus, “rather than opinions of interviewees.” He was concerned that the EAC would be in a position of “adding to the universe of opinions.”
2. Mr. Rokita questioned whether the “opinions” accumulated in the research “is a fair sampling of what’s out there.” Ms. Wang responded that one of the purposes of the research was to explore whether there is a method available to actually quantify in some way how much fraud there is and where it is occurring in the electoral process. Mr. Rokita replied that “Maybe at the end of the day we stop spending taxpayer money or it’s going to be too much to spend to find that kind of data. Otherwise, we will stop it here and recognize there is a huge difference of opinion on that issue of fraud, when it occurs is obtainable, and that would possibly be a conclusion of the EAC.” Ms. Sims responded that she thought it would be possible to get better statistics on fraud and there might be a way of “identifying at this point certain parts in the election process that are more vulnerable, that we should be addressing.”
3. Mr. Rokita stated that, “We’re not sure that fraud at the polling place doesn’t exist. We can’t conclude that.”
4. Mr. Rokita expressed concern about working with a political scientist. He believes that the “EAC needs to be very careful in who they select, because all the time and effort and money that’s been spent up to date and would be spent in the future could be invalidated by a wrong selection in the eyes of some group.”

**NEXIS Charts**

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**Case Charts**

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**Appendix 1**  
**List of Individuals Interviewed**

Wade Henderson, Executive Director, Leadership Conference for Civil Rights

Wendy Weiser, Deputy Director, Democracy Program, The Brennan Center

William Groth, attorney for the plaintiffs in the Indiana voter identification litigation

Lori Minnite, Barnard College, Columbia University

Neil Bradley, ACLU Voting Rights Project

Nina Perales, Counsel, Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund

Pat Rogers, attorney, New Mexico

Rebecca Vigil-Giron, Secretary of State, New Mexico

Sarah Ball Johnson, Executive Director of the State Board of Elections, Kentucky

Stephen Ansolobhere, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Chandler Davidson, Rice University

Tracey Campbell, author, *Deliver the Vote*

Douglas Webber, Assistant Attorney General, Indiana, (defendant in the Indiana voter identification litigation)

Heather Dawn Thompson, Director of Government Relations, National Congress of American Indians

Jason Torchinsky, Assistant General Counsel, American Center for Voting Rights

Robin DeJarnette, Executive Director, American Center for Voting Rights

Joseph Rich, former Director of the Voting Section, Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice

Joseph Sandler, Counsel to the Democratic National Committee

John Ravitz, Executive Director, New York City Board of Elections

John Tanner, Director, Voting Section, Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice

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Kevin Kennedy, Executive Director of the State Board of Elections, Wisconsin  
Evelyn Stratton, Justice, Supreme Court of Ohio

Tony Sirvello, Executive Director, International Association of  
Clerks, Recorders, Election Officials and Treasurers

Harry Van Sickle, Commissioner of Elections, Pennsylvania

Craig Donsanto, Director, Public Integrity Section, U.S. Department of Justice

Sharon Priest, former Secretary of State, Arkansas

**Appendix 2**  
**List of Literature Reviewed**

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Laughlin McDonald, "The New Poll Tax," *The American Prospect* vol. 13 no. 23, December 30, 2002.

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The Brennan Center and Professor Michael McDonald "Analysis of the September 15, 2005 Voter Fraud Report Submitted to the New Jersey Attorney General," The Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law, December 2005.

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Craig Donsanto, "Prosecution of Electoral Fraud Under United State Federal Law," *IFES Political Finance White Paper Series*, IFES, 2006.

General Accounting Office, "Elections: Views of Selected Local Election Officials on Managing Voter Registration and Ensuring Eligible Citizens Can Vote," Report to Congressional Requesters, September 2005.

Lori Minnite and David Callahan, "Securing the Vote: An Analysis of Election Fraud," *Demos: A Network of Ideas and Action*, 2003.

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#### **Books**

John Fund, *Stealing Elections: How Voter Fraud Threatens Our Democracy*, Encounter Books, 2004.

Andrew Gumbel, *Steal this Vote: Dirty Elections and the Rotten History of Democracy in American*, Nation Books, 2005.

Tracy Campbell, *Deliver the Vote: A History of Election Fraud, An American Political Tradition – 1742-2004*, Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2005.

David E. Johnson and Jonny R. Johnson, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the White House: Foolhardiness, Folly, and Fraud in the Presidential Elections, from Andrew Jackson to George W. Bush*, Taylor Trade Publishing, 2004.

Mark Crispin Miller, *Fooled Again*, Basic Books, 2005.

**Legal**

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*Common Cause of Georgia vs. Billups*, U.S. District Court, Northern District of Georgia (Rome) 4:05-cv-00201-HLM U.S. Court of Appeals, 11<sup>th</sup> Circuit 05-15784

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<http://www.votingrights.org/news/downloads/Section%205%20Recommendation%20Memorandum.pdf>

### Appendix 3

## Excerpt from “Machinery of Democracy,” a Brennan Center Report

### APPENDIX C

#### BRENNAN CENTER TASK FORCE ON VOTING SYSTEM SECURITY, LAWRENCE NORDEN, CHAIR

Excerpted from pp. 8-19

#### METHODOLOGY

The Task Force concluded, and the peer review team at NIST agreed, that the best approach for comprehensively evaluating voting system threats was to: (1) identify and categorize the potential threats against voting systems, (2) prioritize these threats based upon an agreed upon metric (which would tell us how difficult each threat is to accomplish from the attacker’s point of view), and (3) determine, utilizing the same metric employed to prioritize threats, how much more difficult each of the catalogued attacks would become after various sets of countermeasures are implemented.

This model allows us to identify the attacks we should be most concerned about (*i.e.*, the most practical and least difficult attacks). Furthermore, it allows us to quantify the potential effectiveness of various sets of countermeasures (*i.e.*, how difficult the least difficult attack is after the countermeasure has been implemented). Other potential models considered, but ultimately rejected by the Task Force, are detailed in Appendix B.

#### IDENTIFICATION OF THREATS

The first step in creating a threat model for voting systems was to identify as many potential attacks as possible. To that end, the Task Force, together with the participating election officials, spent several months identifying voting system vulnerabilities. Following this work, NIST held a Voting Systems Threat Analysis Workshop on October 7, 2005. Members of the public were invited to write up and post additional potential attacks. Taken together, this work produced over 120 potential attacks on the three voting systems. They are detailed in the catalogs annexed. Many of the attacks are described in more detail at <http://vote.nist.gov/threats/papers.htm>.

The types of threats detailed in the catalogs can be broken down into nine categories: (1) the insertion of corrupt software into machines prior to Election Day; (2) wireless and other remote control attacks on voting machines on Election Day; (3) attacks on tally servers; (4) miscalibration of voting machines; (5) shut off of voting machine features intended to assist voters; (6) denial of service attacks; (7) actions by corrupt poll workers or others at the polling place to affect votes cast; (8) vote buying schemes; (9) attacks on ballots or VVPT. Often, the actual attacks

involve some combination of these categories. We provide a discussion of each type of attack in “Categories of Attacks,” *infra* at pp. 24–27.

### **PRIORITIZING THREATS: NUMBER OF INFORMED PARTICIPANTS AS METRIC**

Without some form of prioritization, a compilation of the threats is of limited value. Only by prioritizing these various threats could we help election officials identify which attacks they should be most concerned about, and what steps could be taken to make such attacks as difficult as possible. As discussed below, we have determined the level of difficulty for each attack where the attacker is attempting to affect the outcome of a close statewide election.<sup>21</sup>

There is no perfect way to determine which attacks are the least difficult, because each attack requires a different mix of resources – well-placed insiders, money, programming skills, security expertise, *etc.* Different attackers would find certain resources easier to acquire than others. For example, election fraud committed by local election officials would always involve well-placed insiders and a thorough understanding of election procedures; at the same time, there is no reason to expect such officials to have highly skilled hackers or first-rate programmers working with them. By contrast, election fraud carried out by a foreign government would likely start with plenty of money and technically skilled attackers, but probably without many conveniently placed insiders or detailed knowledge of election procedures.

Ultimately, we decided to use the “number of informed participants” as the metric for determining attack difficulty. An attack which uses fewer participants is deemed the easier attack.

We have defined “informed participant” as someone whose participation is needed to make the attack work, and who knows enough about the attack to foil or expose it. This is to be distinguished from a participant who unknowingly assists the attack by performing a task that is integral to the attack’s successful execution without understanding that the task is part of an attack on voting systems.

The reason for using the security metric “number of informed participants” is relatively straightforward: the larger a conspiracy is, the more difficult it would be to keep it secret. Where an attacker can carry out an attack by herself, she need only trust herself. On the other hand, a conspiracy that requires thousands of people to take part (like a vote-buying scheme) also requires thousands of people to keep quiet. The larger the number of people involved, the greater the likelihood that one of them (or one who was approached, but declined to take part) would either inform the public or authorities about the attack, or commit some kind of error that causes the attack to fail or become known.

Moreover, recruiting a large number of people who are willing to undermine the integrity of a statewide election is also presumably difficult. It is not hard to imagine two or three people agreeing to work to change the outcome of an election. It seems far less likely that an attacker could identify and employ hundreds or thousands of similarly corrupt people without being discovered.

We can get an idea of how this metric works by looking at one of the threats listed in our catalogs: the vote-buying threat, where an attacker or attackers pay individuals to vote for a particular candidate. This is Attack Number 26 in the PCOS Attack Catalog<sup>22</sup> (though this attack would not be substantially different against DREs or DREs w/ VVPT).<sup>23</sup> In order to work under our current types of voting systems, this attack requires (1) at least one person to purchase votes, (2) many people to agree to sell their votes, and (3) some way for the purchaser to confirm that the voters she pays actually voted for the candidate she supported. Ultimately, we determined that, while practical in smaller contests, a vote-buying attack would be an exceptionally difficult way to affect the outcome of a statewide election. This is because, even in a typically close statewide election, an attacker would need to involve thousands of voters to ensure that she could affect the outcome of a statewide race.<sup>24</sup>

For a discussion of other metrics we considered, but ultimately rejected, see Appendix C.

## **DETERMINING NUMBER OF INFORMED PARTICIPANTS**

### **DETERMINING THE STEPS AND VALUES FOR EACH ATTACK**

The Task Force members broke down each of the catalogued attacks into its necessary steps. For instance, Attack 12 in the PCOS Attack Catalog is “Stuffing Ballot Box with Additional Marked Ballots.”<sup>25</sup> We determined that, at a minimum, there were three component parts to this attack: (1) stealing or creating the ballots and then marking them, (2) scanning marked ballots through the PCOS scanners, probably before the polls opened, and (3) modifying the poll books in each location to ensure that the total number of votes in the ballot boxes was not greater than the number of voters who signed in at the polling place.

Task Force members then assigned a value representing the minimum number of persons they believed would be necessary to accomplish each goal. For PCOS Attack 12, the following values were assigned:<sup>26</sup>

**Minimum number required to steal or create ballots: 5 persons total.**<sup>27</sup>

**Minimum number required to scan marked ballots: 1 per polling place attacked.**

**Minimum number required to modify poll books: 1 per polling place attacked.**<sup>28</sup>

After these values were assigned, the Brennan Center interviewed several election officials to see whether they agreed with the steps and values assigned to each attack.<sup>29</sup> When necessary, the values and steps were modified. The new catalogs, including attack steps and values, were then reviewed by Task Force members. The purpose of this review was to ensure, among other things, that the steps and values were sound.

These steps and values tell us how difficult it would be to accomplish a *single attack in a single polling place*. They do not tell us how many people it would take to change the outcome of an election successfully – that depends, of course, on specific facts about the jurisdiction: how many votes are generally recorded in each polling

place, how many polling places are there in the jurisdiction, and how close is the race? For this reason, we determined that it was necessary to construct a hypothetical jurisdiction, to which we now turn.

**NUMBER OF INFORMED PARTICIPANTS NEEDED TO CHANGE STATEWIDE ELECTION**

We have decided to examine the difficulty of each attack in the context of changing the outcome of a reasonably close statewide election. While we are concerned by potential attacks on voting systems in any type of election, we are most troubled by attacks that have the potential to affect large numbers of votes. These are the attacks that could actually change the outcome of a statewide election with just a handful of attack participants.

We are less troubled by attacks on voting systems that can only affect a small number of votes (and might therefore be more useful in local elections). This is because there are many non-system attacks that can also affect a small number of votes (*i.e.*, sending out misleading information about polling places, physically intimidating voters, submitting multiple absentee ballots, *etc.*). Given the fact that these non-system attacks are likely to be less difficult in terms of number of participants, financial cost, risk of detection, and time commitment, we are uncertain that an attacker would target *voting machines* to alter a small number of votes.

In order to evaluate how difficult it would be for an attacker to change the outcome of a statewide election, we created a composite jurisdiction. The composite jurisdiction was created to be representative of a relatively close statewide election. We did not want to examine a statewide election where results were so skewed toward one candidate (for instance, the re-election of Senator Edward M. Kennedy in 2000, where he won 73% of the vote<sup>30</sup>), that reversing the election results would be impossible without causing extreme public suspicion. Nor did we want to look at races where changing only a relative handful of votes (for instance, the Governor's race in Washington State in 2004, which was decided by a mere 129 votes<sup>31</sup>) could affect the outcome of an election; under this scenario, many of the potential attacks would involve few people, and therefore look equally difficult.

We have named our composite jurisdiction "the State of Pennasota." The State of Pennasota is a composite of ten states: Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Ohio, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Nevada, Wisconsin and Minnesota. These states were chosen because they were the ten "battleground" states that Zogby International consistently polled in the spring, summer, and fall 2004.<sup>32</sup> These are statewide elections that an attacker would have expected, ahead of time, to be fairly close.

We have also created a composite election, which we label the "Governor's Race" in Pennasota. The results of this election are a composite of the actual results in the same ten states in the 2004 Presidential Election.

We have used these composites as the framework by which to evaluate the difficulty of the various catalogued attacks.<sup>33</sup> For instance, we know a ballot-box stuffing attack would require roughly five people to create and mark fake ballots, as

well as one person per polling place to stuff the boxes, and one person per polling place to modify the poll books. But, in order to determine how many informed participants would be needed to affect a statewide race, we need to know how many polling places would need to be attacked.

The composite jurisdiction and composite election provide us with information needed to answer these questions: *i.e.*, how many extra votes our attackers would need to add to their favored candidate's total for him to win, how many ballots our attackers can stuff into a particular polling place's ballot box without arousing suspicion (and related to this, how many votes are generally cast in the average polling place), how many polling places are there in the state, *etc.* We provide details about both the composite jurisdiction and election in the section entitled "Governor's Race, State of Pennasota, 2007," *infra* at pp 20–27.

#### LIMITS OF INFORMED PARTICIPANTS AS METRIC

Of the possible metrics we considered, we believe that measuring the number of people who know they are involved in an attack (and thus could provide evidence of the attack to the authorities and/or the media), is the best single measure of attack difficulty; as already discussed, we have concluded that the more people an attacker is forced to involve in his attack, the more likely it is that one of the participants would reveal the attack's existence and foil the attack, perhaps sending attackers to jail. However, we are aware of a number of places where the methodology could provide us with questionable results.

By deciding to concentrate on size of attack team, we mostly ignore the need for other resources when planning an attack. Thus, a software attack on DREs which makes use of steganography<sup>34</sup> to hide attack instruction files (*see* "DRE w/ VVPT Attack No.1a", discussed in greater detail, *infra* at pp. 62–65) is considered easier than an attack program delivered over a wireless network at the polling place (*see* discussion of wireless networks, *infra* at pp. 85–91). However, the former attack probably requires a much more technologically sophisticated attacker.

Another imperfection with this metric is that we do not have an easy way to represent how much choice the attacker has in finding members of his attack team. Thus, with PCOS voting, we conclude that the cost of subverting a routine audit of ballots is roughly equal to the cost of intercepting ballot boxes in transit and substituting altered ballots (*see* discussion of PCOS attacks, *infra* at pp. 77–83). However, subverting the audit team requires getting a specific set of trusted people to cooperate with the attacker. By contrast, the attacker may be able to decide which precincts to tamper with based on which people he has already recruited for his attack.

In an attempt to address this concern, we considered looking at the number of "insiders" necessary to take part in each attack. Under this theory, getting five people to take part in a conspiracy to attack a voting system might not be particularly difficult. But getting five well-placed county election officials to take part in the attack would be (and should be labeled) the more difficult of the two attacks. Because, for the most part, the low-cost attacks we have identified do not necessarily involve well placed insiders (but could, for instance, involve one of many people with access to commercial off the shelf software ("COTS") during development

or at the vendor), we do not believe that using this metric would have substantially changed our analysis.<sup>35</sup>

Finally, these attack team sizes do not always capture the logistical complexity of an attack. For example, an attack on VVPT machines involving tampering with the voting machine software and also replacing the paper records in transit requires the attacker to determine what votes were falsely produced by the voting machine and print replacement records in time to substitute them. While this is clearly possible, it raises a lot of operational difficulties – a single failed substitution leaves the possibility that the attack would be detected during the audit of ballots.

We have tried to keep these imperfections in mind when analyzing and discussing our least difficult attacks.

We suspect that much of the disagreement between voting officials and computer security experts in the last several years stems from a difference of opinion in prioritizing the difficulty of attacks. Election officials, with extensive experience in the logistics of handling tons of paper ballots, have little faith in paper and understand the kind of breakdowns in procedures that lead to traditional attacks like ballot box stuffing; in contrast, sophisticated attacks on computer voting systems appear very difficult to many of them. Computer security experts understand sophisticated attacks on computer systems, and recognize the availability of tools and expertise that makes these attacks practical to launch, but have no clear idea how they would manage the logistics of attacking a paper-based system. Looking at attack team size is one way to bridge this difference in perspective.

## **EFFECTS OF IMPLEMENTING COUNTERMEASURE SETS**

The final step of our threat analysis is to measure the effect of certain countermeasures against the catalogued attacks. How much more difficult would the attacks become once the countermeasures are put into effect? How many more informed participants (if any) would be needed to counter or defeat these countermeasures?

Our process for examining the effectiveness of a countermeasure mirrors the process for determining the difficulty of an attack: we first asked whether the countermeasure would allow us to detect an attack with near certainty. If we agreed that the countermeasure would expose the attack, we identified the steps that would be necessary to circumvent or defeat the countermeasure. For each step to defeat the countermeasure, we determined the number of additional informed participants (if any) that an attacker would need to add to his team. As with the process for determining attack difficulty, the Brennan Center interviewed numerous election officials to see whether they agreed with the steps and values assigned. When necessary, the values and steps for defeating the countermeasures were altered to reflect the input of election officials.

## **COUNTERMEASURES EXAMINED**

### **BASIC SET OF COUNTERMEASURES**

The first set of countermeasures we looked at is the “Basic Set” of countermeasures. This Basic Set was derived from security survey responses<sup>36</sup> we received

from county election officials around the country, as well as additional interviews with more than a dozen current and former election officials. Within the Basic Set of countermeasures are the following procedures:

### **Inspection**

The jurisdiction is not knowingly using any uncertified software that is subject to inspection by the Independent Testing Authority (often referred to as the "ITA").<sup>37</sup>

### **Physical Security for Machines**

- Ballot boxes (to the extent they exist) are examined (to ensure they are empty) and locked by poll workers immediately before the polls are opened.
- Before and after being brought to the polls for Election Day, voting systems for each county are locked in a single room, in a county warehouse.
- The warehouse has perimeter alarms, secure locks, video surveillance and regular visits by security guards.
- Access to the warehouse is controlled by sign-in, possibly with card keys or similar automatic logging of entry and exit for regular staff.
- Some form of "tamper evident" seals are placed on machines before and after each election.
- The machines are transported to polling locations five to fifteen days before Election Day.

### **Chain of Custody/Physical Security of Election Day Records**

- At close of the polls, vote tallies for each machine are totaled and compared with number of persons that have signed the poll books.
- A copy of totals for each machine is posted at each polling place on Election Night and taken home by poll workers to check against what is posted publicly at election headquarters, on the web, in the papers, or elsewhere.<sup>38</sup>
- All audit information (*i.e.*, Event Logs, VVPT records, paper ballots, machine printouts of totals) that is not electronically transmitted as part of the unofficial upload to the central election office, is delivered in official, sealed and hand-delivered information packets or boxes. All seals are numbered and tamper-evident.
- Transportation of information packets is completed by two election officials representing opposing parties who have been instructed to remain in joint custody of the information packets or boxes from the moment it leaves the precinct to the moment it arrives at the county election center.

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- Each polling place sends its information packets or boxes to the county election center separately, rather than having one truck or person pick up this data from multiple polling locations.
- Once the sealed information packets or boxes have reached the county election center, they are logged. Numbers on the seals are checked to ensure that they have not been replaced. Any broken or replaced seals are logged. Intact seals are left intact.
- After the packets and/or boxes have been logged, they are provided with physical security precautions at least as great as those listed for voting machines, above. Specifically, for Pennasota, we have assumed the room in which the packets are stored have perimeter alarms, secure locks, video surveillance and regular visits by security guards and county police officers; and access to the room is controlled by sign-in, possibly with card keys or similar automatic logging of entry and exit for regular staff.

### **Testing<sup>39</sup>**

- An Independent Testing Authority has certified the model of voting machine used in the polling place.
- Acceptance Testing<sup>40</sup> is performed on machines at time, or soon after they are received by County.
- Pre-election Logic and Accuracy<sup>41</sup> testing is performed by the relevant election official.
- Prior to opening the polls, every voting machine and vote tabulation system is checked to see that it is still configured for the correct election, including the correct precinct, ballot style, and other applicable details.

### **REGIMEN FOR AUTOMATIC ROUTINE AUDIT PLUS BASIC SET OF COUNTERMEASURES.**

The second set of countermeasures is the Regimen for an Automatic Routine Audit Plus Basic Set of Countermeasures.

Some form of routine auditing of voter-verified paper records occurs in 12 states, to test the accuracy of electronic voting machines. They generally require between 1 and 10% of all precinct voting machines to be audited after each election. <sup>42</sup>

Jurisdictions can implement this set of countermeasures only if their voting systems produce some sort of voter-verified paper record of each vote. This could be in the form of a paper ballot, in the case of PCOS, or a voter-verified paper trail (“VVPT”), in the case of DREs.

We have assumed that jurisdictions take the following steps when conducting an Automatic Routine Audit (when referring to this set of assumptions “Regimen for an Automatic Routine Audit”):

### The Audit

- Leaders of the major parties in each county are responsible for selecting a sufficient number of audit-team members to be used in that county.<sup>43</sup>
- Using a highly transparent random selection mechanism (*see* point ii, below), the voter-verified paper records for between a small percentage of all voting machines in the State are selected for auditing.
- Using a transparent random selection method, auditors are assigned to the selected machines (two or three people, with representatives of each major political party, would comprise each audit team).
- The selection of voting machines, and the assignment of auditors to machines, occurs immediately before the audits take place. The audits take place as soon after polls close as possible – for example, at 9 a.m. the morning after polls close.
- Using a transparent random selection method, county police officers, security personnel and the video monitor assigned to guard the voter-verified records are chosen from a large pool of on-duty officers and employees on election night.
- The auditors are provided the machine tallies and are able to see that the county tally reflects the sums of the machine tallies before the start of the inspection of the paper.
- The audit would include a tally of spoiled ballots (in the case of VVPT, the number of cancellations recorded), overvotes, and undervotes.

### Transparent Random Selection Process

In this report, we have assumed that random auditing procedures are in place for both the Regimen for an Automatic Routine Audit and Regimen for Parallel Testing. We have further assumed procedures to prevent a single, corrupt person from being able to fix the results. This implies a kind of transparent and public random procedure.

For the Regimen for an Automatic Routine Audit there are at least two places where transparent, random selection processes are important: in the selection of precincts to audit, and in the assignment of auditors to the precincts they will be auditing.

Good election security can employ Transparent Random Selection in other places with good effect:

- the selection of parallel testers from a pool of qualified individuals.
- the assignment of police and other security professionals from on-duty lists, to monitor key materials, for example, the VVPT records between the time that they arrive at election central and the time of the completion of the ARA.

If a selection process for auditing is to be trustworthy and trusted, ideally:

- The whole process will be publicly observable or videotaped;<sup>44</sup>
- The random selection will be publicly verifiable, *i.e.*, anyone observing will be able to verify that the sample was chosen randomly (or at least that the number selected is not under the control of any small number of people); and
- The process will be simple and practical within the context of current election practice so as to avoid imposing unnecessary burdens on election officials.

There are a number of ways that election officials can ensure some kind of transparent randomness. One way would be to use a state lottery machine to select precincts or polling places for auditing. We have included two potential examples of transparent random selection processes in Appendix F. These apply to the Regimen for Parallel Testing as well.

#### **REGIMEN FOR PARALLEL TESTING PLUS BASIC SET OF COUNTERMEASURES**

The final set of countermeasures we have examined is “Parallel Testing” plus the Basic Set of countermeasures. Parallel Testing, also known as election-day testing, involves selecting voting machines at random and testing them as realistically as possible during the period that votes are being cast.

#### **Parallel Testing**

In developing our set of assumptions for Parallel Testing, we relied heavily upon interviews with Jocelyn Whitney, Project Manager for Parallel Testing in the State of California, and conclusions drawn from this Report.<sup>45</sup> In our analysis, we assume that the following procedures would be included in the Parallel Testing regimen (when referring to this regimen “Regimen for Parallel Testing”) that we evaluate:

- At least two of each DRE model (meaning both vendor and model) would be selected for Parallel Testing;
- At least two DREs from each of the three largest counties would be parallel tested;
- Counties to be parallel tested would be chosen by the Secretary of State in a transparent and random manner.
- Counties would be notified as late as possible that machines from one of their precincts would be selected for Parallel Testing;<sup>46</sup>
- Precincts would be selected through a transparent random mechanism;
- A video camera would record testing;
- For each test, there would be one tester and one observer;

- Parallel Testing would occur at the polling place;
- The script for Parallel Testing would be generated in a way that mimics voter behavior and voting patterns for the polling place;
- At the end of the Parallel Testing, the tester and observer would reconcile vote totals in the script with vote totals reported on the machine.

### **Transparent Random Selection Process**

We further assume that the same type of transparent random selection process that would be used for the Regimen for Automatic Routine Audit would also be employed for the Regimen for Parallel Testing to determine which machines would be subjected to testing on Election Day.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **ALTERNATIVE SECURITY METRICS CONSIDERED**

#### **Dollars Spent**

The decision to use the number of informed participants as the metric for attack level difficulty came after considering several other potential metrics. One of the first metrics we considered was the dollar cost of attacks. This metric makes sense when looking at attacks that seek financial gain – for instance, misappropriating corporate funds. It is not rational to spend \$100,000 on the misappropriation of corporate funds if the total value of those funds is \$90,000. Ultimately, we rejected this metric as the basis for our analysis because the dollar cost of the attacks we considered were dwarfed by both (1) current federal and state budgets, and (2) the amounts currently spent legally in state and federal political campaigns.

#### **Time of Attack**

The relative security of safes and other safety measures are often rated in terms of “time to defeat.” This was rejected as metric of difficulty because it did not seem relevant to voting systems. Attackers breaking into a house are concerned with the amount of time it might take to complete their robbery because the homeowners or police might show up. With regard to election fraud, many attackers may be willing to start months or years before an election if they believe they can control the outcome. As discussed *supra* at pp. 35–48, attackers may be confident that they can circumvent the independent testing authorities and other measures meant to identify attacks, so that the amount of time an attack takes becomes less relevant.

**Appendix 4**  
**Voting Fraud-Voter Intimidation Working Group**

**The Honorable Todd Rokita**

Indiana Secretary of State

Member, EAC Standards Board and the Executive Board of the Standards Board

**Kathy Rogers**

Georgia Director of Elections, Office of the Secretary of State

Member, EAC Standards Board

**J.R. Perez**

Guadalupe County Elections Administrator, Texas

**Barbara Arnwine**

Executive Director, Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law

Leader of Election Protection Coalition

**Robert Bauer**

Chair of the Political Law Practice at the law firm of Perkins Coie, District of Columbia

National Counsel for Voter Protection, Democratic National Committee

**Benjamin L. Ginsberg**

Partner, Patton Boggs LLP

Counsel to national Republican campaign committees and Republican candidates

**Mark (Thor) Hearne II**

Partner-Member, Lathrop & Gage, St Louis, Missouri

National Counsel to the American Center for Voting Rights

**Barry Weinberg**

Former Deputy Chief and Acting Chief, Voting Section, Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice

*EAC Invited Technical Advisor:*

**Craig Donsanto**

Director, Election Crimes Branch, U.S. Department of Justice

## Voting Fraud and Voter Intimidation – Preliminary Research & Recommendations

<sup>i</sup> Department of Justice's Activities to Address Past Election-Related Voting Irregularities, General Accounting Office, October 14, 2004, GAO-04-1041R

<sup>ii</sup> The MyVote1 Project Final Report, Fels Institute of Government, University of Pennsylvania, November 1, 2005, Pg. 12

<sup>iii</sup> Department of Justice's Activities to Address Past Election-Related Voting Irregularities, General Accounting Office, October 14, 2004, GAO-04-1041R, p. 4. This same report criticizes some of the procedures the Section used for these systems and urged the Department to improve upon them in time for the 2004 presidential election. No follow-up report has been done since that time to the best of our knowledge.

<sup>iv</sup> "Department Of Justice To Hold Ballot Access and Voting Integrity Symposium," U.S. Department of Justice press release, August 2, 2005

<sup>v</sup> Craig C. Donsanto, Prosecution of Electoral Fraud Under United States Federal Law," IFES Political Finance White Paper Series, 2006, p. 29

<sup>vi</sup> Ana Henderson and Christopher Edley, Jr., Voting Rights Act Reauthorization: Research-Based Recommendations to Improve Voting Access, Chief Justice Earl Warren Institute on Race, Ethnicity and Diversity, University of California at Berkeley, School of Law, 2006, p. 29

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**Voting Fraud and Voter Intimidation**  
**Report to the**  
**U.S. Election Assistance Commission**  
**on**  
**Preliminary Research & Recommendations**

**By**

**Job Serebrov and Tova Wang**

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## Introduction

### **Charge Under HAVA**

Under the Help America Vote Act, Pub. L. No. 107-252, 116 Stat. 1666 (2002) (“HAVA”), the United States Election Assistance Commission is charged with developing national statistics on voter fraud and developing methods of deterring and investigating voter fraud. Also, the Commission is charged with developing methods of identifying, deterring, and investigating methods of voter intimidation.

### **Scope of Project**

The Commission employed a bipartisan team of legal consultants, Tova Wang and Job Serebrov to develop a preliminary overview work product to determine the quantity and quality of vote fraud and voter intimidation that is present on a national scale. The consultants’ work is neither comprehensive nor conclusive. This first phase of an envisioned two-phase project was constrained by both time and funding. The consultants’ conclusions and recommendations for phase II will be contained in this report.

The consultants, working without the aid of a support staff, divided most of the work. However, the final work product was mutually checked and approved. They agreed upon the steps that were taken needed and the method employed. For all of the documentary sources, the consultants limited the time period under review from January 1, 2001 to January 1, 2006. The research performed by the consultants included interviews, an extensive Nexis search, a review of existing literature, and case research.

**Interviews:** The consultants chose the interviewees by first coming up with a list of the categories of types of people they wanted to interview. Then the consultants separately, equally filled those categories with a certain number of people. Due to time and resource constraints, the consultants had to pare down this list substantially – for instance, they had to rule out interviewing prosecutors altogether – but still got a good range of people to talk to. The ultimate categories were academics, advocates, elections officials, lawyers and judges. Although the consultants were able to talk to most of the people they wanted to, some were unavailable and a few were not comfortable speaking to them, particularly judges. The consultants together conducted all of the interviews, either by phone or in person. Then the consultants split up drafting the summaries. All summaries were reviewed and mutually approved. Most of the interviews were extremely informative and the consultants found the interviewees to be extremely knowledgeable and insightful for the most part.

**Nexis:** Initially, the consultants developed an enormous list of possible Nexis search terms. It soon became obvious that it would be impossible to conduct the research that way. As a result, consultant Wang performed the Nexis search by finding search term combinations that would yield virtually every article on a particular subject from the last

five years. Consultant Serebrov approved the search terms. Then Wang created an excel spreadsheet in order to break down the articles in way in which they could be effectively analyzed for patterns. Each type of fraud is broken down in a separate chart according to where it took place, the date, the type of election it occurred in, what the allegation was, the publication it came from. Where there was a follow up article, any information that that suggested there had been some further action taken or some resolution to the allegation was also included. For four very complicated and long drawn out situations – Washington State, Wisconsin, South Dakota in 2004, and the vote buying cases in a couple of particular jurisdictions over the last several years –written summaries with news citations are provided.

***Existing Literature:*** Part of the selections made by the consultants resulted from consultant Wang's long-term familiarity with the material while part was the result of a joint web search for articles and books on vote fraud and voter intimidation and suggestions from those interviewed by the consultants. The consultants reviewed a wide range of materials from government reports and investigations, to academic literature, to reports published by advocacy groups. The consultants believe that they covered the landscape of available sources.

***Cases:*** In order to properly identify all applicable cases, the consultants first developed an extensive word search term list. A WestLaw search was performed and the first one hundred cases under each word search term were then gathered in individual files. This resulted in a total of approximately 44,000 cases. Most of these cases were federal as opposed to state and appellate as opposed to trial. Consultant Serebrov analyzed the cases in each file to determine if they were on point. If he found that the first twenty cases were inapplicable, Serebrov would sample forty to fifty other file cases at random to determine applicability. If the entire file did not yield any cases, the file would be discarded. All discarded word search terms were recorded in a separate file. Likewise, if the file only yielded a few applicable cases, it would also be discarded. However, if a small but significant number of cases were on point, the file was later charted. The results of the case search were stark because relatively few applicable cases were found.

**Working Definition of Fraud and Intimidation**

*Manipulation  
NOT definition*

*Note: The definition provided below is for the purposes of this EAC project. Most of the acts described come within the federal criminal definition of fraud, but some may not.*

Election fraud is any intentional action, or intentional failure to act when there is a duty to do so, that corrupts the election process in a manner that can impact on election outcomes. This includes interfering in the process by which persons register to vote; the way in which ballots are obtained, marked, or tabulated; and the process by which election results are canvassed and certified.

Examples include the following:

- falsifying voter registration information pertinent to eligibility to cast a vote, (e.g. residence, criminal status, etc).;
- altering completed voter registration applications by entering false information;
- knowingly destroying completed voter registration applications (other than spoiled applications) before they can be submitted to the proper election authority;
- knowingly removing eligible voters from voter registration lists, in violation of HAVA, NVRA, or state election laws;
- intentional destruction by election officials of voter registration records or balloting records, in violation of records retention laws, to remove evidence of election fraud;
- vote buying;
- voting in the name of another;
- voting more than once;
- coercing a voter's choice on an absentee ballot;
- using a false name and/or signature on an absentee ballot;
- destroying or misappropriating an absentee ballot;
- felons, or in some states ex-felons, who vote when they know they are ineligible to do so;
- misleading an ex-felon about his or her right to vote;
- voting by non-citizens who know they are ineligible to do so;
- intimidating practices aimed at vote suppression or deterrence, including the abuse of challenge laws;
- deceiving voters with false information (e.g.; deliberately directing voters to the wrong polling place or providing false information on polling hours and dates);
- knowingly failing to accept voter registration applications, to provide ballots, or to accept and count voted ballots in accordance with the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act;
- intentional miscounting of ballots by election officials;
- intentional misrepresentation of vote tallies by election officials;
- acting in any other manner with the intention of suppressing voter registration or voting, or interfering with vote counting and the certification of the vote.

Voting fraud does not include mistakes made in the course of voter registration, balloting, or tabulating ballots and certifying results. For purposes of the EAC study, it also does not include violations of campaign finance laws.

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## Summaries of Research Conducted

### Interviews

#### *Common Themes*

- There is virtually universal agreement that absentee ballot fraud is the biggest problem, with vote buying and registration fraud coming in after that. The vote buying often comes in the form of payment for absentee ballots, although not always. Some absentee ballot fraud is part of an organized effort; some is by individuals, who sometimes are not even aware that what they are doing is illegal. Voter registration fraud seems to take the form of people signing up with false names. Registration fraud seems to be most common where people doing the registration were paid by the signature.
- There is widespread but not unanimous agreement that there is little polling place fraud, or at least much less than is claimed, including voter impersonation, “dead” voters, noncitizen voting and felon voters. Those few who believe it occurs often enough to be a concern say that it is impossible to show the extent to which it happens, but do point to instances in the press of such incidents. Most people believe that false registration forms have not resulted in polling place fraud, although it may create the perception that vote fraud is possible. Those who believe there is more polling place fraud than reported/investigated/prosecuted believe that registration fraud does lead to fraudulent votes. Jason Torchinsky from the American Center for Voting Rights is the only interviewee who believes that polling place fraud is widespread and among the most significant problems in the system.
- Abuse of challenger laws and abusive challengers seem to be the biggest intimidation/suppression concerns, and many of those interviewed assert that the new identification requirements are the modern version of voter intimidation and suppression. However there is evidence of some continued outright intimidation and suppression, especially in some Native American communities. A number of people also raise the problem of poll workers engaging in harassment of minority voters. Other activities commonly raised were the issue of polling places being moved at the last moment, unequal distribution of voting machines, videotaping of voters at the polls, and targeted misinformation campaigns.
- Several people indicate – including representatives from DOJ -- that for various reasons, the Department of Justice is bringing fewer voter intimidation and suppression cases now and is focusing on matters such as noncitizen voting, double voting and felon voting. While the civil rights section continues to focus on systemic patterns of malfeasance, the public integrity section is focusing now on individuals, on isolated instances of fraud.
- The problem of badly kept voter registration lists, with both ineligible voters remaining on the rolls and eligible voters being taken off, remains a common concern. A few people are also troubled by voters being on registration lists in two states. They said that there was no evidence that this had led to double voting, but it opens the door to the possibility. There is great hope that full

implementation of the new requirements of HAVA – done well, a major caveat – will reduce this problem dramatically.

**Common Recommendations:**

- Many of those interviewed recommend better poll worker training as the best way to improve the process; a few also recommended longer voting times or voting on days other than election day (such as weekends) but fewer polling places so only the best poll workers would be employed
- Many interviewed support stronger criminal laws and increased enforcement of existing laws with respect to both fraud and intimidation. Advocates from across the spectrum expressed frustration with the failure of the Department of Justice to pursue complaints.
  - With respect to the civil rights section, John Tanner indicated that fewer cases are being brought because fewer are warranted – it has become increasingly difficult to know when allegations of intimidation and suppression are credible since it depends on one's definition of intimidation, and because both parties are doing it. Moreover prior enforcement of the laws has now changed the entire landscape – race based problems are rare now. Although challenges based on race and unequal implementation of identification rules would be actionable, Mr. Tanner was unaware of such situations actually occurring and the section has not pursued any such cases.
  - Craig Donsanto of the public integrity section says that while the number of election fraud related complaints have not gone up since 2002, nor has the proportion of legitimate to illegitimate claims of fraud, the number of cases the department is investigating and the number of indictments the section is pursuing are both up dramatically. Since 2002, the department has brought more cases against alien voters, felon voters and double voters than ever before. Mr. Donsanto would like more resources so it can do more and would like to have laws that make it easier for the federal government to assume jurisdiction over voter fraud cases.
- A couple of interviewees recommend a new law that would make it easier to criminally prosecute people for intimidation even when there is not racial animus.
- Almost everyone hopes that administrators will maximize the potential of statewide voter registration databases to prevent fraud. Of particular note, Sarah Ball Johnson, Executive Director of Elections for Kentucky, emphasized that having had an effective statewide voter registration database for more than thirty years has helped that state avoid most of the fraud problems that have been alleged elsewhere, such as double voting and felon voting.
- Several advocate expanded monitoring of the polls, including some associated with the Department of Justice.
- Challenge laws, both with respect to pre-election day challenges and challengers at the polls, need to be revised by all states to ensure they are not used for purposes of wrongful disenfranchisement and harassment

*Inconsistent w/ interviewees despite*

- Several people advocate passage of Senator Barak Obama’s “deceptive practices” bill
- There is a split on whether it would be helpful to have nonpartisan election officials – some indicated they thought even if elections officials are elected nonpartisanly they will carry out their duties in biased ways nonetheless. However, most agree that elections officials pursuing partisan agendas is a problem that must be addressed in some fashion. Suggestions included moving election responsibilities out of the secretary of states’ office; increasing transparency in the process; and enacting conflict of interest rules.
- A few recommend returning to allowing use of absentee ballots “for cause” only if it were politically feasible.
- A few recommend enacting a national identification card, including Pat Rogers, an attorney in New Mexico, and Jason Torchinsky from ACVR, who advocates the scheme contemplated in the Carter-Baker Commission Report.
- A couple of interviewees indicated the need for clear standards for the distribution of voting machines

## **Nexis Research**

### ***Absentee Ballot Fraud***

According to press reports, absentee ballots are abused in a variety of ways:

- Campaign workers, candidates and others coerce the voting choices of vulnerable populations, usually elderly voters
- Workers for groups and individuals have attempted to vote absentee in the names of the deceased
- Workers for groups, campaign workers and individuals have attempted to forge the names of other voters on absentee ballot requests and absentee ballots and thus vote multiple times

It is unclear how often actual convictions result from these activities (a handful of articles indicate convictions and guilty pleas), but this is an area in which there have been a substantial number of official investigations and actual charges filed, according to news reports where such information is available. A few of the allegations became part of civil court proceedings contesting the outcome of the election.

While absentee fraud allegations turn up throughout the country, a few states have had several such cases. Especially of note are Indiana, New Jersey, South Dakota, and most particularly, Texas. Interestingly, there were no articles regarding Oregon, where the entire system is vote by mail.

### ***Voter Registration Fraud***

According to press reports, the following types of allegations of voter registration fraud are most common:

- Registering in the name of dead people
- Fake names and other information on voter registration forms
- Illegitimate addresses used on voter registration forms
- Voters being tricked into registering for a particular party under false pretenses
- Destruction of voter registration forms depending on the party the voter registered with

There was only one self evident instance of a noncitizen registering to vote. Many of the instances reported on included official investigations and charges filed, but few actual convictions, at least from the news reporting. There have been multiple reports of registration fraud in California, Colorado, Florida, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

### *Voter Intimidation and Suppression*

This is the area which had the most articles in part because there were so many allegations of intimidation and suppression during the 2004 election. Most of these remained allegations and no criminal investigation or prosecution ensued. Some of the cases did end up in civil litigation.

This is not to say that these alleged activities were confined to 2004 – there were several allegations made during every year studied. Most notable were the high number of allegations of voter intimidation and harassment reported during the 2003 Philadelphia mayoral race.

A very high number of the articles were about the issue of challenges to voters' registration status and challengers at the polling places. There were many allegations that planned challenge activities were targeted at minority communities. Some of the challenges were concentrated in immigrant communities.

However, the tactics alleged varied greatly. The types of activities discussed also include the following:

- Photographing or videotaping voters coming out of polling places.
- Improper demands for identification
- Poll watchers harassing voters
- Poll workers being hostile to or aggressively challenging voters
- Disproportionate police presence
- Poll watchers wearing clothes with messages that seemed intended to intimidate
- Insufficient voting machines and unmanageably long lines

Although the incidents reported on occurred everywhere, not surprisingly, many came from “battleground” states. There were several such reports out of Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

### ***“Dead Voters and Multiple Voting”***

There were a high number of articles about people voting in the names of the dead and voting more than once. Many of these articles were marked by allegations of big numbers of people committing these frauds, and relatively few of these allegations turning out to be accurate according to investigations by the newspapers themselves, elections officials and criminal investigators. Often the problem turned out to be a result of administrative error, poll workers mis-marking of voter lists, a flawed registration list and/or errors made in the attempt to match names of voters on the list with the names of the people who voted. In a good number of cases, there were allegations that charges of double voting by political leaders were an effort to scare people away from the voting process.

Nonetheless there were a few cases of people actually being charged and/or convicted for these kinds of activities. Most of the cases involved a person voting both by absentee ballot and in person. A few instances involved people voting both during early voting and on Election Day, which calls into question the proper marking and maintenance of the voting lists. In many instances, the person charged claimed not to have voted twice on purpose. A very small handful of cases involved a voter voting in more than one county and there was one substantiated case involving a person voting in more than one state. Other instances in which such efforts were alleged were disproved by officials.

In the case of voting in the name of a dead person, the problem lay in the voter registration list not being properly maintained, i.e. the person was still on the registration list as eligible to vote, and a person taking criminal advantage of that. In total, the San Francisco Chronicle found 5 such cases in March 2004; the AP cited a newspaper analysis of five such persons in an Indiana primary in May 2004; and a senate committee found two people to have voted in the names of the dead in 2005.

As usual, there were a disproportionate number of such articles coming out of Florida. Notably, there were three articles out of Oregon, which has one hundred percent vote-by-mail.

### ***Vote Buying***

There were a surprising number of articles about vote buying cases. A few of these instances involved long-time investigations in three particular jurisdictions as detailed in the vote buying summary. There were more official investigations, indictments and convictions/pleas in this area. All of these cases are concentrated in the Midwest and South.

### ***Deceptive Practices***

In 2004 there were numerous reports of intentional disinformation about voting eligibility and the voting process meant to confuse voters about their rights and when and where to vote. Misinformation came in the form of flyers, phone calls, letters, and even people going door to door. Many of the efforts were reportedly targeted at minority communities. A disproportionate number of them came from key battleground states, particularly Florida, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. From the news reports found, only one of these instances was officially investigated, the case in Oregon involving the destruction of voter registration forms. There were no reports of prosecutions or any other legal proceeding.

### ***Non-citizen Voting***

There were surprisingly few articles regarding noncitizen registration and voting – just seven all together, in seven different states across the country. They were also evenly split between allegations of noncitizens registering and noncitizens voting. In one case charges were filed against ten individuals. In one case a judge in a civil suit found there was illegal noncitizen voting. Three instances prompted official investigations. Two cases, from this nexis search, remained just allegations of noncitizen voting.

### ***Felon Voting***

Although there were only thirteen cases of felon voting, some of them involved large numbers of voters. Most notably, of course, are the cases that came to light in the Washington gubernatorial election contest (see Washington summary) and in Wisconsin (see Wisconsin summary). In several states, the main problem has been the large number of ineligible felons that remained on the voting list.

### ***Election Official Fraud***

In most of the cases in which fraud by elections officials is suspected or alleged, it is difficult to determine whether it is incompetence or a crime. There are several cases of ballots gone missing, ballots unaccounted for and ballots ending up in a worker's possession. In two cases workers were said to have changed peoples' votes. The one instance in which widespread ballot box stuffing by elections workers was alleged was in Washington State. The judge in the civil trial of that election contest did not find that elections workers had committed fraud. Four of the cases are from Texas.

### **Existing Research**

There are many reports and books that describe anecdotes and draw broad conclusions from a large array of incidents. There is little research that is truly systematic or scientific. The most systematic look at fraud is the report written by Lori Minnite. The most systematic look at voter intimidation is the report by Laughlin McDonald. Books

written about this subject seem to all have a political bias and a pre-existing agenda that makes them somewhat less valuable.

Researchers agree that measuring something like the incidence of fraud and intimidation in a scientifically legitimate way is extremely difficult from a methodological perspective and would require resources beyond the means of most social and political scientists. As a result, there is much more written on this topic by advocacy groups than social scientists. It is hoped that this gap will be filled in the “second phase” of this EAC project.

Moreover, reports and books make allegations but, perhaps by their nature, have little follow up. As a result, it is difficult to know when something has remained in the stage of being an allegation and gone no further, or progressed to the point of being investigated or prosecuted or in any other way proven to be valid by an independent, neutral entity. This is true, for example, with respect to allegations of voter intimidation by civil rights organizations, and, with respect to fraud, John Fund’s frequently cited book. Again, this is something that it is hoped will be addressed in the “second phase” of this EAC project by doing follow up research on allegations made in reports, books and newspaper articles.

Other items of note:

- There is as much evidence, and as much concern, about structural forms of disenfranchisement as about intentional abuse of the system. These include felon disenfranchisement, poor maintenance of databases and identification requirements.
- There is tremendous disagreement about the extent to which polling place fraud, e.g. double voting, intentional felon voting, noncitizen voting, is a serious problem. On balance, more researchers find it to be less of a problem than is commonly described in the political debate, but some reports say it is a major problem, albeit hard to identify.
- There is substantial concern across the board about absentee balloting and the opportunity it presents for fraud.
- Federal law governing election fraud and intimidation is varied and complex and yet may nonetheless be insufficient or subject to too many limitations to be as effective as it might be.
- Deceptive practices, e.g. targeted flyers and phone calls providing misinformation, were a major problem in 2004.
- Voter intimidation continues to be focused on minority communities, although the American Center for Voting Rights uniquely alleges it is focused on Republicans.

## Cases

After reviewing over 40,000 cases, the majority of which came from appeals courts, I have found comparatively very few which are applicable to this study. Of those that are applicable, no apparent thematic pattern emerges. However, it seems that the greatest areas of fraud and intimidation have shifted from past patterns of stealing votes to present problems with voter registration, voter identification, the proper delivery and counting of absentee and overseas ballots, provisional voting, vote buying, and challenges to felon eligibility. But because so few cases provided a picture of these current problems, I suggest that case research for the second phase of this project concentrate on state trial-level decisions.

## Methodology

The following is a summary of interviews conducted with a number of political scientists and experts in the field as to how one might undertake a comprehensive examination of voter fraud and intimidation. A list of the individuals interviewed and their ideas are available, and all of the individuals welcome any further questions or explanations of their recommended procedures.

- In analyzing instances of alleged fraud and intimidation, we should look to criminology as a model. In criminology, experts use two sources: the Uniform Crime Reports, which are all reports made to the police, and the Victimization Survey, which asks the general public whether a particular incident has happened to them. After surveying what the most common allegations are, we should conduct a survey of the general public that ask whether they have committed certain acts or been subjected to any incidents of fraud or intimidation. This would require using a very large sample, and we would need to employ the services of an expert in survey data collection. (Stephen Ansolobhere, MIT)
- Several political scientists with expertise in these types of studies recommended a methodology that includes interviews, focus groups, and a limited survey. In determining who to interview and where the focus groups should be drawn from, they recommend the following procedure:
  - Pick a number of places that have historically had many reports of fraud and/or intimidation; from that pool pick 10 that are geographically and demographically diverse, and have had a diversity of problems
  - Pick a number of places that have not had many reports of fraud and/or intimidation; from that pool pick 10 places that match the geographic and demographic make-up of the previous ten above (and, if possible, have comparable elections practices)

- Assess the resulting overall reports and impressions resulting from these interviews and focus groups, and examine comparisons and differences among the states and what may give rise to them.

In conducting a survey of elections officials, district attorneys, district election officers, they recommend that:

- The survey sample be large in order to be able to get the necessary subsets
- The survey must include a random set of counties where there have and have not been a large number of allegations

(Allan Lichtman, American University; Thad Hall, University of Utah; Bernard Grofman, UC – Irvine)

- Another political scientist recommended employing a methodology that relies on qualitative data drawn from in-depth interviews with key critics and experts on all sides of the debate on fraud; quantitative data collected through a survey of state and local elections and law enforcement officials; and case studies. Case studies should focus on the five or ten states, regions or cities where there has been a history of election fraud to examine past and present problems. The survey should be mailed to each state's attorney general and secretary of state, each county district attorney's office and each county board of elections in the 50 states. (Lorraine Minnite, Barnard College)
- The research should be a two-step process. Using LexisNexis and other research tools, a search should be conducted of news media accounts over the past decade. Second, interviews with a systematic sample of election officials nationwide and in selected states should be conducted. (Chandler Davidson, Rice University)
- One expert in the field posits that we can never come up with a number that accurately represents either the incidence of fraud or the incidence of voter intimidation. Therefore, the better approach is to do an assessment of what is most likely to happen, what election violations are most likely to be committed – in other words, a risk analysis. This would include an analysis of what it would actually take to commit various acts, e.g. the cost/benefit of each kind of violation. From there we could rank the likely prevalence of each type of activity and examine what measures are or could be effective in combating them. (Wendy Weiser, Brennan Center of New York University)
- Replicate a study in the United States done abroad by Susan Hyde of the University of California- San Diego examining the impact of impartial poll site observers on the incidence of election fraud. Doing this retrospectively would require the following steps:
  - Find out where there were federal observers
  - Get precinct level voting information for those places

- Analyze whether there was any difference in election outcomes in those places with and without observers, and whether any of these results seem anomalous.

Despite the tremendous differences in the political landscapes of the countries examined by Hyde in previous studies and the U.S., Hyde believes this study could be effectively replicated in this country by sending observers to a random sample of precincts. Rather than compare the incumbent's vote share, such factors such as voter complaints, voter turnout, number of provisional ballots used, composition of the electorate, as well as any anomalous voting results could be compared between sites with and without monitors.

For example, if intimidation is occurring, and if reputable monitors make intimidation less likely or voters more confident, then turnout should be higher on average in monitored precincts than in unmonitored precincts. If polling station officials are intentionally refusing to issue provisional ballots, and the polling station officials are more likely to adhere to regulations while being monitored, the average number of provisional ballots should be higher in monitored precincts than in unmonitored precincts. If monitors cause polling station officials to adhere more closely to regulations, then there should be fewer complaints (in general) about monitored than unmonitored precincts (this could also be reversed if monitors made voters more likely to complain).

Again, random assignment controls for all of the other factors that otherwise influence these variables.

One of the downsides of this approach is it does not get at some forms of fraud, e.g. absentee ballot fraud; those would have to be analyzed separately.

- Another political scientist recommends conducting an analysis of vote fraud claims and purging of registration rolls by list matching. Allegations of illegal voting often are based on matching of names and birth dates. Alleged instances of double voting are based on matching the names and birth dates of persons found on voting records. Allegations of ineligible felon (depending on state law), deceased, and of non-citizen voting are based on matching lists of names, birth dates, and sometimes addresses of such people against a voting records. Anyone with basic relational database skills can perform such matching in a matter of minutes.

However, there are a number of pitfalls for the unwary that can lead to grossly over-estimating the number of fraudulent votes, such as missing or ignored middle names and suffixes or matching on missing birth dates. Furthermore, there is a surprising statistical fact that a group of about three hundred people with the same first and last name are almost assured to share the exact same birth date, including year. In a large state, it is not uncommon for hundreds of Robert Smiths (and other common names) to have voted. Thus, allegations of vote fraud

or purging of voter registration rolls by list matching almost assuredly will find a large proportion of false positives: people who voted legally or are registered to vote legally.

Statistics can be rigorously applied to determine how many names would be expected to be matched by chance. A simulation approach is best applied here: randomly assign a birth date to an arbitrary number of people and observe how many match within the list or across lists. The simulation is repeated many times to average out the variation due to chance. The results can then be matched back to actual voting records and purge lists, for example, in the hotly contested states of Ohio or Florida, or in states with Election Day registration where there are concerns that easy access to voting permits double voting. This analysis will rigorously identify the magnitude alleged voter fraud, and may very well find instances of alleged fraud that exceed what might have otherwise happened by chance.

This same political scientist also recommends another way to examine the problem: look at statistics on provisional voting: the number cast might provide indications of intimidation (people being challenged at the polls) and the number of those not counted would be indications of "vote fraud." One could look at those jurisdictions in the Election Day Survey with a disproportionate number of provisional ballots cast and cross reference it with demographics and number of provisional ballots discarded. (Michael McDonald, George Mason University)

- Spencer Overton, in a forthcoming law review article entitled *Voter Identification*, suggests a methodology that employs three approaches—investigations of voter fraud, random surveys of voters who purported to vote, and an examination of death rolls provide a better understanding of the frequency of fraud. He says all three approaches have strengths and weaknesses, and thus the best studies would employ all three to assess the extent of voter fraud. An excerpt follows:

1. *Investigations and Prosecutions of Voter Fraud*

Policymakers should develop databases that record all investigations, allegations, charges, trials, convictions, acquittals, and plea bargains regarding voter fraud. Existing studies are incomplete but provide some insight. For example, a statewide survey of each of Ohio's 88 county boards of elections found only four instances of ineligible persons attempting to vote out of a total of 9,078,728 votes cast in the state's 2002 and 2004 general elections. This is a fraud rate of 0.0000045 percent. The Carter-Baker Commission's Report noted that since October 2002, federal officials had charged 89 individuals with casting multiple votes, providing false information about their felon status, buying votes, submitting false voter registration information, and voting improperly as a non-citizen. Examined in the context of the 196,139,871 ballots cast between October 2002 and

August 2005, this represents a fraud rate of 0.0000005 percent (note also that not all of the activities charged would have been prevented by a photo identification requirement).

A more comprehensive study should distinguish voter fraud that could be prevented by a photo identification requirement from other types of fraud — such as absentee voting and stuffing ballot boxes — and obtain statistics on the factors that led law enforcement to prosecute fraud. The study would demand significant resources because it would require that researchers interview and pour over the records of local district attorneys and election boards.

Hard data on investigations, allegations, charges, pleas, and prosecutions is important because it quantifies the amount of fraud officials detect. Even if prosecutors vigorously pursue voter fraud, however, the number of fraud cases charged probably does not capture the total amount of voter fraud. Information on official investigations, charges, and prosecutions should be supplemented by surveys of voters and a comparison of voting rolls to death rolls.

## *2. Random Surveys of Voters*

Random surveys could give insight about the percentage of votes cast fraudulently. For example, political scientists could contact a statistically representative sampling of 1,000 people who purportedly voted at the polls in the last election, ask them if they actually voted, and confirm the percentage who are valid voters. Researchers should conduct the survey soon after an election to locate as many legitimate voters as possible with fresh memories.

Because many respondents would perceive voting as a social good, some who did not vote might claim that they did, which may underestimate the extent of fraud. A surveyor might mitigate this skew through the framing of the question (“I’ve got a record that you voted. Is that true?”).

Further, some voters will not be located by researchers and others will refuse to talk to researchers. Photo identification proponents might construe these non-respondents as improper registrations that were used to commit voter fraud.

Instead of surveying all voters to determine the amount of fraud, researchers might reduce the margin of error by focusing on a random sampling of voters who signed affidavits in the three states that request photo identification but also allow voters to establish their identity through affidavit—Florida, Louisiana, and South Dakota. In

South Dakota, for example, only two percent of voters signed affidavits to establish their identity. If the survey indicates that 95 percent of those who signed affidavits are legitimate voters (and the other 5 percent were shown to be either fraudulent or were non-responsive), this suggests that voter fraud accounts for, at the maximum, 0.1 percent of ballots cast.

The affidavit study, however, is limited to three states, and it is unclear whether this sample is representative of other states (the difficulty may be magnified in Louisiana in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina's displacement of hundreds of thousands of voters). Further, the affidavit study reveals information about the amount of fraud in a photo identification state with an affidavit exception—more voter fraud may exist in a state that does not request photo identification.

### 3. *Examining Death Rolls*

A comparison of death rolls to voting rolls might also provide an estimate of fraud.

Imagine that one million people live in state A, which has no documentary identification requirement. Death records show that 20,000 people passed away in state A in 2003. A cross-referencing of this list to the voter rolls shows that 10,000 of those who died were registered voters, and these names remained on the voter rolls during the November 2004 election. Researchers would look at what percentage of the 10,000 dead-but-registered people who "voted" in the November 2004 election. A researcher should distinguish the votes cast in the name of the dead at the polls from those cast absentee (which a photo identification requirement would not prevent). This number would be extrapolated to the electorate as a whole.

This methodology also has its strengths and weaknesses. If fraudulent voters target the dead, the study might overestimate the fraud that exists among living voters (although a low incidence of fraud among deceased voters might suggest that fraud among all voters is low). The appearance of fraud also might be inflated by false positives produced by a computer match of different people with the same name. Photo identification advocates would likely assert that the rate of voter fraud could be higher among fictitious names registered, and that the death record survey would not capture that type of fraud because fictitious names registered would not show up in the death records. Nevertheless, this study, combined with the other two, would provide important insight into the magnitude of fraud likely to exist in the absence of a photo identification requirement.

**Recommendations for Further EAC Activity  
on Voting Fraud and Voter Intimidation**

**Consultants' Recommendations**

***Recommendation 1: Conduct More Interviews***

Time and resource constraints prevented the consultants from interviewing the full range of participants in the process. As a result, we recommend that any future activity in this area include conducting further interviews.

In particular, we recommend that more election officials from all levels of government, parts of the country, and parties be interviewed. These individuals have the most direct inside information on how the system works -- and at times does not work. They are often the first people voters go to when something goes wrong and are often responsible for fixing it. They are the ones who must carry out the measures that are designed to both prevent fraud and voter intimidation and suppression. They will most likely know what, therefore, is and is not working.

It would also be especially beneficial to talk to people in law enforcement, specifically federal District Election Officers ("DEOs") and local district attorneys, as well as civil and criminal defense attorneys.

The Public Integrity Section of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice has all of the 93 U.S. Attorneys appoint Assistant U.S. Attorneys to serve as DEOs for two years. DEOs are required to

- screen and conduct preliminary investigations of complaints, in conjunction with the FBI and PIN, to determine whether they constitute potential election crimes and should become matters for investigation;
- oversee the investigation and prosecution of election fraud and other election crimes in their districts;
- coordinate their district's (investigative and prosecutorial) efforts with DOJ headquarters prosecutors;
- coordinate election matters with state and local election and law enforcement officials and make them aware of their availability to assist with election-related matters;
- issue press releases to the public announcing the names and telephone numbers of DOJ and FBI officials to contact on election day with complaints about voting or election irregularities and answer telephones on election day to receive these complaints; and
- supervise a team of Assistant U.S. Attorneys and FBI special agents who are appointed to handle election-related allegations while the polls are open on election day.<sup>1</sup>

Given the great responsibilities of the DEOs, and the breadth of issues they must deal with, they undoubtedly are great resources for information and insight as to what types of fraud and intimidation/suppression are occurring in their districts.

In many situations, however, it is the local district attorneys who will investigate election fraud and suppression tactics, especially in local elections. They will be able to provide information on what has gone on in their jurisdictions, as well as which matters get pursued and why.

Finally, those who defend people accused of election related crimes would also be useful to speak to. They may have a different perspective on how well the system is working to detect, prevent, and prosecute election fraud.

***Recommendation 2: Follow Up on Nexis Research***

The Nexis search conducted for this phase of the research was based on a list of search terms agreed upon by both consultants. Thousands of articles were reviewed and hundreds analyzed. Many of the articles contain allegations of fraud or intimidation. Similarly, many of the articles contain information about investigations into such activities or even charges brought. However, without being able to go beyond the agreed search terms, it could not be determined whether there was any later determination regarding the allegations, investigation or charges brought. This leaves a gaping hole: it is impossible to know if the article is just reporting on “talk” or what turns out to be a serious affront to the system.

As a result, we recommend that follow up Nexis research be conducted to determine what, if any, resolutions or further activity there was in each case. This would provide a much more accurate picture of what types of activities are actually taking place.

***Recommendation 3: Follow Up on Allegations Found in Literature Review***

Similarly, many allegations are made in the reports and books that we analyzed and summarized. Those allegations are often not substantiated in any way and are inherently time limited by the date of the writing. Despite this, such reports and books are frequently cited by various interested parties as evidence of fraud or intimidation.

Therefore, we recommend follow up to the literature review: for those reports and books that make or cite specific instances of fraud or intimidation, a research effort should be made to follow up on those references to see if and how they were resolved.

***Recommendation 4: Review Complaints File With MyVote1 Project Voter Hotline***

During the 2004 election and the statewide elections of 2005, the University of Pennsylvania led a consortium of groups and researchers in conducting the MyVote1 Project. This project involved using a 1-800 voter hotline where voters could call for poll location, be transferred to a local hotline, or leave a recorded message with a complaint.