

Exhibit G

United States District Court
District of New Jersey

Democratic National Committee, et al., Plaintiffs,	Civil Action No. 81-3876
v.	Judge Dickinson R. Debevoise
Republican National Committee, et al., Defendants.	

DECLARATION OF MARIA CINO

1. My name is Maria Cino. I am the Deputy Chairman of the Republican National Committee, 310 First Street, SE, Washington, DC. 20003. I have held this position since June 2003.

2. Since receiving the Democratic National Committee's papers at approximately 7 pm EDT on Wednesday, October 27, 2004, my staff and I have investigated the facts and circumstances upon which the DNC's allegations are purportedly based. This Declaration is based upon facts within my personal knowledge and facts ascertained as a result of our ongoing investigation

3. On June 15, 2004, RNC Chairman Ed Gillespie wrote to DNC Chairman Terry McAuliffe proposing that the RNC and DNC jointly attempt to assure that all properly registered voters be allowed to vote without improper interference or intimidation. In particular, Chairman Gillespie proposed that each party list all precincts throughout the country in which it anticipated problems, and then endeavor to have both a Republican and Democratic volunteer working cooperatively as an observation team in each of those precincts. The intent of this proposal was to avoid election-eve charges by the Democratic Party of voter intimidation, and by the

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Republican Party of vote fraud. (A copy of the June 15, 2004 letter is attached hereto as Exhibit 1). Although Chairman McAuliffe responded by letter of July 1, 2004 (attached hereto as Exhibit 2), he did not accept the proposal of cooperative observation teams.

4. On or about August 10, 2004, the Republican National Committee mailed a letter welcoming all newly-registered voters in Cuyahoga County, Ohio, to the political process, and encouraging them to support the Republican ticket. Because the RNC wanted to welcome all newly-registered voter to the political process, the mailing went to all newly-registered voters in Cuyahoga County. A copy of this letter, which clearly indicates that it was "Paid for by the Republican National Committee," is attached hereto as Exhibit 3. The RNC selected Cuyahoga County for this mailing because it understood that the county had a particularly large number of new registrants. Of the 49,552 letters mailed, approximately 3,353 were returned as undeliverable. These returned mailings have not been used in any challenges to voter registrations. Neither Ebony Malone nor Irving Agosto were on the mailing list for this letter.

5. On September 9, 2004, the Republican Party of Ohio sent letters to newly-registered voters in 5 Ohio Counties: Cuyahoga, Franklin, Summit, Hamilton, and Montgomery. These counties were selected because they were the counties with the largest anticipated numerical increases in registration. All Ohio counties were not selected simply because of the expense of obtaining all the lists, the expense of mailings, and the declining benefit of outreach efforts to new voters in counties that had minimal new registrations. Again, these letters went to all newly registered voters. A copy of this letter, which clearly indicates it was "Paid for by the Ohio Republican Party," is attached hereto as Exhibit 4. 15,238 of these letters were returned as undeliverable. Again, neither Ebony Malone nor Irving Agosto were on the mailing list to receive this letter.

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6. It is the practice in Ohio for county Boards of Elections to send informational packets to newly-registered voters, informing new registrants of the location of their polling stations and other important information. These mailings were sent at various times during 2004. Neither the RNC nor the Republican Party of Ohio had anything to do with these mailings.

7. Beginning on or about October 7, the Republican Party of Ohio began to receive reports that, by the week of October 18, demonstrated that tens of thousands of letters sent by the county Boards of Election had been returned as undeliverable. This fact was reported in the Ohio press, and became a matter of interest to the public and to the Republican Party. Exemplary articles reporting on these returned mailings are attached as Exhibit 5. Although Intervenor Ebony Malone and Irving Agosto were not on either the RNC mailing list or the Republican Party of Ohio mailing list, they were on the county Board of Elections mailing list, and any challenge to their multiple registrations arises from the fact that the county mailings to them were returned as undeliverable.

8. Concurrently over the last couple of months, there have been widespread media reports of voter registration irregularities in Ohio and throughout the country. For example, in Ohio, media reports indicated that:

a. A woman working for a group aligned with the Democratic Party paid for the voter registration of fictitious persons with crack cocaine. An exemplary media report of this incident is attached as Exhibit 6.

b. An individual in Columbus, Ohio was indicted on two felony counts for submitting a false election registration form and submitting a false signature. An exemplary media report of this incident is attached as Exhibit 7.

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c. Officials in Hamilton County, Ohio are currently investigating possibly fraudulent voter registration cards. An exemplary media report of this incident is attached as Exhibit 8.

9. The group known as Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now ("ACORN"), to which both Intervenors refer as soliciting their involvement in this lawsuit, has been widely implicated by media reports in fraudulent voter registration activities in Ohio and other states. Among the potentially illegal activities are the submission of fraudulent signatures and payment on a per-registration basis for gathering voter registrations. ACORN is currently under criminal investigation in Colorado, Florida, North Carolina, and Ohio. Media reports of ACORN's voter registration activities in Ohio, by way of example, are attached as Exhibit 9.

10. Rather than allow Democrat-aligned groups to continue engaging in such blatant voter registration improprieties, I understand that the Republican Party of Ohio initiated challenges to the questionable voter registrations. It appears that these challenges were based primarily on the county Board of Elections Mailings, and were not based on the RNC's mailing. These challenges are being pursued through the statutory process in Ohio, which provides each challenged registrant an opportunity for a hearing. It is my understanding that yesterday, a federal district judge enjoined the challenge process, although it has also been reported that the Attorney General of Ohio has filed an emergency appeal to the Sixth Circuit.

11. Neither the RNC, nor to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, the Republican Party of Ohio, has been involved in any efforts to suppress voter turnout, and certainly not in any racially motivated or directed efforts to remove qualified voters from the voter rolls. The RNC firmly believes that every qualified and properly registered voter should make every effort to vote, and should be allowed to do so. But there is no place in a fair and

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open election process for fraudulent voter registration, whether of fictitious persons like Mary Poppins or Dick Tracy, or of unqualified persons, or of persons who, like the Intervenors here, register multiple times at multiple addresses.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Maria Cino", written over a horizontal line.

Maria Cino

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Republican
National
Committee

Ed Gillespie
Chairman

June 15, 2004

Chairman Terry McAuliffe
Democratic National Committee
430 South Capitol Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003

Dear ~~Chairman McAuliffe:~~ *Terry*

As we cast our votes this November, I know you agree that no American should believe that he or she will be intimidated from voting or that his or her vote won't count because of fraud. As both you and I have noted, there is a problem with American elections if the process is not perceived as fair.

The challenges of properly implementing the new Help America Vote Act (HAVA) gives us a unique opportunity to try to correct some of the systemic problems our process faces. I'd like to propose a program under which we can work together as the chairs of our respective Parties to protect the integrity of the voting process for every American.

You have falsely and unfairly charged the Republican Party with trying to intimidate voters. The Republican National Committee is not, and will not be, engaged in any effort to suppress or intimidate voters. Our Party finds such conduct reprehensible and if we receive any evidence that such conduct is occurring, I will take all steps necessary to ensure that it ceases immediately. Rather, our goal in this election is an unprecedented effort to register new voters and encourage participation in the political process.

The other side of the coin is that, just as Democrats apparently believe that Republicans are engaged in voter intimidation, many in my Party believe Democrats engineer voter fraud. I know you feel about these charges the way I feel about the charges of voter intimidation.

The unfortunate reality -- and why I am writing you today -- is that these charges and counter-charges reflect two sides of a coin that create an atmosphere of divisiveness across our country. As Chairs of the parties, I know you feel as I do that we have an obligation to make this situation better.

What I hope we can do is join together for a program to bring transparency and openness to every voting place in the country where either of us believes there is a potential for voter intimidation, fraud or mistrust of the tabulation process. The proposal, which I look forward to discussing and refining further with you, is an unprecedented and massive undertaking – but worth it.

Each of us would list every precinct where we fear there could be a problem on Election Day. To put some limits on it, we could begin with Presidential battleground states, as well as those with contested Senatorial and Gubernatorial races.

Next, each of us would be responsible for recruiting a volunteer for each named precinct. The Republican and Democratic volunteers would work as an observation team.

We would recruit similarly bipartisan teams assigned to cover multiple precincts to respond to and investigate reports of problems. The teams would agree on avenues of appeals that could be taken to the courts, if needed.

We would invite members of the media to be present either in a central location or embedded with the teams.

The goal is to provide a mechanism where the problems that have occurred in the past with voting, and will face a major test this election with the implementation of HAVA, have a transparent, bipartisan solution.

Sincerely,


Ed Gillespie

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JUL-01-2004 17:06 FROM:

TO: 58538774

P.2/4



DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE

July 1, 2004

Chairman Ed Gillespie
Republican National Committee
310 First Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Chairman Gillespie:

The Democratic National Committee (DNC) and the Voting Rights Institute applaud your commitment to openness and fairness in the electoral process for 2004 and beyond; the citizens of this country deserve nothing less. We also agree that eligible voters should be able to exercise their right to vote without fear of harassment or intimidation, and we strongly oppose any fraudulent behavior or activity at polling places.

As you know, Congress passed the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) in response to the tremendous voting irregularities that occurred in 2000 – most memorably in Florida. Its goal is to help ensure the very openness and fairness that we all agree is fundamental to the credibility of the electoral process. This is to be done, in part, by allocating funds to states to improve their election systems and by establishing uniform standards that should be employed by those systems, to ensure that money is being spent wisely and affectively.

DeForest "Buster" Soaries, Jr., Chair of the bi-partisan Election Assistance Commission (EAC) that has been charged with the immense task of implementing HAVA, has said that the Commission lacks the funding to ensure that these standards – which are so crucial to the success of bringing more openness to our electoral process – are developed and implemented. Further undermining the EAC's efforts; is the fact that President Bush has requested a \$10 million budget cut for this fiscally strapped Commission in FY2005, under the unsupported assumption that there will somehow be unobligated balances in this amount carried over from FY2004. We ask therefore, that you and the RNC join us in calling on Congress to appropriate the funds needed to fulfill the promise of HAVA.

Funding alone, of course, is not the solution to the problems so many voters have faced in attempting to vote. Systemic changes that address these issues should be encouraged and supported. The League of Women Voters, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and other leading civil rights organizations, have identified the top five risks to eligible voters in 2004: voter registration problems, erroneous purging, problems with the new ID requirement, difficulties with the new electronic voting systems and failure to count provisional ballots.

To deal with some of the problems facing voters this fall, the League of Women Voters have recommended the following steps be implemented to ensure that no eligible

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JLL-01-2004 17:06 FROM:

TO: 98638774

P. 3/4

citizen is disenfranchised. We agree with many of their conclusions and would encourage the RNC to support the implementation of these procedures:

1. Ensure that voter registration applications or forms are processed in a timely fashion prior to Election Day. State and local election officials should be encouraged to update their voter registration lists and to maintain open lines of communication between polling sites and the registrar's central office.
2. Provide timely notice to any citizen who has been purged from a state felon list so he or she may register to vote prior to Election Day if they are eligible. The list should be made public to ensure that these citizens are notified prior to the statewide deadline for voter registration. We also encourage state and local officials to cut off or stop any purging after August 1, 2004.
3. Every citizen should be educated on what form, if any, of ID they may be required to produce at their polling place and this information should be widely published prior to Election Day.
4. Educate citizens on the new voting systems that will be used in their local jurisdiction this fall. We also encourage that security standards be set to maintain the integrity of our voting systems.
5. Every polling site in America should have provisional ballots available to citizens who may show up at the wrong site. We also encourage a non-discriminatory process for issuing and counting these provisional ballots.

We believe it is necessary to remove every barrier that impedes or denies an eligible vote. The RNC and its allies should work with its state parties and affiliates to encourage campaign and election workers to help protect and promote the rights of all citizens to have a voice in their democracy. And the Republican Party should stand firmly and publicly against any group, whether or not affiliated, that devises schemes to impede lawful registration and access to the polls.

We are also calling on the RNC to urge the Department of Justice to follow up on existing voting rights violation cases that have not been adequately addressed. The Justice Department has been given the task of implementing some important HAVA provisions. We encourage the Department to not only vigorously enforce the Voting Rights Act, as amended, but to safeguard the electoral process by working with state and local officials to ensure no one is harassed or intimidated while attempting to participate in the electoral process.

Forty years ago this summer, activists from across America converged in Mississippi to help educate and register tens of thousands of previously disenfranchised American citizens. In the spirit of their leadership and determination to expand the franchise, the DNC calls upon the RNC to do its part in ensuring no American citizen is denied the right to participate in the electoral process.

We appreciate your suggestion of novel means of achieving this goal, which you envision in part as a joint initiative in targeted jurisdictions by the two political parties.

JUL-01-2004 17:06 FROM:

TO: 98635774

P. 4/4

But what matters is not a public-relations gambit by the two political parties, but rather a commitment equally shared by both that the laws will be enforced by those federal and state agencies charged with protecting the constitutional and statutory rights of all our citizens. We look forward to your embrace of this fundamental proposition, and your active support for its fulfillment in practice at all levels of the Republican party and among its allies.

Yours truly,


Terence R. McAuliffe
Chairman
Democratic National Committee


Donna Brazile
Chair
Voting Rights Institute

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63493 OS GOPDearFriend 8/9/04 7:11 PM Page 1

August 10, 2004

Dear Friend,

Congratulations! You recently registered to vote and you have taken the first step in being an active participant in the election process. Former President Ronald Reagan understood this when he said, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free."

This election is about our future. A future focused on:

- Tax relief so hard working families can keep more of what they earn,
- Fighting and winning the war on terror, and
- High standards and real accountability in education.

Each state's laws differ on when and where you can vote. We at the Republican National Committee strongly believe in everyone's right to participate in our country's electoral process. Please take time to visit our website at www.gop.com/newvoter.

Sincerely,
The Republican National Committee

Paid for by the Republican National Committee. www.gop.org
Not authorized by any candidate or candidate committee

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OCT. 28. 2004 11:10AM

OHIO REPUBLICAN PARTY

NO. 398 P. 2

September 9, 2004

Dear Friend,

Congratulations! You recently registered to vote and you have taken the first step in being an active participant in the election process. Former President Ronald Reagan understood this when he said, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free."

This election is about our future. A future focused on:

- Tax relief so hard working families can keep more of what they earn,
- Fighting and winning the war on terror, and
- High standards and real accountability in education.

We in the Republican Party strongly believe in everyone's right to participate in our country's electoral process. We urge you to consider voting Republican. Please take time to visit our website at www.ohiogop.org.

Sincerely,



Bob Bennett
Chairman, Ohio Republican Party

Paid for by the Ohio Republican Party, 211 S. Fifth St., Columbus, Ohio 43215 www.ohiogop.org
Not Authorized by any Candidate or Candidate's Committee

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Akron Beacon Journal (Ohio)

September 29, 2004 Wednesday 4X EDITION

SECTION: A; BRIEF; Pg. 1

LENGTH: 1055 words

HEADLINE: Suspicious voter cards are piling up;
Huge Ohio registration effort brings new voters, problems

BYLINE: By Lisa A. Abraham; Beacon Journal staff writer

BODY:

As voter registration cards continue to pour into boards of elections across Ohio, instances of alleged voter registration fraud are growing.

In Summit County, suspected fraudulent voter registration cards continue to trickle in on top of the more than 800 already under scrutiny, according to Board of Elections Deputy Director John Schmidt.

The county sheriff, the state Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation, and the Ohio attorney general are investigating the cards received by Summit County.

As of Tuesday, the office had a stack of 3,000 voter registration cards that still had to be verified, Schmidt said.

Monday is the state's deadline for voter registration for the Nov. 2 election.

With Ohio's position as a must-win state in the presidential election, canvassers have been conducting an unprecedented voter-registration effort that is expected to result in as many as 300,000 new registered voters.

But the glut of registration cards has brought problems.

In Mahoning County, Elections Director Michael Sciortino said he has flagged 48 voter registration cards that were part of a group of about 325 submitted by the NAACP in Cleveland.

Sciortino said he will wait until after the Oct. 4 registration cutoff to present them to his board and forward them to the county prosecutor for investigation.

The number, he said, is high even for a presidential election year. Sciortino couldn't recall any problem registrations in 2000, but noted that voter registration in general has far exceeded 2000 totals.

Since January, Mahoning County has registered about 12,500 new voters, with about 1,000 registration cards waiting to be verified and more coming in daily.

Similar handwriting

Sciortino said the registration cards originated from the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections. Many appeared to be in the same handwriting, and as his staff has attempted to verify them, they have been told repeatedly, "I didn't sign that card," he said.

Carlo LoParo, spokesman for Ohio Secretary of State J. Kenneth Blackwell, said his office does not serve as a clearinghouse for possible voter registration fraud, so the problems they know of are ones that have received a lot of media attention, like Summit and Lake counties.

In Lake County, elections officials found more than 100 questionable voter registration forms and absentee ballot applications, including an attempt to register at least one deceased person to vote, said Linda Hlebak, deputy director of the Lake County Board of Elections.

"We have had some trouble," she said, adding that the investigation has been turned over to the Lake County prosecutor.

She said the Lake board sends out postcards to confirm registrations. When the cards start coming back as undeliverable due to nonexistent addresses, it's an indication that there are problems, Hlebak said.

LoParo said the county sheriff or prosecutor is the appropriate agency to investigate cases of suspected fraud.

Increased vigilance

In this political season, when voter registration campaigns are working at a record pace, LoParo said boards of elections have had to be increasingly vigilant.

"There are laws established to deal with election violations or voter fraud. They will be enforced this year... We take voter fraud very seriously," he said.

Even less populated counties have had problems.

Portage County Elections Director Lois Enlow said her office has about a dozen suspected fraudulent registration cards her board is expected to hand over to its county prosecutor.

Some in the group actually were forwarded to Portage County from officials in Summit County and the Secretary of State's office after the addresses on the cards were determined to be in Portage County, she said.

"We're not handwriting experts, but we can see that that one looks an awful lot like this one," she said.

Enlow said her office rarely has problems, so the dozen questionable registration cards are unusual. "I don't recall having even that many," she said.

Since before the March primary election, problems have been noted in counties including Cuyahoga, Franklin, and Trumbull.

In Canton, Stark County Elections Director Jeff Matthews said he's had about four questionable registration cards, but the problem is not as widespread as other areas.

A bigger problem has been the numerous duplicate registration cards that have been submitted for voters who already are registered legally.

Often when a canvasser approaches, a voter will simply register again, and sometimes, again, he said.

"People just keep filling out the forms. We're encountering more as we're working through our backlog," he said.

"I've been here 18 years and I've never seen such a high volume of registrations come in so quickly," said Susan Strasser, director of the Medina County Board of Elections.

Her office hasn't had any problems so far, but she's been watching for it because of problems in other counties.

"That's so hard to police," she said.

Strasser said her staff can compare handwriting on signatures on registration cards, but similar patterns may only be detected if the cards arrive in the same batch.

"We're really keeping an eye out for that. We're scrutinizing each signature. But it can come in a week later," she said.

Plus, she said fictitious addresses may be easy to discover, but fictitious voters at real addresses are found only if the person actually living at the residence bothers to call and alert the elections board about the situation.

If the actual resident receives a confirmation card with another person's name on it and tosses it in the trash, that fictitious voter could get registered.

"I don't know how you police something like that," Strasser said. "Fraud can be done anywhere."

Stephen Brooks, associate director of the Bliss Institute for Applied Politics at the University of Akron, said the concern that the election may be turned by illegally registered voters is unlikely.

"The boards of elections are very competent and their systems are designed to prevent those people from voting... They are designed to prevent illegal voting and to promote legal voting and in general they do a relatively good job," he said.

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The Cincinnati Enquirer

October 20, 2004 Wednesday Final Edition

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1A

LENGTH: 812 words

HEADLINE: Thousands of new-voter cards in Ohio undeliverable

BYLINE: By Jim Siegel Enquirer Columbus Bureau

BODY:

COLOMBUS - Thousands of cards mailed by county election boards to newly registered voters in Hamilton County and throughout the state are being returned because the people can't be found.

John Williams, director of the Hamilton County Board of Elections, said the situation indicates that there might not be as many new voters as some expect in a state deemed crucial in the presidential election.

Ohio Republican Party Chairman Robert Bennett on Tuesday said it's a result of statewide registration fraud conducted by independent groups that support Democratic candidates.

"By most accounts, their work can only be considered sloppy, haphazard and, in some cases, downright illegal," Bennett said, noting that the state party plans to take out full-page ads in Ohio newspapers encouraging citizens to stop voter fraud.

Democratic Party spokesman Dan Trevas said the fraud uncovered in Ohio equates to "minor errors" when viewed in the bigger picture.

"The vast majority of those registered for the first time are intent on voting," he said.

Bennett cited instances in 10 counties where potentially fraudulent voter registration forms were submitted.

He said many were submitted by groups he terms "auxiliaries of the Democratic Party": the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) and America Coming Together.

The groups paid people to register voters. Some registrations were filled out for dead people, some contained fake addresses, and others named fiction characters such as Dick Tracy and Mary Poppins.

Jess Goode, spokesman for ACT in Ohio, has denied wrongdoing by his group. He said the Republican Party is scared of the number of new Democratic voters headed to the polls in two weeks.

An estimated 7.9 million people have registered in Ohio, up from 7.1 million at the beginning of the year.

Williams is currently investigating fraud by someone working for ACORN who he said submitted voter registrations for about 35 people who don't exist.

Newly registered voters in Hamilton County are mailed a card telling them where to vote and what political districts they live in. But thousands of those cards were returned because the people, or the addresses listed on voter registration forms, couldn't be found.

"There is quite a number," Williams said, noting that not every returned card is a suspected case of fraud. "People do actually move."

State GOP records, confirmed by Williams, show that through Oct. 4, Hamilton County mailed 63,403 cards to new registrants, and 4,152 were returned - a rate of 6.6 percent.

The number was third-highest in the state behind Cuyahoga County's 14,461 and Franklin's 6,917, according to GOP records. In Butler County, 255 cards mailed to new voters were returned, while 24 were returned in Warren County, according to GOP records. Clermont County numbers were not available.

Tim Burke, chairman of the Hamilton County Democratic Party and the county elections board, said an updated number of cards returned is 5,808 out of 150,000 mailed not only to new voters, but also to those changing addresses, for a return rate of less than 4 percent.

Burke said fraud makes up a small percentage of the hundreds of thousands of newly registered voters in Ohio.

"I think Republicans are attempting to justify what they intend to do on Election Day by raising questions of voter fraud and overplaying this," he said.

What both the Democratic and Republican parties in Ohio intend to do is use a 51-year-old law that allows them to place challengers at polling sites. The parties are recruiting lawyers, law students and others to ensure that people are allowed to vote, or to potentially challenge voters' eligibility.

Bennett said his efforts are likely to focus on heavily Democratic areas where many new voters have been registered. Democrats expect to match the effort.

As further evidence of registration fraud, Bennett said the Ohio Republican Party sent out its own letters to newly registered Ohio voters, encouraging them to vote Republican.

In the counties where new registration was highest, 3 percent to 9 percent of the letters were returned because the people were not located.

"I can say . . . as someone who's been in state politics for 40 years, that the normal rate of return is less than 1 percent," he said. "These results are really unprecedented and frightening."

Ed Gillespie, chairman of the Republican National Committee, joined Bennett Tuesday and said Ohio's issues of voter registration fraud cases are alarming and part of a national problem.

"Whether it's for profit motive or political motive, fraud is being committed in the registration process in a way that makes more possible fraud on Election Day," he said.

"I'll bet you this. If Mary Poppins and Dick Tracy vote on Election Day, they'll vote for John Kerry."

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Mary Poppins prompts Investigation

(CNN) -- Ohio authorities say a man was charged Monday with filling out more than 100 fictitious voter registration forms, some in names such as Disney character Mary Poppins and pop singer Michael Jackson.

Chad Staton, 22, of Defiance County in northwestern Ohio, was to receive money for each registration form he could persuade potential voters to fill out, said Sheriff David Westrick.

Instead, Staton, himself, filled out the forms and returned them to the Toledo woman who hired him. Sheriff's deputies allege he was paid in crack cocaine instead of money.

Staton had his first court appearance Monday on a felony charge of false registration, and was released on his own recognizance. He has another court appearance scheduled for Friday.

Westrick said the Toledo woman, Georgianne Pitts, 41, told officers she was recruited by Thaddeus Jackson II of Cleveland to obtain voter registrations. He said a business card provided by Pitts indicated that Jackson is the assistant Ohio director of the NAACP National Voter Fund.

Westrick said he didn't know the legal status of Pitts and Jackson, who live outside his jurisdiction.

Greg Moore, the executive director of the NAACP National Voter Fund, said: "We believe anyone violating the law hurts the credibility of NVF and more importantly the thousands of hard-working men and women who are legally registering people to vote."

According to its Web site, the National Voter Fund advances the cause of civil rights through advocacy, educating voters on candidates' stands on civil rights and increasing voter turnout in the African-American community.

The sheriff added that deputies and Toledo police had obtained a search warrant for the house where Pitts lives. He said officers confiscated drug paraphernalia and voter registration forms from the home.

Westrick said Pitts admitted paying Staton crack cocaine for the registrations in lieu of money. Westrick said he didn't know the legal status of Pitts and Jackson, who live outside his jurisdiction.

Westrick said his office began an investigation after a complaint was made by the Defiance County Board of Elections. The board received the forms from the Cuyahoga Board of Elections. Cuyahoga County includes Cleveland.

Westrick said officials became suspicious because the handwriting on the forms was similar. In some cases, there were dozens of addresses for a single block in Defiance, where there are only a couple of homes, he said.

But the biggest giveaway may have been the names themselves.

"Mary Poppins hasn't voted here in a long time. Michael Jackson hasn't. Those were some of the fictitious names," Westrick said.

Find this article at:

<http://www.cnn.com/2004/LAW/10/18/mary.poppins.registers.to.vote>

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The Columbus Dispatch

Columbus Dispatch (Ohio)

September 8, 2004 Wednesday, Home Final Edition

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 02B

LENGTH: 434 words

HEADLINE: FRANKLIN COUNTY GRAND JURY;
WORKER ACCUSED OF FALSIFYING VOTER FORM

BYLINE: Robert Vitale, THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

BODY:

A part-time worker signing up new voters for a local community group has been indicted by a Franklin County grand jury on charges he forged a registration form.

Kevin Eugene Dooley, 45, was indicted on two counts: submitting a false election registration form and submitting a false signature. Both are felonies, punishable by up to a year in prison and a \$2,500 fine.

The charges stem from an investigation that began in May after the Franklin County Board of Elections discovered dozens of voter registration forms with fake names or false information. They were submitted by the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, or ACORN, which paid workers bonuses based on the number of voters they registered.

County Prosecutor Ron O'Brien said yesterday that the indictment is the first of its type during his seven years in office.

"It's a rare kind of charge," he said. "Usually you don't have the kinds of intense registration efforts going on by both parties and interest groups."

About 94,000 new voters have been registered so far this year in Franklin County, which surpasses the total number of new voters signed up in the 2000 presidential election year. As of May, there were 755,000 county residents registered to vote.

ACORN is one of a number of liberal groups that have paid workers to register voters in urban areas, particularly poorer neighborhoods that traditionally vote for Democrats. Another group, America Coming Together, came under criticism this summer after the Associated Press reported it employed felons to conduct door-to-door registration in Ohio and other states.

An arrest warrant was delivered to Dooley's last known address on the North Side, but he was still at large yesterday.

ACORN officials could not be reached for comment. O'Brien said Dooley was one of two workers the group fired shortly after the sheriff's office began investigating the fake names and forged signatures.

The group also began performing its own checks on information submitted by its workers, and Board of Elections Director Matthew Damschroder said the extra step has cut down on the number of questionable forms submitted to his agency.

"They're doing a lot of filtering," he said of groups conducting their own voter-registration drives. "No organization doing voter registration on the street wants to be tagged."

O'Brien said that although a number of forms have had falsified information, investigators were unable to trace them to anyone else. Dooley is accused of forging just one form, of a woman he attempted to contact.

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The Cincinnati Enquirer October 8, 2004 Friday Final Edition
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The Cincinnati Enquirer

October 8, 2004 Friday Final Edition

SECTION: METRO; Pg. 1C

LENGTH: 397 words

HEADLINE: Alleged fraudulent voter cards scrutinized

BYLINE: By Cindi Andrews Enquirer staff writer

BODY:

19 in Hamilton Co. suspected

Hamilton County election officials will meet this morning to discuss 19 voter registrations for people who may not exist, which would be a rare case of election fraud.

Board of Elections Director John Williams subpoenaed those named on the voter registration cards after similar handwriting and false addresses raised election workers' suspicions. The sheriff's department could not find them, he said.

The cards were turned in, Williams said, by someone affiliated with the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), a group that represents low-income people.

"We have a very extensive fraud detecting process," said Dierdre Murch of ACORN. "If this is true, I don't know how they got there."

Officials in Columbus are also investigating possible improprieties by an ACORN worker there.

ACORN has registered more than 1 million new voters nationwide, including 158,036 in Ohio, according to its Web site, www.acorn.org.

Murch said she took 526 new voter registrations to the board of elections late Thursday that the group found in a mismarked box and are asking the board to accept even though the deadline was Monday.

Ohio is under unprecedented scrutiny over its election process this year as a battleground state in what is expected to be a close presidential election. Unprecedented levels of voter interest also resulted in record numbers of new voter registrations.

State and local officials say those factors contributed to an unusually high number of potential election fraud cases. Lake and Summit counties are investigating over 1,000 potential instances of voter registration fraud.

By comparison, Hamilton County's 19 potential fraud cases out of the 68,728 new

voter registrations tallied so far appear to be a pretty small number, Board of Elections Chairman Tim Burke said.

The Board of Elections can refer election fraud for prosecution if it decides there was malicious intent. It's a felony and carries a possible sentence of up to one year in jail and a \$2,500 fine.

The only other incidents Burke could remember in his dozen years on the board involved candidate petitions. In 2001, four women were sentenced to 30 days in jail each for signing fake names on petitions they were supposed to be circulating for would-be congressional candidate Jim Condit Jr.

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SECTION: EDITORIAL & COMMENT; Pg. 08A

LENGTH: 381 words

HEADLINE: QUALITY, NOT QUANTITY;
Per-name reward system can encourage fraud in solicitation of voters

BODY:
Paying people to register voters or to gather signatures for ballot petitions is an established practice in Ohio, and it often is necessary to get worthy candidates and issues on the ballot.

But making it into piecework -- paying workers by the signature or by the registration card -- inevitably raises the chance that some will inflate their productivity by making up names.

If political interest groups want to maintain the right to do paid electioneering, they had better police their employees vigilantly.

Franklin County elections officials said recently that two groups -- Project Vote and the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, also known as ACORN - - turned in several of what appear to be fraudulent forms, some of which bore the names of people already registered to vote.

Although ACORN and Project Vote officials said they check as many as 75 percent of the cards turned in by their paid collectors, some fraudulent cards apparently were undiscovered and passed on to the Board of Elections.

The fraud was discovered when elections employees sent notification cards out to the "new" voters, who, in turn, told the board of the mistakes.

ACORN, which advocates on behalf of the poor and says it has registered 23,000 voters since fall, made the right move by firing two employees who turned in cards that turned out to be fake. A third person already had quit.

Franklin County elections Director Matthew Damschroder would like to see more. Pointing out that knowingly turning in false election information is a felony, he has called for prosecution of those suspected.

The call is on target. While the perpetrators most likely were interested making money, not stealing an election, officials should send the message that the accuracy of voter-registration rolls is too important to trifle with.

Paid petitioning and registration are probably an inescapable fact of political life; few

organizations attract enough volunteers to gather the thousands of signatures typically needed to put something on the ballot or register thousands of new voters.

Given the problems inherent in paying per signature, however, groups that use the practice strongly should consider paying only an hourly rate and avoiding any per-signature premiums.

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September 7, 2004, Tuesday, BC cycle

SECTION: Political News

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HEADLINE: Warrant issued for false registration

DATELINE: COLUMBUS, Ohio

BODY:

A warrant was issued for a parolee accused of forging a signature on a voter registration form, Franklin County Prosecutor Ron O'Brien said Tuesday.

A grand jury indicted Kevin Eugene Dooley, 45, of Columbus, on one felony count each of false election registration and submitting false election signatures, O'Brien said.

If convicted, Dooley could be sentenced from six months to one year in prison on each count. He was released on parole in November while serving a six-to-25-year sentence for receiving stolen property, escape and breaking and entering, O'Brien said.

Dooley was employed by the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, or ACORN, associated with the nonprofit Project Vote, a national group that registers low-income and minority voters, O'Brien said.

Dooley submitted a card bearing a woman's name to the Franklin County Board of Elections that had a forged signature, the indictment said. Dooley's pay included a fee for each new voter he registered beyond a certain goal, according to the indictment.

In June, ACORN fired a worker over several dozen forms submitted to Franklin County elections officials that were duplicates or had false information, the group's organizer said.

ACORN organizer Katy Gail said the group would cooperate with prosecutors. The forms were traceable because workers initial them, she said. A telephone call Tuesday to a number listed for Gail was not answered. There was no listing for Dooley.

Two Ohio Voter-Registration Workers Fired

Published: Jun 03, 2004 2:01 PM EST

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) - Two workers with a community activist group's voter-registration campaign were fired after authorities determined they submitted fraudulent forms to election officials.

The workers were collecting voter registrations for the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, or ACORN, when they turned in the forms, which were duplicates or contained false information.

The group agreed Wednesday to perform extra checks on its paperwork. "This just makes it harder for everybody," organizer Katy Gall said. "We definitely are glad we were able to catch it at this stage."

Matthew Damschroder, director of the Franklin County Board of Elections, blamed a bonus paid to workers based on the number of new registrations they collected.

"It's not the organization per se that's problematic — it's the individuals," he said. "I don't believe there's anyone out there masterminding a program to throw an election."

ACORN workers are paid \$6.25 an hour and have registered 23,000 new voters in the county since last fall.

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HEADLINE: Late voter registrations could cause Election Day havoc

DATELINE: CLEVELAND

BODY:

Voter advocates worry that a flood of new registrations and address changes will lead to confusion and lost votes on Election Day.

In Ohio's largest counties, election boards are getting nearly double the number of registration cards submitted in 2000. The scramble is only expected to intensify this week, as the Oct. 4 registration deadline nears.

"We think this will be the sleeper issue in this election," said Kay Maxwell, national president of the League of Women Voters. "Plenty of people can fall through the cracks."

Ohio is so crucial in this year's presidential campaign that voter registration groups are stepping over each other to locate every unregistered resident.

"Ohio's the subject of such a national focus that we're almost drowning each other," said Josh Gildrie, state coordinator for the New Voters Project. "It's absolutely amazing what's going on."

Election boards across the state have hired extra staff members, extended working hours, or both to process cards. Some boards are processing them 24 hours a day.

At Cuyahoga County's elections board, Ohio's largest, about 20,000 cards sat in bins last week, waiting to be checked and entered into computers. Director Michael Vu said the board will spend about \$175,000 on extra workers to process the cards. He expected to eliminate the backlog over the weekend.

John Williams, Hamilton County's elections director, said the backlog was still about 5,000 last week - down from 14,000.

"This is an election unlike anything 30-year pros have seen," he said.

Surveys show the majority of the new voters appear to be Democrats, said Dennis

Lieberman, the Democratic Party chairman in Montgomery County. Volunteers have called a significant number of the 25,000 newly registered voters in Montgomery County, and three-quarters have identified themselves as Democrats.

Some local election officials say voter groups bear responsibility for the registration backlog because they have turned in too many cards that are duplicates or incomplete, forcing the boards to track down the voters.

In Cuyahoga County, for instance, Project Vote and the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, or ACORN, worked together to submit the most cards. But they also produced the highest percentage - about 15 percent - of incomplete cards.

Candy Roberts, ACORN's voter registration coordinator, said the organization had problems at first but tightened its procedures to reduce errors and possible fraud.

"We can't tell when we meet someone on the street if they're not being honest with us," she said.

Republicans have been critical of Project Vote, ACORN and other groups that pay canvassers to register voters, many in Democratic-leaning areas.

Jason Mauk, a spokesman for the Ohio Republican Party, said sloppy work by the groups has overloaded election boards.

"Our concern is that cases of fraud will slip through," he said. "This could raise challenges to ballots and wreak havoc on Election Day."