

## “GRAB THEM BY THE MID-TERMS”

### ONE WILPF US PUBLIC ORGANIZING CALL

#### Report and Materials

Compiled by Nancy Price

The March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018 ONE WILPF call, sponsored by Women’s International League for Peace & Freedom – US Section ([www.wilpfus.org](http://www.wilpfus.org)) focused on voter rights, countering voter suppression and protecting election integrity. The featured speakers were

- **KAREN McKIM**, former **County Clerk candidate** for Dane County, Wisconsin
- **JAN BEN DOR**, **Coordinator, Michigan Election Reform Alliance and National Election Defense Coalition Board Member**
- **NANCY PRICE**, Co-Chair, **Alliance for Democracy**

**If you missed the call or wish to listen again**, use this link for the audio recording. There will be a delay at the start of the call. Advance cursor to when voice recording begins. We had a historic slide show at the start of the call...so listen for the voter integrity information at about 49:30.

<http://mcrecordings.s3.amazonaws.com/UMMVLDQ6JHK608U1QVKH4RVYDY31H6Y1.mp3>

**WHAT CAN WE DO NOW to protect the right to vote** and ensure our elections are fair and honest during the Primary and November Mid-Term Elections?  
What part does the upcoming US Census play in election redistricting?  
How Can We Ensure an Accurate Census?  
These topics were discussed on the call, along with these detailed items:

- \***Guarantee Accurate Vote Count**
- \***End Voter Suppression**
- \***Have an Accurate Census**
- \***End Partisan Redistricting aka: Gerrymandering**

#### Guarantee Accurate Vote Count

Our voting machines are more than 15 years old. Voters can be disenfranchised by accident or on purpose. An inaccurate vote count can result from aging machinery that malfunctions or is accidentally mis-programmed, or an inaccurate count not noticed or ignored for whatever reason. Malicious “hacking” of the vote can occur in many ways in particular by intentional, systematic mis-programming for a predetermined outcome or through gaining control of the voting machine through electronic means by outside actors either within or outside the US. Attempts to move to internet voting would only increase the likelihood of hacking.

A better understanding of how your state can improve election security preparedness can help build urgency for appropriate solutions and arm voters with information to demand increased security measure. States have authority over election laws, audits and recounts which differ widely from state to state.

Karen McKim noted that most voting machines have safeguards that are largely decorative. In Wisconsin and 25 other states, county clerks don't check the accuracy of the machines before they certify the results of the election. In no other field, business or public sector, do managers in charge of computers have no way to notice the accuracy of the computer. When you don't notice random mistakes you can't detect when people are deliberately being disenfranchised either!

The situation is EASILY FIXED. You can't prevent vulnerabilities but you can use paper ballots to cross check the results, even if you use optical scanners to compare the count. In her county Kim used a simple overhead projector and a non-partisan review committee to quickly count the paper ballots and compare them to the recorded tally. It's so easy and fast to do.

### **Karen recommended:**

- 1- Be sure your community uses paper ballots not just computerized voting.
- 2- Get local election officials to agree to USE the paper ballots to confirm the accuracy of the machines BEFORE they certify the results as final. Accuracy checks are easy and fast to do using paper ballots.
- 3- Volunteer to be a poll worker. You will receive non-partisan training and better understand the local process.
- 4- Join with grass roots groups in your area working on election integrity issues.

Here is an excellent report released on February 12, 2018 by the Center for American Progress on Election Security in All 50 States

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/democracy/reports/2018/02/12/446336/election-security-50-states/>

One way to ensure an accurate vote is to require a robust audit and if necessary a recount. Citizens for Election Integrity: Minnesota <https://ceimn.org> has excellent information on Searchable Databases for State Audit and Recount Laws and Best Practices on Post-Election Audits and Recounts. Research your state as most have inadequate audits laws: an audit of 1-2% of the vote is not effective; most experts agree that an audit of 5% of the vote is the minimum. Another resource is [electionaudits.org](http://electionaudits.org), a clearing house for election audit information.

There is no real need or requirement to announce a final count – winners and losers – until the state election result canvass is completed and the vote certified. State election result canvassing, also known as the certification of state election results, are the laws governing the certification and review of state election votes. Here is a state by state review of the laws that denote the time frames and requirements for review. [https://ballotpedia.org/State Election Result Canvassing](https://ballotpedia.org/State_Election_Result_Canvassing)

### **Resources**

#### **Verified Voting Organization data on computer verifying ballots.**

An organization run by computer scientists working on vote security.

<https://www.verifiedvoting.org/>

#### **What is the truth about voting machines and ballot counting?** Find out how it all works.

<https://www.brennancenter.org/issues/ballot-design-machines>

#### **Who's REALLY hacking our elections?**

An assessment of the threat from outside and within.

<https://www.brennancenter.org/issues/foreign-interference-elections>

## **A Computer Scientist Loses Sleep Over America's Vulnerable Election System & Has The Solution!**

<https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2018/3/8/1747376/-Computer-scientist-loses-sleep-over-America-s-vulnerable-election-system-and-has-the-solution>

**Find out the laws in your state that mandate post-election audits:**

<https://www.verifiedvoting.org/state-audit-laws/>

**National Election Defense Coalition: federal legislation** <https://www.electiondefense.org/>

**Verified Voting Foundation** <https://www.verifiedvoting.org/>

**Voting equipment verifier** <https://www.verifiedvoting.org/verifier/>

## **End Voter Suppression**

The National Voter Corps is a new national organization formed in 2017 with projects to help people vote. They have investigated and reviewed organizations to determine which ones are active and can effectively use your skills and time. **To volunteer: contact**

[www.nationalvotercorps.org](http://www.nationalvotercorps.org)

- A. **Before Election Day**, assisting people to know what identification is required in their state to vote. In states where strict photo ID laws are still in effect, and not yet struck down in court, help non-driving voters get the documents and credentials required. This may involve driving voters to several offices. Also assisting people to register to vote and to apply for an absentee or mail-in ballot. This may also include driving people to their local Election Clerk's office to carry out these tasks.
- B. **On Election Day: Getting out the Vote and Voter Protection by Monitoring the Polls**
  1. Organize phone calls, door knocks, and rides to the polls to get out the vote, especially targeting the lowest turnout groups –single women and youth ages 18-30. Provide child care in a van, while the parent goes in to cast a ballot. Jan BenDor mentioned that in one precinct that the Michigan Election Defense Alliance studied, rides to the polling place and childcare increased turnout by 35%.
  2. **Get yard signs** from the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law <https://lawyerscommittee.org> and post the hotline number they run for voters at polling places: 1-888-OuR VOTE. Read about their **Voting Rights Project** and read their report on about continuing voter suppression and [learn about your state](https://votingrightstoday.org/ncvr/home) here. <https://votingrightstoday.org/ncvr/home>
  3. Take election protection training if offered by your local Election Clerk or civil rights groups.
  4. **Form an Elector Monitors team** to spot problems or violations of state election law at a polling place where you live. Monitors are certified as "election challengers" under state law. Michigan Election Defense Alliance has run such a program for over a decade and has trained local groups by request. Here is their **Manual and Checklist** to print out [www.michiganelectionreformalliance.org](http://www.michiganelectionreformalliance.org)

## Resources:

### Is your state on the voter suppression battleground?

Check out this interactive map:

<https://www.brennancenter.org/new-voting-restrictions-america>

### What legislation in YOUR state threatens voters' rights?

Check out this interactive map:

<https://www.brennancenter.org/major-litigation-could-impact-voting-access>

### On Election Day - Train to be an Observer

Citizen manuals <http://michiganelectionreformalliance.org/manuals.shtml>

The National Voter Corps, Lisa Ferino [www.nationalvoter corps.org](http://www.nationalvoter corps.org)

## “FUND THE COUNT” - ENSURE A FULLY FUNDED & ACCURATE CENSUS

Right now there are questions over whether Congress will adequately fund the census to have enough well-trained canvassers. Also, there is a huge backlash over Pres. Trump's proposal to include a question about the person's citizenship.

A correct and accurate census is important first because a good census is essential to adequate funding by Congress to states and local governments. An inaccurate count could make for inadequate planning and underfund essential programs like mental health, public health, education, infrastructure, corrections and energy needs. Additionally, after the 2020 census, state commissions carryout redistricting in time for the 2022 Mid-term elections.

**The census counting is supposed to be done at the end of 2020**, and the results delivered in early 2021. That leaves only the rest of 2021 for states and localities to conduct redistricting. Redistricting then has to be implemented in all kinds of places—state maps, voter databases, and precinct voting locations. Then local election administrators have to send notice to voters to let them know of their new representation districts and voting places, by a state deadline before the first state election in 2022. **Any breakdown at any point in this tight timeline would jeopardize the whole 2022 election Primary and Mid-Term cycle.**

## Resources

Here is a useful reference on the Census:

<https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/2017/comm/2020-census-timeline.html>

Information at US Census website: <https://www.census.gov/en.html>

### How The Census Affects Congressional Redistricting

<https://www.census.gov/topics/public-sector/congressional-apportionment.html>

### A Fair & Accurate Census Is Essential

<https://civilrights.org/a-fair-and-accurate-census-is-essential-the-2020-census-must-be-well-funded-with-a-highly-qualified-and-established-leader-as-census-bureau-director/>

### Why the Census Matters -- PETITION:

<https://www.dailykos.com/campaigns/letters/sign-and-send-the-petition-to-the-us-senate-census-2020-must-be-fully-funded>

## **End Partisan Redistricting aka Gerrymandering**

Gerrymandering is one of the original strategies wealthy, white, land-owning men have used to maintain power and oppress the poor non-white citizens of this country. Gov. Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts, scion of a wealthy merchant family, collaborated in this technique in 1812, when he signed oddly shaped precincts into law, including one that looked like a salamander, thus spawning the term gerrymander. The specific strategy is to group a bare majority of voters into as many districts in the state as possible to favor the election of their preferred policy makers.

Gerrymandering is now being fought back against because in 2010 the Republican State Leadership used new computer mapping technology to undertake a national gerrymandering project that took control of most of the country's statehouses and the U.S. House of Representatives. This project known as REDMAP, the Redistricting Majority Project, succeeded in taking over the legislatures in 20 states in 2010 and the used their control of the redistricting process in those states to create enough Republican-majority Congressional Districts nationwide so they could control Congress. They called it a "firewall" and predicted it would guarantee their control of Congress for a decade. That prediction became a reality in 2012 when they won a 33-seat majority in the House of Representatives even though Democratic candidates collected 1.7 million more votes nationally.

As we know, there now are many court challenges in states over district boundaries. Most recently the Supreme Court actually redrew some boundaries in Pennsylvania judged to be excessively partisan. Because redistricting occurs every ten years after the census, this 2020 census has assumed huge importance.

### **Resources:**

#### **"Gerrymandering: The Civil War Over Public Policy"**

[www.thealliancefordemocracy.org/pdf/AfDJR6406.pdf](http://www.thealliancefordemocracy.org/pdf/AfDJR6406.pdf) which explains the origin of the practice, the Republican seizure of state houses and Congress in 2010 and 2012 through national gerrymandering project financed by major corporations that would benefit from deregulation, free trade agreements, etc. .

#### **What is Redistricting and how does it work?**

Excellent background primer to understand the issue.

<https://www.brennancenter.org/issues/redistricting>

#### **Michigan Election Reform Alliance [www.michiganelectionreformalliance.org](http://www.michiganelectionreformalliance.org)**

Our reports--<http://michiganelectionreformalliance.org/reports.shtml>

#### **Michigan Redistricting Reform by Citizens' Constitutional Amendment**

[www.votersnotpoliticians.com](http://www.votersnotpoliticians.com)

### **Additional General Resources**

#### **Website of national organizations on voting rights and election reform**

[www.michiganelectionreformalliance.org/websites.shtml](http://www.michiganelectionreformalliance.org/websites.shtml)

#### **Michigan Election Reform Alliance**

[www.michiganelectionreformalliance.org](http://www.michiganelectionreformalliance.org)

Our Reports <http://michiganelectionreformalliance.org/reports.shtml> and

Citizen Manuals <http://michiganelectionreformalliance.org/manuals.shtml>

**National Election Defense Coalition** <https://www.electiondefense.org/>

**The National Voter Corps** Lisa Ferino [www.nationalvoter corps.org](http://www.nationalvoter corps.org)

**Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law** <https://lawyerscommittee.org/>

**Books** recommended by Jan BenDor

Dr. Tracy Campbell, **Deliver the Vote: A History of Election Fraud, an American Political Tradition 1742-2004** (2006)

Alexander Keyssar, **The Right to Vote: A Contested History of Democracy in the United States**, revised edition (2009)



**EXCELLENT RESOURCE**

Print out excellent articles by experts or order extra copies of the whole magazine to share with your community.

Read the Alliance for Democracy's magazine **Justice Rising: The People's Vote Must Count: Reclaim Elections, Restore Voting Rights, Protect Our Ballot.**

Print out individual articles here.  
[www.thealliancefordemocracy.org/AfDJR64.pdf](http://www.thealliancefordemocracy.org/AfDJR64.pdf)

Order copies for \$1.00 plus postage at [afd@thealliancefordemocracy.org](mailto:afd@thealliancefordemocracy.org)

Or call the Hudson, MA office 978-333-7971.

**THE NEXT ONE WILPF Call on Thursday, April 12<sup>th</sup>  
4pm pacific/7pm eastern**

This call will be open to WILPF US members only .

Our topic will be EARTH DAY, and our featured speaker will be environmental scientist Nancy Wood on the importance of preserving biodiversity.

We'll also ask branches to report on their SOLIDARITY PLANS for EARTH DAY.