



# *Last Days Beacon*

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## VOTING & ELECTORAL INTEGRITY IN THE U.S.: CAN AMERICANS TRUST OUR VOTING SYSTEM?

How likely is it that state and federal officials are ignoring evidence of widespread election fraud?

|                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| Very likely       | 37% |
| Somewhat likely   | 25% |
| Not very likely   | 12% |
| Not at all likely | 21% |

Survey of 915 US Likely Voters conducted April 17-19, 2023  
by Rasmussen Reports, MOE +/- 3%

*By Carol Rushton*

*It's not the people who vote that counts; it's the people who count the votes. - Josef Stalin*

I remember growing up hearing this quote by Soviet dictator Josef Stalin. There are websites stating that Stalin never said this. No matter who said it, it accurately describes how many Americans now feel about the voting process in the United States.

Election fraud is a real concern of Americans today. From Chicago Mayor Richard Daley having ballot boxes stuffed in 1960 with fraudulent ballots to ensure that John F. Kennedy beat Richard Nixon to serious questions concerning the 2020 presidential election, countless Americans are troubled and uneasy that some are engaging in illegitimate tactics to win or actually steal elections.

Democrats downplay reports of voter fraud in any election in which a Democrat wins. But according to the Electoral Integrity Project in 2020, the U.S is ranked 61st in the world concerning electoral integrity. Costa Rica and Uruguay are better at protecting their voting system than we are. In 2022,

the same organization listed the U.S. as slipping to 75<sup>th</sup>, behind Trinidad and Tobago (Toby James, “Elections: A Global Ranking Rates US Weakest Among Liberal Democracies,” June 13, 2022, ElectoralIntegrityProject.com). Yikes! No wonder many Americans are currently pessimistic about the results of our elections.

Americans take voting in elections for granted but this has not been the norm throughout the approximately 6,000 years of recorded human history. Kings and dictators have ruled the world for the vast majority of this time, with the peasants or conquered peoples having little to no say about how they were governed by their rulers. The city states in Ancient Greece were notable exceptions but that example was ignored for 2,000 years. The United States of America was the first country that established a constitutional, representative republic in which the citizens elected peers among the local population to act on their behalf to vote on and pass laws for their benefit.

Americans have no idea as to how the United States revolutionized the world with the simple idea that a country’s leaders should be chosen by the citizens and not by inheriting a throne or invading a country. Voting for local and national representatives is now considered a fundamental human right throughout the entire world because our country’s founders realized that voting for our leaders and government representatives was a crucial and essential component of liberty. Countries such as Communist China, North Korea, and Cuba are condemned for NOT allowing their citizens to vote.

Israel is a prime example of how the U.S. and our electoral system have impacted another country. Israeli citizens have the entire day off work to vote; most businesses are shut down so there is no excuse for an Israeli citizen not to vote, although there is no requirement to vote. Kim Wehle, author of *What You Need To Know About Voting*, reports that a similar situation occurs in Australia, where 96% of Australians are registered to vote. “Election day is always on a Saturday, and voting centers are well organized and staffed by an independent commission . . . As one Australian explains, ‘Voting in Australia is like a party. There’s a BBQ at the local school. Everyone turns up. Everyone votes. There’s a sense that: We’re all in this together. We’re all affected by the decision we make today’ “ (2020, Harper-Collins Publishers, NY, pg. 10). Twenty-four countries regard voting with such gravity and seriousness that they *require* their citizens to vote (Ibid., pg. 10).

How does the United States fare in actual voter turnout? Not very well. Registering to vote and actually voting in the U.S. is not hard. But Wehle cites in her book that the U.S. ranks 26<sup>th</sup> in voter turnout compared to the rest of the world and “only 56 percent of the voting age population ultimately cast a vote” in the 2016 presidential election (Ibid., pg. 10). She gives the startling statistic that usually less than 50% of Americans actually show up to vote in most elections (Ibid., pg. 4). Local elections are notorious for having low voter turnout, especially if the elections for various city or county positions or issues are held during an off-election year. In fact, the great black conservative Walter E. Williams refused to vote, contending that his vote didn’t really count!

What are some of the issues that have developed over recent years that have many Americans concerned that our electoral system is not as secure as it should be?

## Illegals Voting in Elections



Traditionally, those living in the U.S. but who are not citizens, even if they are in the country legally with a legal work visa, have not been allowed to vote in elections. But that is changing and changing quickly. Washington, D.C. and 19 states now allow illegal aliens or noncitizens to obtain a legal driver's license. These states include Hawaii, California, Washington, Oregon, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, Illinois, Minnesota, New York, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. State legislatures in New Hampshire, Indiana, and Nebraska are considering bills to allow the same practice.

If you think noncitizens or illegals are not voting if they have a driver's license, you are extremely naïve. California passed a Motor Voter law that allows anyone living in California to register to vote at the same time they apply for a driver's license. Sophia Bollag, a reporter for the Associated Press, divulged that in 2018 that California's DMV had registered noncitizens to vote - supposedly in error (October 8, 2018, "California DMV: Non-citizens May Be Registered to Vote," apnews.com). Even though it may be technically illegal for noncitizens to vote in California, the state is a big mess. California has no voter ID requirement laws and allows many state residents to vote by mail. Do you honestly think the state government of California is checking voters to make sure illegals and noncitizens are not voting? Please.

In their eye-opening book *Our Broken Elections: How the Left Changed the Way You Vote*, John Fund and Hans Von Spakovsky confirm that illegal aliens do vote in U.S. elections now on a regular basis, not only in California but in other states as well. They cite Gustavo Araujo Lerma in California, Marcella Villaruz in Illinois, and Michael Nan Baako in Maryland were all noncitizens who voted illegally in the U.S. and were successfully prosecuted for election fraud. North Carolina discovered 43 illegal aliens in 2018 who had voted. The U.S. House of Representatives learned that hundreds of illegal aliens had voted in an election for a House seat in California that was won by Democrat Loretta Sanchez who defeated incumbent Republican Bob Dornan in 1996. Concerning this election and illegals voting in California, Fund and Von Spakovsky wrote:

But California election officials had no clue (or didn't care) that hundreds of registered California voters were aliens. The situation has only gotten worse since then with the state's switch to automatic voter registration. None of the aliens was ever prosecuted for illegally registering and voting, and California never took *any* steps to fix this security hole in its registration system. Not only that, but the House investigation only found registered aliens who were in the Immigration and Naturalization Service records; any illegal aliens who had never

been arrested or detained were not in those records and therefore were not detected by the investigation. In its report, the House committee expressed the strong belief that hundreds of other illegal votes had been cast in the race, but Clinton administration immigration officials refused to cooperate further with the House probe (John Fund, Hans Von Spakovsky, *Our Broken Elections: How the Left Changed the Way You Vote*, 2021, Encounter Books, NY, NY, pg. 105).

Fund and Von Spakovsky reported the findings of the Public Interest Legal Foundation concerning illegals and voting. The PILF discovered that thousands of illegals and noncitizens had been removed from voter rolls in Michigan, Virginia, New Jersey and other states, but not before the noncitizens or illegals had already voted in elections, sometimes for years. Unfortunately, this is not uncommon. Fund and Von Spakovsky also report in their book that Pennsylvania's Department of Motor Vehicles accidentally (!?) actually registered thousands of illegals and noncitizens to vote. A Republican in Philadelphia by the name of Al Schmidt, a member of Philadelphia's three-member election commission, stated that Pennsylvania had been registering noncitizens to vote since 2006 (AP, "Pennsylvania System Glitch Let Non-Citizens Register to Vote," September 21, 2017, [www.mcall.com](http://www.mcall.com)).

This situation is being compounded by cities and states passing laws to allow noncitizens to vote. According to Americans for Citizen Voting, as reported by the Daily Signal, cities in California, Illinois, Maryland, New York, and Vermont have passed laws permitting noncitizens to vote in local elections, with Washington, D.C. being the latest to join the list (Fred Lucas, "Real Foreign Interference': DC Latest Jurisdiction to Allow Noncitizens to Vote," March 13, 2023, The Daily Signal, [dailysignal.com](http://dailysignal.com)).

Some Americans honestly think it is not fair for noncitizens and illegals to be barred from voting in U.S. elections. In "Noncitizens Are Slowly Gaining Voting Rights," Pew Research revealed that the movement to allow noncitizens to vote in our elections is gaining steam. Vermont State Democrat Representative Hal Colson said, "People always glom onto the idea that you have to earn our right to vote by becoming a citizen. I just don't buy that. We're talking about a large chunk of the community that's closed off." Another Democrat in Illinois, State Senator Celina Villanueva echoed this sentiment. "We're essentially doing taxation without representation. We have a large population of noncitizens in this state and throughout this country and they should have their voices heard, especially when it comes to the education of their children" (Matt Vasilogambros, "Noncitizens Are Slowly Gaining Voting Rights," July 1, 2021, [www.pewtrusts.org](http://www.pewtrusts.org)). It never seems to occur to these Democrats that if illegal aliens were not in the country in the first place, their voting or not voting in elections would not be an issue.

Who really thinks that these same noncitizens are not voting in state and national elections?

## Ballot Harvesting



One aspect of the deterioration in our elections that most Americans may not be very familiar with is the practice of ballot harvesting. According to the Cato Institute, “ballot harvesting or ballot collection happens when one person gathers absentee/mail ballots from many voters - bundling, you might say - for submission at a mail or drop box” (Walter Olson, “The Trouble With Ballot Harvesting,” May 12, 2022, Cato At Liberty, [www.cato.org](http://www.cato.org)). Sounds pretty innocuous, right? Nothing wrong with offering to pick up ballots from voters who may not be able to drive to a post office to mail their ballot, correct?

Olson continues in his article some of the worrying issues concerning ballot harvesting:

[T]he person standing there asking you to hand over your ballot may be someone you have a hard time saying no to, owing to dependence, economic or otherwise. What if it’s a union steward at your workplace, or the political boss of your community, or a patriarchal family member? What if they’re pressing you for a faster decision than you’d prefer to make? There’s a requirement that the envelope be sealed before you hand it over, but that might work mostly as an honor system. If you yield to improper pressure, who’s going to complain to the authorities, or verify a complaint?

States in which Democrats are in control of the state legislature and the governorship have used ballot harvesting very effectively, especially in states that allow only or push mail-in ballots. Democrat Party officials in those states watch very closely which Democrat voters have mailed in their ballots and those who have not. Then party officials will pay a friendly “visit” to those Democrats who have not mailed in their ballot to “assist” them in filling them out. California and especially Oregon have used the system of ballot harvesting very effectively.

Oregon used to be a fairly conservative state with at least some Republican governors into the 1980s. However, Oregon has not had a Republican governor since 1987. In 1998, Oregon passed the bill instituting a mail-in only ballot system in 1998. While Oregon’s mail-in ballot system may not have directly affected the election of Democrat governors, the last U.S. Republican senator from Oregon was Gordon Smith, elected in 1997. Democrat Ron Wyden has been a U.S. senator since 1996, and Democrat Jeff Markley was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2008.

Colorado also has instituted all-mail voting, which has dramatically changed the once-solidly conservative Republican state to a very liberal Democrat state. Although voters can still vote at polling places on Election Day, I will be very surprised if Colorado ever elects a conservative governor or senator again.

An organization called, Lawyers Democracy Fund, has also expressed concerns about ballot harvesting and even presented an example of how ballot harvesting affected the results of the 2018 Midterm Elections in California (shocking, isn't it?).

In California, several Republican congressional candidates led their Democratic competitors on Election Night by thousands of votes. However, as election officials spent days and, in some cases weeks, after the election tabulating millions of ballots that were dropped off at polling locations on Election Day, these candidates ended up losing. Because California legalized ballot harvesting in 2016 with basically no restrictions, a total of five million ballots - 40% of the total ballots cast - were dropped off at the polling locations on Election Day and were counted after election night. As several Republican candidates slowly saw their leads dwindle after the polls closed, it raised alarms concerning the fairness and honesty of the election due to ballot harvesting ("Ballot Harvesting . . . Ballot Harvesting Is Already Affecting Elections," December 19, 2022, Lawyers Democracy Fund, lawyersdemocracyfund.org).

LDF also listed two other instances of blatant ballot harvesting in North Carolina and Arizona. At the end of the article, LDF stated they are "strongly opposed to ballot harvesting for how it jeopardizes free and fair elections, undermines ballot secrecy, and allows voters to be wrongly influenced by bad actors . . . The lack of administrative oversight in mail voting affords too great an opportunity for ballot harvesters to undermine the fairness and honesty of elections by interfering with the free will and autonomy of voters who alone have the responsibility to determine who to vote for or whether to vote at all."

### Election Fraud: Is That All There Is?



Unfortunately, ballot harvesting and noncitizens and illegals voting are not the only instances of election fraud. Democrats have pushed early voting for years - and they have been very successful. Instead of having Election Day to vote for congressional and presidential elections, most states now have Election Month - or longer! This can seriously subvert the integrity of elections.

Only four states - Alabama, Connecticut, Mississippi, and New Hampshire - do not allow early in-person voting. Pennsylvania makes mail-in and absentee ballots available 50 days before Election Day. This was a particularly contentious practice because the mentally impaired Democrat John Fetterman and Republican Dr. Mehmet Oz did not have their only debate for the U.S. Senate seat until October 25, 2022, when many Pennsylvania voters had already cast their ballots.

South Dakota and Minnesota allow early voting 46 days before an actual election; Wyoming, Virginia, Vermont - 45 days; Illinois and Michigan - 40 days; Maine and Nebraska - 30 days; California and

Ohio - 29 days; Indiana and New Mexico - 28 days; Arizona - 27 days. Oklahoma, where I reside, only allows early voting a few days before any election, which is very reasonable.

John Fund and Hans Von Spakovsky discuss in their book, *Our Broken Elections*, other instances that sabotage and erode our elections.

One example I had never considered is ballot petition fraud. This is important when candidates are trying to win their political nomination during the primaries. Fund and Von Spakovsky relate how Barack Obama was able to secure a spot on the ballot for the Democrat primary in Indiana in 2008 against Hillary Clinton. Obama beat Clinton to become the Democrat candidate for president. "In 2011, a Yale University undergraduate student looking through the ballot petitions" for Obama "noticed that 'page after page of signatures' were all in the same handwriting. A forensic specialist confirmed that the signatures on nineteen pages of the ballot petitions were forgeries" (John Fund, Hans Von Spakovsky, *Our Broken Elections: How the Left Changed the Way You Vote*, 2021, Encounter Books, NY, NY, pg. 91). No prosecution ever occurred, probably because Obama had appointed David Capp, the U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Indiana.

In the same chapter, Fund and Von Spakovsky list recent examples of altering vote counts, which includes accepting bribes to stuffing ballot boxes, changing a voter's ballot, and actually bribing voters with monetary reimbursement to vote for a specific candidate. In some cases, the bribes resulted in changing the election results.

Duplicate voting is a very serious issue simply because many counties and states refuse to review their voter rolls and remove those who have moved or have died. Democrat Wendy Rosen ran for a Maryland House seat against incumbent Republican Andy Harris. But two months before the election, it was discovered that Rosen was registered to vote in Maryland and Florida - and had been voting in both states! Rosen got off with a small fine and community service. How many other Americans are getting away with something like this?

### Christians: To Vote or Not to Vote?



Even with all the election issues, it is still important for Christians to vote. However, the statistics concerning American Christians and voting are deplorable. In 2012, The Baptist Press reported that at least 30 million Christians were not registered to vote or do not vote even if they are registered. A more recent statistic was reported by CBN, the Christian Broadcasting Network, that 65 million American Christians do not vote (CBN News, "15M Christians Aren't Registered to Vote," December 10, 2022, [www2.cbn.com](http://www2.cbn.com)). CBN interviewed Jason Yates, CEO of My Faith Votes who decried Christians opposing becoming involved in politics and voting.

Our honorary national chairman is Mike Huckabee and I asked him that same question recently and what he said to me was, “Do you do your dishes? Because if you don’t do your dishes and you just turn your back on it the stack of dishes is only going to grow and the stench from all your dirty dishes is only going to grow, so what you’ve gotta do is roll up your sleeves and do the dishes.” And I think that’s a perfect analogy for what we’re doing here,” Yates explains. “We can’t just ignore it. We have to bring the good of our faith, the values of our faith into the election process, into the civic square.” (Ibid, [www2.cbn.com](http://www2.cbn.com)).

Think of the change that would occur in our country if every American Christian not only registered to vote but committed themselves to actually vote in local and national elections. The change in our country would be dramatic. Voting is the easiest and least strenuous way to become involved in the political process. But American Christians seem to be very apathetic about putting a few minutes aside every few years to show up at their polling places and fill out a ballot which usually takes five minutes or less. Christians need to take the old adage to heart: If you don’t vote, you can’t complain about the government you end up with.

I don’t think that Kim Wehle, author of *What You Need to Know About Voting*, is a conservative and probably not even a Republican or a Christian but she gives a defense of why it is important to vote.

Voting is vitally important, even if an individual vote doesn’t sway a particular election one way or another. It is the only way that “We the People” self-govern. The ability to self-govern is a privilege and a gift - one that we honor by showing up at the ballot booth, even if your vote doesn’t “matter” in altering a particular race. It’s sometimes hard for Americans to fathom that not everyone on the planet enjoys the privilege of self-government. If we want to keep that privilege, we need to exercise it . . . In short, the right to vote is perhaps the most fundamental of our fundamental prerogatives as Americans . . . Voting is the cornerstone of democracy. But much like voting, American democracy itself is not a “right” endowed by a higher power. It is a gift that has operated as a beacon of humanity and freedom to the rest of the world. American democracy, embodied in the US Constitution, means that nobody in elected or appointed office gets so much power that people are picked on arbitrarily. It is how “We the People” govern ourselves. If the structure of our government is to survive for our children and grandchildren, we must see to it. The way to do it is by voting, voting, and voting. If voting didn’t matter much, foreign governments wouldn’t try to influence it . . . Your vote *does* matter” (Ibid, pgs. 4-5, 7).

Do you think that Chinese, Koreans, or Cubans would ignore voting if by some miracle their governments allowed free and transparent elections? Our right to vote is truly unique and precious. Americans truly do not appreciate the great and immense gift and responsibility we have been given. This makes it all the more important that Americans must be able to trust our election system.

*This is a multi-part series on voting in America.*

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