Who Is Really for Election Reform?

by Phyllis Schlafly

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A top priority of Democrats nationwide is to try to expand early voting even beyond the more than 40-plus million votes that were cast on days other than Election Day in 2012 or by mail. The present system balkanizes and deprives our nation of the unifying value of one Nation on Election Day.

The Democrats know that their massive use of early voting was a major factor that enabled them to pile up the winning votes to reelect Barack Obama. Obama enthusiastically supports early voting; he urged 10,000 fans at his campaign speech in Urbandale, Iowa to vote right now "starting Sept. 27 … you don't have to wait until Nov. 6 to vote."

On the first day of the new Congress, the House Democrats showed what they think is really important by pushing (fortunately, unsuccessfully) for a new federal law that would require 10 hours a day of early voting for 15 days before any federal election. The bill also would have invented a new voting "right" that no one has to stand in line more than one hour.

Republicans think the goal of voting reform should be honest elections, not convenience, plus maintenance of safeguards against voter fraud and coercion of voters. Republicans want to make sure that only U.S. citizens can vote, that Voter-ID is used in every state, and that ballots from our armed forces abroad are really counted.

Early voting bypasses many safeguards for voting integrity such as having Poll Watchers from both political parties to monitor everything going on to deter polling-place monkey business. It's expensive and nearly impossible to secure Poll Watchers for the many days of early voting that were allowed in Ohio (35 days) and other swing states.

Early voting is a liberal gimmick that disenfranchises Election Day voters by determining the outcome before Election Day and, contrary to liberal propaganda, early voting decreases overall voter turnout. Early voting increased substantially in Ohio in 2012, but overall turnout decreased significantly.

Early voting violates federal law, which for more than a century has required national elections to occur on the same day. Early voting adds heavy costs to the taxpayers and to the candidates because it significantly lengthens the campaign.

Early voting is unfair because it prevents voters from changing their minds up until Election Day. Early voting encourages uninformed voting because many voted before the presidential debates were held.

Early voting makes campaigns more expensive; it lengthens the time period for advertising. It harms third-party candidates who lack a political organization to get out early voters.

Early voting is a misnomer. More precise names would be premature voting, uninformed voting, or political machine voting.

What if jurors were allowed to decide they are tired of a lengthy trial and want to vote to convict a defendant midway through the trial and go home? Isn't it just as important for voters to hear all the facts about candidates before voting?

Absentee voting provides another big opportunity for election fraud because it deprives many voters of our precious secret ballot. Here is one way that absentee voting works.

An Arkansas state legislator, Rep. Hudson Hallum, bribed voters with money and food to cast their absentee ballots for him, obtained and distributed ballots to those voters, and then collected them in unsealed envelopes. If the ballots were marked for Hallum's opponent, Hallum pitched them. Hallum pled guilty to election fraud.

Mail-in ballots are subject to the same problem. Most of them are probably not secret ballots but are cast without traditional safeguards of secrecy and freedom from coercion, and you don't know who is looking at them before they are dropped in the ballot box

Obama's margin of victory was only a few hundred thousand votes in the four swing states of Florida, Ohio, Virginia and New Hampshire. That was far less than the number of mailed-in ballots cast.

Another easy way this racket works is to take absentee ballots to nursing homes and assisted-living institutions. The campaign worker “helps” the physically or mentally disabled senior citizens choose for whom they want to vote, marks the ballot, and then turns it in.

The Democrats’ party line is that voter fraud is a myth, but that illusion was dispelled by another stunning case of fraud by a prominent incumbent. The son and field director of U.S. Rep. Jim Moran, who has been in office for 22 years representing Virginia’s Washington suburbs, was filmed by videographer James O’Keefe advising an undercover reporter how to bypass Virginia’s Voter-ID law. The method was exquisitely ingenious: it called for creating fake utility bills on the internet to substitute for Voter-ID.