



Republican National Lawyers Association

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Bipartisan Support for Fixing the Voting Rolls; but Let's Keep the Focus on Election Day

Washington, DC –As the leading Republican group on matters of election law and administration, the Republican National Lawyers Association (RNLA) issued a response to offer its perspective on the recent report of the Presidential Commission on Election Administration (PCEA) outlining recommendations to improve election administration in the U.S.

RNLA President Craig Burkhardt: “PCEA suggests many good reforms for the election administration process. For example its recommendations in areas such as voter registration and list maintenance would go a long way to reduce fraud and long lines in our election process. I’m glad the President’s former lawyer co-chaired the effort and helped author the PECA report – which document recognizes by inclusion that tasks such as list maintenance are not forms of voter suppression.”

RNLA Co-Chair Heather Heidelbaugh: “It is unfortunate that the PCEA report chose to recommend early voting which has not been shown to help with long lines or address other systemic voting problems. This recommendation if adopted would simply produce more burdens for local election officials and divert resources that should go to purchasing new voting equipment and other upgrades.”

Briefly, RNLA agrees with many of the Commission’s recommendations, particularly:

- ✓ Identifying deficiencies in our voter registration system as a significant contributor to Election Day problems, including long lines at the polls.
- ✓ PCEA’s recommendations to improve polling place management, including leveraging technology through the use of electronic poll books; =and
- ✓ Reforming the current voting equipment testing and certification process

RNLA strongly cautions against the Commission’s recommendation that states embrace more early voting as a solution to the systemic election administration problems identified in its report. The experience from recent elections demonstrates that early voting does not solve the problem of long lines. It is also expensive, distracts from Election Day preparations, and diminishes the importance of Election Day.

RNLA’s recommends state and local election officials adopt additional reforms to improve election administration:

- ✓ Amend their laws so there are fewer restrictions in sharing voter registration, voter history and Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) data with other states to improve the accuracy of the voter rolls and prevent double-voting. Among other tools to help with this process are to adopt *intrastate* data-sharing among other state agencies, upgrade statewide voter registration databases, explore public-private partnerships for list maintenance, and utilize the Department of Homeland Security's SAVE database to ensure only citizens are able to register and remain on the voter rolls.
- ✓ Develop technology to display voter photographs on electronic poll books to improve the integrity of the check-in process.
- ✓ Manage precinct sizes by timely re-precincting, ensuring a manageable number of voters are assigned to polling places and avoid co-locating polling places when possible.

The complete response is available at www.rnla.org/pecaresponse.pdf. RNLA leaders are available to discuss the RNLA response. The RNLA is made up of over 5,000 lawyers and law students nationwide who are dedicated to the principle that elections should be open, fair and honest. Visit www.rnla.org for general information on the RNLA or email press@republicanlawyer.net or call 202-802-0437 to schedule an interview.

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