

Electronic Voting Fraud: A Real Threat to Any Democrat Running for President

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The way our electoral process now stands, electronic voting machines guarantee a Republican victory in 2016.

No matter what she does, Hillary Clinton – or any other Democratic nominee – cannot be elected without a fundamental change in the basic mechanics of how our votes are cast and counted.

It is a profoundly disturbing reality that casts a long shadow over all that's wrong with our electoral system, no matter who one favors for public office.

Just 15 years after the theft of the 2000 election, the Democrats have [finally begun to talk](#) about voter rights and various methods to guarantee public access to the polls.

But for a non-Republican to win the White House in 2016, one of two virtually impossible things must happen: The Democrat must [win by absolutely indisputable margins](#) far beyond simple majorities – 10 percent or more – in the key states whose electronic tallies will swing the Electoral College.

Or the nation must find and accept a way to guarantee a reliable vote count immune to electronic manipulation by those who control the voting apparatus in each state, meaning the governors and secretaries of state.

At this point, it's hard to see either happening.

Today, there are 24 states where both the governor and secretary of state are Republicans. These include Florida and Ohio, where rigged vote counts put George W. Bush in the White House in 2000 and 2004. In both states, the presidential election was decided by governors and secretaries of state in control of the voting process and final vote count. In Florida in 2000, that was Bush's brother Jeb; in [Ohio in 2004](#), it was Secretary of State J. Kenneth Blackwell, co-chair of the Buckeye committee to re-elect Bush and Cheney.

In 2016, additional key swing states with both governors and secretaries of state from the GOP include Michigan, Iowa, Nevada and Arizona, among many others.

No significant reforms have been put in place to prevent the theft of another presidential election. Quite the opposite. Since the 2000 Bush-Gore fiasco and the Help America Vote Act that followed, electronic voting machines have spread throughout the country. Election results in a wide range of federal, state and local contests have been extremely suspect, and there's no reason to believe 2016 will be any different – [except to get worse](#).

Indeed, the Koch brothers and their fellow mega-billionaires have proudly announced their willingness to spend as much money as it takes to buy the White House. The Democrats do have corporate backers, but are not likely to win the 2016 money game, at least not to an extent that would allow them to crack the states where the GOP controls the voting machines.

Citizens United, *McCutcheon* and other key Supreme Court decisions have guaranteed that the corporate super-rich are free to pour in as much cash as they need to control electoral campaigns. There is no doubt that in 2016 cash will flow beyond all means of calculation.

At least some of that GOP cash will guarantee that electronic voting machines in key states are rigged again.

Remember that in Florida in 2000, former Gov. Jeb Bush and his Secretary of State Katherine Harris used computerized electronic registration fraud to eliminate tens of thousands of votes by people of color in an [election decided](#) for Bush's brother by less than 600 votes.

In Volusia County, the vote count fluctuated with electronic manipulation at key hours of the evening. George W. Bush's true tally remains a mystery. What's known is that he lost the general election by more than 500,000 votes, but somehow won the Electoral College.

In 2004, all projected estimates at 12:20 am election night showed Bush losing Ohio, which would have given John Kerry the presidency.

But a series of "glitches" mysteriously shut the data flow coming from the basement of the Old Pioneer Bank Building in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The server bank there had been contracted to do the vote compilation by Ohio's GOP Secretary of State J. Kenneth Blackwell. The servers in that basement also housed the emails of Karl Rove and the Republican Party. (The Bush family IT specialist in charge, Michael Connell, was [deposed a day before Election Day 2008](#), then died in a mysterious small plane crash a month later.)

By 2 am, when the data flow somehow resumed, Bush was declared the winner. The vote margins had done a legendary flip of more than 6 percent, a virtual statistical impossibility, especially when combined with "magical" flips in at least seven other swing states that decided the election.

Nothing has been done to improve the situation in Ohio. A federal court decision required election officials to deliver the 2004 ballots and voting records to a single repository so they could be re-examined. The court order was ignored by 56 of the state's 88 counties, which destroyed the records, making a recount impossible. No arrests were made. To this day there has been no definitive confirmation of the highly contested ballots that gave George W. Bush his second term. And both computerized poll books and electronic voting machines have [proliferated](#) even further throughout the state.

In 2008 and 2012, Barack Obama won by big enough margins to get him by. Thousands of volunteers inundated ballot centers to monitor what was going on. Without them, John McCain and Mitt Romney would have become president.

But numerous Senate, House and other races were clearly swung electronically. That includes three US Senate races in 2014 that gave the GOP its current illegitimate margin in the upper house of Congress. Serious questions must be asked about the alleged re-election

of Gov. Rick Scott, which has put him in charge of the Florida vote count next year.

Not one major Democratic candidate has raised a serious legal challenge based on these electronic “anomalies.”

So today there is no meaningful independent apparatus in place to credibly examine the electronic presidential ballot tally. And it’s not likely Team Koch will allow what happened for Obama in 2008 and 2012 to be repeated.

A single strategic IT manipulator virtually anywhere could swing the 2016 election with just a few keystrokes perpetrated in less than a minute.

After years of utterly ignoring the issue of voter rights, Hillary Clinton and the Democrats seem to have vaguely awakened. They’re now raising demands about early voting and other steps in the process long familiar to the election protection movement.

But she and the Democrats have not touched the issue of electronic voting or accountability.

Source codes remain “proprietary,” so the public has no control over the private machines on which our [allegedly democratic elections](#) are conducted. There is no usable paper trail, transparency or accountability.

We are concerned that *all* voters get fair access to the polls, and all votes are fairly counted, no matter who the candidate. We have no doubt the Democratic Party would be just as willing to flip elections from Republicans as vice versa, and that both have, can and will do the same to the Green Party and other challengers.

So we support universal hand-counted paper ballots, automatic universal voter registration, a four-day national holiday for voting, major restrictions on campaign spending and a wide range of additional reforms meant to guarantee some kind of democracy in the United States.

We are happy to have Clinton and the Democrats finally begin to address some of these issues. But it’s nowhere near enough.

Guaranteed voter registration and ballot access are meaningful only if they feed into a system that produces a reliable vote count.

That does not include easily corrupted electronic machines.

Do we really think the Kochs and their ilk would spend billions to sway our elections without throwing in some pocket change to flip the final tally? Especially in states where they [already own](#) both the governor and the secretary of state?

From Al Gore to John Kerry to Daily Kos and beyond, the Democrats have been utterly unwilling to face this reality.

If they don’t, we can ready ourselves for Hillary’s concession speech.

And for a final goodbye to even the illusion that our electoral process has any real meaning.

Harvey Wasserman is co-author, with Bob Fitrakis, of [Will the GOP Steal America's 2012 Election?](#)

Bob Fitrakis is co-author, with Harvey Wasserman, of [Will the GOP Steal America's 2012 Election?](#), an e-book.

Bob Fitrakis and Harvey Wasserman's next book Election Theft Is the Fourth Jim Crow: How the GOP Can Buy, Rig, Steal and Lynch the Presidency in 2016 will be published prior to the next vote count. Please contact us at truth@freepress.org and solartopia@me.com for more information and support.

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