

Video alleges voter fraud in NH

◆ Ballots requested, given:

State authorities say they are investigating the matter.

By **MARK HAYWARD**
New Hampshire Union Leader

MANCHESTER — The New Hampshire Attorney General has launched a comprehensive review of state voting procedures, after people obtained ballots of dead voters during the presidential primary on Tuesday.

No fraudulent votes were actually cast. But in nine instances, clerks readily handed over ballots after a would-be voter implied he was the city resident, recently deceased, still listed on the voter checklist, according to a video posted on the Internet.

After receiving the ballot, the person departed without voting.

The video was produced and posted by Project Veritas, a national organization that has snared ACORN, National Public Radio and others in clandestine video recordings.

Associate Attorney General Richard Head said his office became aware of the effort on Election Day and immediately began an investigation.

“That investigation is ongoing,” he said. “Based on the information received on Election Day and the information on the video, we are undertaking a comprehensive review of voting procedures with the Secretary of State.”

U.S. Attorney for New Hampshire John Kacavas said he had not heard of the video as of Wednesday.

“If it’s true, it’s troubling to me,” Kacavas said. “I’m certainly going to look into it.”

State law makes it a crime to use a false name to obtain a ballot. State law also prohibits the audio-recording of a person without consent.

It appeared that most, if not all, of the video was filmed at polling places in Nashua and Manchester.

Secretary of State William Gardner, as well as city clerks in Manchester and Nashua, quickly said Wednesday that they support the idea of voter identification, but not the voter photo ID bill that Gov. John Lynch vetoed last year.

Officials in Nashua and Manchester said the filmmaker should be arrested.

“They should be arrested and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. When I was in the Senate, I always heard, ‘This never happens.’

This is proof this happens,” said Manchester Mayor Ted Gatsas.

“People who pull stunts like this should be prosecuted,” Nashua City Clerk Paul Bergeron said.

Project Veritas released the video the day after New Hampshire’s first-in-the-nation presidential primary.

“With the eight-vote margin in the 2012 Iowa Caucus, it is clear that voter fraud can influence the outcome of an election and it is important to note that Project Veritas’ team had the ability to cast more than a dozen votes in this latest investigation,” James O’Keefe said in a fundraising email.

Actually, the would-be voter gets his hands on ballots only nine times in the 10-minute, seven-second Project Veritas video.

In one, the clerk directly asks the person if he is the man listed on the checklist.

At that point, the person said he was just checking to see if the checklist designates the voter as deceased.

In another, the dead person is not on the checklist, and the clerk encourages the person to register to vote.

Another time, the wouldbe voter left after poll workers started asking question about the name he gave,

Manchester City Clerk Matt Normand said.

“It just so happens the ward moderator recognized the name as not being that person,” Normand said.

The moderator, Gloria Pilotte, asked to speak to the undercover voter to see if there was some mistake.

He left before they had a chance to speak.

“He never got a ballot,” Normand said. That instance is not on the video, which can be found at www.theprojectveritas.com.

Project Veritas asked the New Hampshire Union Leader to email questions about the video, but did not respond.

It’s not impossible for a dead man to vote in the Granite State.

Secretary of State Gardner said a fraudulent voter could check newspaper obituaries for recently dead people, and then go to a city or town to see if the name is on voting lists.

The bogus voter could then go to a polling place and likely get a ballot, he said.

VOTER Fraud (Cont'd)

Gardner said he's open to changes in state voting procedures, but not the legislation that Lynch vetoed.

Its provisional voting procedure would have been difficult to administer, Gardner said.

"I'm OK with photo ID, but I would like a way to do it without sending people home from the voting place without having cast a ballot," Gardner said. Republican House Speaker William O'Brien said Democrats have consistently maintained that no voter fraud takes place in New Hampshire.

Now it's been shown that flaws exist in the system.

"I'm afraid — I hope it doesn't come down to this — it challenges our first-in-the-nation primary position," O'Brien said.

He said Republicans are open to compromise as long as the New Hampshire voting pool is not diluted by non-resident or fictitious voters.

New Hampshire Union Leader reporters John DiStaso and Beth Lamontagne Hall contributed to this article.

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