# Republicans Need Tools for 2014 Victory

by Phyllis Schlafly

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Although the midterm elections are still two weeks away, about two million Americans have already voted. The circus of early and mail-in voting undermines the federal law which provides: "The Tuesday next after the 1st Monday in November, in every even numbered year, is established as the day for the election."

When our national elections were held on one unifying day, discussions and debates could continue among family, neighbors and the media up until the day that virtually everyone voted. The one and only debate between Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter occurred only a week before Election Day in 1980, with the candidates tied in the polls while a television audience of perhaps 120 million people watched.

Why rampant early voting is even allowed remains a mystery. The Constitution requires that the members of the Electoral College, who elect the president, must cast their votes on the same day throughout the nation, because our founding fathers wisely sought to avoid the mischief caused by early voting.

Yet in this year's race for the U.S. Senate in Iowa, which may decide which party controls the Senate beginning January, some 170,000 Iowans had already cast their votes before the candidates held a key debate. Those votes cast before debates are held can hardly be desirable.

In Congress, a representative may change the vote he cast for or against a piece of legislation up until all the votes are cast and the voting period is closed. But the millions who vote early cannot change their vote based on new information, and candidates are wasting time and money campaigning in front of people who have already voted.

Because of the Ebola scandal, some may wish to change their vote, but that is impossible for those who have already voted. Some early voters may die before Election Day, and early voting allows the votes of those dead people to be included. If there is any dispute over whether their votes were valid or fraudulent, they are no longer with us to defend themselves.

Typically, there are no poll watchers during early voting, so the integrity of the casting of the ballots cannot be monitored. Many of the early votes are cast in a coercive environment, such as a union boss driving employees to the polls and watching over the process so there is no guarantee that their votes will be private.

Democrats promote early voting for the same reason they oppose voter ID: because they view early voting as helping their side. In the absurdly long 35-day period of early voting in Ohio in 2012, Democrats racked up perhaps a million-vote advantage over Republicans before Election Day was ever reached.

Republicans have been slow to realize how early voting helps the Democrats. Most top Republican political operatives firmly believed, right up to the morning of the 2012 election, that Mitt Romney was going to win.

In his expert analysis of why Republicans lost the 2012 election, scholar Dr. Jerome Corsi quoted Mitt Romney's chief campaign strategist, Stuart Stevens, on the last plane flight of the 2012 campaign, confidently assuring all that Romney would win the presidency because "a positive campaign message trumps a good ground game every time."

Romney lacked a message, too, but he was mainly defeated by the Democrats' superb ground game, which exploited early voting in key states such as Florida and Ohio. By continuously updating their computer-based information about who had not yet voted, Democrats could harass and nag low-information voters until they turned in their ballots.

Some Republicans may be learning from past mistakes. The New York Times just quoted Republican pollster Neil Newhouse as saying, "I've become a believer in what the Democrats can do in turning out the vote. Count me as converted."

But are top Republican strategists converted enough to realize that the hundreds of millions of big-donor dollars spent on pricey television ads during the last weeks of the campaign are wasted on those who already voted early? Those TV ads are very profitable for the strategists who place them and collect their commissions.

On the other hand, the Democrats had a first-rate computer program, plenty of technicians who had located and identified every potential Obama voter, and an army of

people willing and ready to make up to 14 personal contacts urging those pre-identified voters to hurry up and vote for Obama.

Even if a few Republican strategists have lately "become a believer in what the Democrats can do in turning out the vote," it doesn't mean Republicans can go and do likewise. Republicans still have nothing remotely comparable to the techno-political machine that twice elected Obama.

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