Don’t Let Your Vote Be Canceled by Fraud

by Phyllis Schlafly

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As we approach a major national election, we hear warnings about many kinds of vote fraud and possible recounts that might delay confirmation of who are the victors. We also hear from deniers who insist that vote fraud is a figment of the imagination of Republicans. It isn’t; vote fraud is real.

Many instances of registration fraud schemes were carried out by ACORN, and some members were even tried and convicted. Although ACORN announced it was closing its doors, it reemerged under new names.

It’s common knowledge that there are more registered voters in Philadelphia than there are people living in Philadelphia, because dead and moved-away voters have not been stricken from the list. Similar accusations have been made in a dozen other states.

In Minnesota, we were entertained for weeks with news of the recounting of votes in the 2008 Minnesota election for U.S. Senate. Al Franken was declared the winner by 312 votes out of three million cast.

After all was said and done, Minnesota **discovered** that 289 convicted felons had voted illegally in Hennepin County, 52 had voted illegally in Ramsey County, and many others voted illegally who were dead or who voted multiple times. That is reason enough for the U.S. Senate to use its constitutional power in Article I, Section 5 to unseat Franken.

In a shocking case this fall, a good-looking Arkansas state legislator, Rep. Hudson Hallum, **pled guilty** to **election fraud** by bribing voters to vote their absentee ballots for him. He had applied for and distributed the absentee ballots, and the voters then gave the ballots to him in unsealed envelopes. If they were marked for Hallum’s opponent, they were pitched.

The wide use of absentee and mail-in ballots has destroyed our traditional American secret ballot. This is a major loss of an important American right and an open door to election fraud.

It’s important to know that it’s much easier to prevent vote fraud beforehand than it is to overturn an election suspected of being plagued with fraud. Can individual citizens do something to prevent vote fraud, or can we count on the government to protect us from the cheaters?

There are things you can do right now, before the election. You can volunteer to be a poll watcher, sometimes called poll observers or challengers or checkers, and usually at least one watcher is allowed to be close enough to the election officials to be able to compare the voter’s signature with the verification record.

State laws vary about the rights and duties of poll watchers and how many can be in a polling place. You can get some helpful advice and good instructions by contacting **www.truethevote.org**.

Most state legislatures will go into session early next year, and now is the time they are planning the bills they want to pass. At the top of their list should be a photo ID law if they are not among the 17 states that already have such a law. There is no question about the constitutionality of voter ID because the Supreme Court upheld the Indiana voter ID law in 2008.

The left squeals in pain about photo ID laws, claiming they are a conspiracy of Republicans to suppress vote turnout, especially of minority voters. There’s no evidence to support that claim and, in fact, voter turnout has actually increased in Indiana and Georgia where photo ID has been implemented.

A citizen who lacks photo ID can prove identity with other documents. These include a state-issued ID, credit card, utility bill, bank statement, student ID, a government check or paycheck showing the voter’s name and address, birth certificate, or a passport.

Minorities are actually among those most eager to implement photo ID. Former Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young said, “You cannot be part of the mainstream of American life today without a photo ID.” The sponsor of Rhode Island’s photo ID law was Harold Metts, who is the only African-American in the state senate.

Just think of all the many occasions when we all must show photo ID: when stopped by the police for a traffic violation, to make a credit card purchase, to check in for any medical treatment, to check into a hotel room, or to board an airplane. Isn't it just as important to assure that only American citizens are allowed to vote, and to prevent non-citizens from canceling out your vote, and to prevent crooks from voting twice or voting in the name of a dead person who is still registered?

When your vote is nullified by illegal votes, you are cheated just as much as if you were denied the right to vote.