

# State Elections Enforcement Commission

## Press Release



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### STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION STATEMENT CONCERNING INQUIRIES REGARDING ALLEGED FRAUDULENT REGISTRATIONS

**HARTFORD, CT** – October 10, 2008 - Jeffrey B. Garfield, Executive Director and General Counsel of the State Elections Enforcement Commission, announced today that the agency has received numerous inquiries from Connecticut citizens concerning allegations of fraudulent registrations, questioning what is being done, and what can be done to protect the integrity of our voter rolls and election process in advance of this important federal presidential election.

The Commission views allegations of voter fraud very seriously, and will pursue criminal prosecutions, by referral to the Connecticut Chief State's Attorney or U.S. Department of Justice, as the evidence so warrants.

First, the Commission can confirm that it has received a complaint from the Bridgeport Registrar of Voters concerning numerous alleged irregularities. While the Commission cannot comment further on a pending investigation, receipt of a complaint is an important indication that the process is working. The Registrars of Voters receive and process voter registration applications, and are the first line of defense in detecting a fraudulent registration. The public should take solace in the fact that Registrars of Voters are detecting such applications and bringing them to the attention of the Commission.

Secondly, if Registrars of Voters determine that there is an infirmity in the application, the application is not approved. This is also a sign that the process is working.

Third, if a new registration *is approved*, pursuant to the federal Help America Vote Act, such voter is required to present identification *prior* to voting. A new voter is similarly required to present a photocopy of his or her identification prior to voting by absentee ballot. Infirmities not detected in the registration process should be detected at this level by the polling place officials and election workers. If a new voter fails to present the required identification, he or she may execute a provisional ballot, which would be counted only when confirmation of the voter's status is accomplished. The State Elections Enforcement Commission can receive and determine complaints under the Help America Vote Act.

The Commission reminds people that those accused of any violation of law have a right to due process, and an investigation will be conducted and completed before any formal action can be taken against any person or entity, if the same is warranted. In the meantime, we encourage vigilance on the part of local Registrars of Voters, and polling place workers on Election Day, who act as our local eyes and ears. There are checks, balances and procedures in place, which thus far are operating to detect registrations that should not be processed.

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