



## Meet the new boss—same as the old boss. Will we be fooled again?

One year after the debacle of 2004, many of the same mistakes and invitations to fraud remain. In this week's election, absentee ballots were not counted properly, people were allowed to submit provisional ballots illegally, and voter rolls still contained the names of the dead, non-citizens and felons who have not had their voting rights restored. Once again, the Secretary of State failed to standardize the voter crediting process in Washington's 39 counties, and thus allowed double votes to be counted. And all of the same election officials are still in place.

This is the result of an utter lack of leadership, and there is plenty of blame to go around:

- Secretary of State Sam Reed, who is the state's top elections official;
- County auditors throughout the state, who seek to avoid the taint of King County's problems, while failing to address the obvious shortcomings; and
- Law enforcement officials, who refuse to investigate—never mind prosecute—clear evidence of fraud.

No wonder Seattle was rated the third most corrupt city for election fraud in the nation following the 2004 election! With this type of leadership, don't be surprised if we move up the list next year.

### Ohio Voters Get It Right

While Washington continues an unhealthy trend toward universal vote-by-mail, despite the dangers of potential fraud and abuse, voters in Ohio thumped (63-37 percent) a proposed constitutional amendment that would have expanded vote-by-mail there. Unlike Washington Secretary of State Sam Reed, who has never met an absentee ballot he didn't like, Ohio Secretary of State Ken Blackwell understands the security risks inherent in absentee ballots. Kudos to Secretary Blackwell and to the common sense voters of Ohio.

### FBI does investigate election fraud, just not in Washington state

The FBI in Detroit seized absentee ballots and other records on election night as part of an investigation into alleged improprieties with the absentee vote. However, the investigation is much broader than that. Other allegations being investigated include:

- Incapacitated nursing home residents were coaxed as to how to vote;
- People were voting from abandoned nursing homes and vacant lots; and
- The city's voting rolls were inflated with more than 300,000 names of people who had died or moved out of the city.



***“The duties of the Secretary of State are limited to compiling these returns on a statewide basis. ...The state constitution, as well, imposes on the Secretary a ministerial duty to certify the returns as submitted by the counties.”***

~WA Secretary of State Sam Reed continues to pass the buck. (WSBA # 20367, filed on 02/01/05)

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**Similar allegations in Washington stemming from the 2004 election have never been investigated by the FBI or the U.S. Attorney's office in Seattle.**

Meanwhile, federal election fraud investigations in New Jersey have already resulted in prison time for a number of people. That investigation continues. In Wisconsin, the fallout from fraud investigations in Milwaukee continues. There have been 14 criminal cases alleging fraud filed in federal court and others in circuit courts. Meanwhile, the Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel*, whose coverage launched the criminal investigations, reports that both state and federal criminal probes continue.



Free and fair elections are indispensable for political freedom.

To protect our electoral system, the Evergreen Freedom Foundation's Voter Integrity Project conducted an extensive survey of election reforms in the 50 states. We have looked for the best practices on the books today, paying particular attention to:

- voter registration requirements and enforcement;
- removal of ineligible registrants and duplications;
- requirements for voter identification;
- the handling of provisional ballots; and
- prevention of fraud and abuse.

For more information, please visit:  
[www.effwa.org/vip](http://www.effwa.org/vip)

**Yet neither U.S. Attorney for Western Washington, John McKay, nor King County Prosecutor Norm Maleng, is showing the slightest interest in pursuing fraud investigations here.**

## RECOMMENDATION

Pay close attention for the next few weeks. Serious election problems, such as those we had in 2004 and in the 2005 primary, seldom become evident until several weeks after the election takes place. We have identified some of them already. It is a certainty, more will be found.

EFF will never give up in this fight to restore integrity to our election system, but your help is vital. Please contact us if you served as a poll worker or observer and identified any problems in the process.



*Election Reform Monitor* is a publication of the Evergreen Freedom Foundation's Voter Integrity Project. Nothing in this publication should be construed as an attempt to aid or hinder the passage of any legislation or ballot measure.

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