

CAMBER
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P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Fraud, incompetence, or corruption?

Hundreds of ineligible votes were counted. Hundred of voted ballots were not counted.

After hearing official assurances made in support of mail ballot elections, members of the citizens group CAMBER have investigated whether mail ballot elections are acceptably free of fraud.

In a report published today, the group released the results of its yearlong study of the Boulder County mail ballot election process. The report is titled, Fraud, Incompetence, or Corruption? It analyzes the 75,944 ballots that were counted in the November 2001 election.

By combining and analyzing voter registration records, Post Office change of address records, and records of who voted in the November election, CAMBER researchers were able to identify ballots that should have not been counted.

According to the report, the official election data shows that more than 500 of the votes that were counted were not eligible, and were not rejected by the mail ballot system.

According to Sheila Horton, CAMBER spokesperson, of these 500 votes that were counted, “some have no birth date on the voter registration file, and some were from active voters who are almost 120 years old. A birth date is required to verify each ballot. A recent press article reported that there are no people this old in Colorado.”

According to Post Office records, many of the counted ballots came from electors who had left Boulder County. According to Al Kolwicz, CAMBER Executive Director, “5 of these electors left the USA, 92 left Colorado, and 49 left Boulder County. Yet their ballots were voted and counted.”

In addition, 246 votes were counted for electors that moved between cities within Boulder County. Because different cities vote for different candidates and issues, voting in the wrong city would adversely influence election results.

There were 607 ballots voted but not counted by election officials. These votes are from either eligible voters whose ballot was rejected for a technicality associated with mail ballot elections, or from ineligible people who attempted to commit fraud.

Horton said, “You can’t have it both ways. Election officials maintain that there is no voter fraud. If these ballots are not fraudulent, then 607 Boulder County voters have been deprived of their right to vote, even though they took the time to get their ballot to the County. When I think of how hard a campaign works to win 600 votes, it makes me want to scream.”

These rejected ballots further illustrate that there is no secret mail ballot. Voted ballots that were rejected can be examined by wrongdoers to learn exactly how these 607 persons voted on each candidate and issue. “Although one might trust the current election officials,” said Kolwicz, “how can we trust those who will ultimately dispose of these rejected ballots?”

The report describes more problems. 18,263 ballots were mailed to people that had moved but not updated their voter registration. Of these, the Post Office did not return to the Clerk about 3,500 ballots that were mailed to addresses with a known forwarding address. What happened to these 3,500 ballots? The Post Office was contracted to not forward ballots.

Horton says, “According to the official documents, 1,843 ballots received by the clerk are missing. They appear as having been received, but are neither rejected nor counted. They are simply gone.”

In the report, CAMBER asks legislators to reject official assurances that there is no election fraud with mail ballot elections.

According to the recent [Report of the CalTech/MIT Voting Technology Project](#), officials should abolish on-demand absentee (and mail ballot) voting in favor of in-person early voting. The report cites coercion and secrecy, fraud and security, and accuracy problems as reasons to do away with mail and absentee voting.

Kolwicz said, “We started out with an open mind to the mail ballot. We simply wanted to insure accurate results. The promises were compelling – high turnout, low cost, no fraud. Now that we have done this research, we recommend that Colorado Legislators prohibit voting by mail until proponents can conclusively prove that they have invented a safe and secure process. From what we have seen, we doubt that it is possible.”

“If recent history be our guide, election officials will try to discredit CAMBER and this report. We hope,” said Horton, “the public understands that all conclusions reached in this report are based on the official election data provided to us by election officials.”

“If a candidate or issue is wrongly defeated, it is not worth arguing about whether the reason was fraud, incompetence or corruption,” said Kolwicz. “We do not desire to overthrow any election; we do not desire to prosecute the ineligible electors. We simply want to do what we can to make sure that Colorado provides fair and accurate elections and a secret ballot.”

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Members of the press are invited to contact Al Kolwicz and Sheila Horton for further information regarding today's report.

CONTACTS

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ATTACHMENT

- Report – Fraud, incompetence, or corruption?

REFERENCE MATERIALS

- CalTech/Mit Voting Technology Project - <http://vote.caltech.edu/>
- CAMBER – www.users.qwest.net/~alkolwicz