

29 States Refuse to Give Data to Voter Fraud Panel, “What Are They Trying to Hide” Trump Asks

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Together with [lashing out at the anchors of Morning Joe](#), slamming “garbage” fake news CNN, and suggesting that Greta Van Susteren was fired because she “refused to go along with Trump hate”, President Trump on Saturday blasted the 29 (and rising) states refusing to comply with his election fraud commission’s request for voter data to a commission he created to investigate alleged voter fraud, asking “what are they trying to hide?”

Numerous states are refusing to give information to the very distinguished VOTER FRAUD PANEL. What are they trying to hide?

— Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) [July 1, 2017](#)

Last Wednesday, Trump’s Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity – which was formed to investigate his claim that millions of illegal votes cost him the popular vote in the 2016 presidential election – sent a letter to all 50 states asking them to turn over voter information including names, the last four digits of social security numbers, addresses, birth dates, political affiliation, felony convictions and voting histories. The request was for information publicly available under each state’s laws. And while some states are providing part of this information, many states immediately raised concerns and voiced their opposition to providing the information, and as of Saturday morning, more than half of all US states – 29 at last count – had refused to comply with the commission’s requests, saying they are unnecessary and violated privacy, according to statements from election officials and media reports.

“This commission was formed to try to find basis for the lie that President Trump put forward that has no foundation,” Kentucky Secretary of State Alison Lundergan Grimes [told Reuters](#) previously in an interview.

Among the states refusing to comply with Trump’s request are both Democratic and Republican states.

Echoing Trump’s skepticism, Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach, the vice chair of the commission, had a similar response to the president on states refusing to comply.

“Frankly, if a state like Kentucky or California won’t provide available information, one has to ask the question, ‘Why not?’” Kobach said Friday

during an interview with NPR. “I mean, what are they trying to hide if they don’t want a presidential advisory commission to study their state voter rolls?” he asked.

Several states replied to that question, as [the Hill reports](#).

“There’s not enough bourbon here in Kentucky to make this request seem sensible,” Kentucky’s Democratic Secretary of State, Alison Lundergan Grimes, [said on MSNBC](#). “Not on my watch are we going to be releasing sensitive information that relate to the privacy of individuals.”

Mississippi Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann, a Republican, also said he won’t turn over any information to the panel, telling members of the voter fraud commission to, “go jump in the Gulf of Mexico.”

Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf, a Democrat, took a similar line, calling the Trump investigation an attempt to suppress the vote.

You can add PA to that list. We will not participate in this systematic effort to suppress the vote. <https://t.co/EHnY2NJI5R>

— Governor Tom Wolf (@GovernorTomWolf) [June 30, 2017](#)

Election officials from both sides of the aisle expressed skepticism about Trump’s claim of voter fraud:

“In Ohio, we pride ourselves on being a state where it is easy to vote and hard to cheat,” said Jon Husted, Ohio’s Republican secretary of state. “Voter fraud happens, it’s rare and when it happens we hold people accountable. I believe that as the Commission does its work, it will find the same about our state.”

Several states, among them California and New York, said participating in the attempt to compile voter data would only serve to legitimize the false and already debunked claims of massive voter fraud,” according to Democratic Secretary of State Alex Padilla. On the other hand, by refusing to participate in the first place, they force Trump himself to question what it is they are hiding.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo and Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe, both Democrats, said their states would not provide confidential information.

“New York refuses to perpetuate the myth voter fraud played a role in our election,” Cuomo said in a statement. “We will not be complying with this request.”

Even Kansas, where Kobach is secretary of state, will not share voters’ Social Security information with the commission.

“In Kansas, the Social Security number is not publicly available,” Kobach told the Kansas City Star. “Every state receives the same letter, but we’re not asking for it if it’s not publicly available.”

Officials in Connecticut, Minnesota, Rhode Island, Utah and Washington also expressed skepticism and said their states would withhold nonpublic information. North Carolina will provide all but the last four digits of Social Security numbers, dates of birth and driver’s license numbers.

Rhode Island Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea (D) took her criticism further, saying Kobach was unfit to lead the commission, given his record of strict voting laws and a recent court fine for failing to produce documents related to a lawsuit over voting laws.

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Trump has made such allegations of voter fraud before, including claiming that millions of people voted illegally in the 2016 election.

Kobach says he does not know if such claims are true but the commission is investigating them. He is an advocate of strict voter identification laws, which he says are necessary to combat fraud. Opponents say those laws hinder access to the polls primarily for elderly and minority voters.

Meanwhile, the [Hill reported](#) that officials have raised questions about the commission’s discretion obtaining the confidential documents.

“State statutes permit the [Wisconsin commission] to share confidential information in limited circumstances with law enforcement agencies or agencies of other states,” Haas said. “The presidential commission does not appear to qualify under either of these categories.”

Trump appointed another voter identification supporter, Heritage Foundation fellow Hans von Spakovsky, to the commission Thursday. Von Spakovsky, one of Kobach’s mentors, has long advocated for stricter voter access rules.

As of noon on Saturday, the states who have refused the Commission’s demands are: Arizona, California, Connecticut, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin.

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