

THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS



PRESS RELEASE

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USCCR REPORT CALLS FOR GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO RESTORE VOTER CONFIDENCE IN THE INTEGRITY OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

WASHINGTON, DC— The United States Commission on Civil Rights today released *Voter Fraud and Voter Intimidation*, a report based on its October 13, 2006 briefing. The fact finding forum dealt with the mounting threats posed by voter fraud and voter intimidation to the nation’s democratic processes, which have gained new salience in a modern political environment characterized by often close and hotly-contested elections.

An expert panel, including individuals engaged in election reform efforts, a distinguished journalist who has studied and written about voter fraud, and veterans of campaigns from both political parties offered the Commission testimony on ways that both federal and state officials might improve the current voting process to eliminate voting irregularities and ensure an electoral system befitting a first-world nation. The experts focused on improvements to state voter registration processes to guarantee accurate voter rolls and the value of requiring voter identification.

In releasing the report, Gerald A. Reynolds, Commission Chairman, said: “Voting irregularities undermine public confidence in the electoral system and jeopardize the principle of ‘one person, one vote.’ Recent evidence in some fourteen states of possible fraud by third party voter registration organizations and of intimidation perpetrated by individuals underscores the need for immediate governmental attention at both the federal and state levels to ensure that our democratic processes are not being corrupted and that Americans’ votes are not being diluted. The Commission asks the White House, the Department of Justice, Congress and state legislators to weigh carefully the growing evidence of voting irregularities, including those relayed in this report, and to consider both short and long-term actions to alleviate the problem.”

The report recommends greater efforts by state and local officials to achieve accurate voter rolls, especially in light of trends towards expanded absentee voting, same-day registration and voting exclusively by mail, which the Commission found to be problematic. To enhance ballot integrity without raising barriers to voting, the Commission also encourages states to adopt a photo identification requirement for both registration and voting that can be provided to the indigent at no cost, coupled with outreach to register qualified voters and better training of poll workers.

The Commission adopted the report by a 6-2 vote at its May 9, 2008 meeting. The report, including the statements of the two dissenting Commissioners, is available on the Commission's Web site, at www.usccr.gov.

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The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is an independent, bipartisan agency charged with monitoring federal civil rights enforcement. Members include Chairman Gerald A. Reynolds, Vice Chairman Abigail Thernstrom, and Commissioners Peter N. Kirsanow, Arlan Melendez, Ashley L. Taylor, Michael Yaki, Gail Heriot and Todd Gaziano. Martin Dannenfeler is the Staff Director. Commission meetings are open to the media and general public.