Ohio Election Facts

Civil Rights Violations, Voter Disenfranchisement, Impossible Vote Counts

Exit Poll: Kerry 52.1% - Bush 47.9%
Certified Result: Kerry 48.5% - Bush 51.0%

The Elephant is in the Room

- Kenneth Blackwell served as Bush’s Campaign Co-Chair AND Ohio’s Secretary of State. Blackwell has stonewalled Rep. John Conyer’s investigation, refused to answer questions regarding the myriad of allegations against him, and instituted a series of election law changes that benefited the re-election of his boss, the President.
- Exit polls, specifically in Florida, Pennsylvania and Ohio favored Kerry, yet were all wrong and outside of the margin of error. Statisticians say there is a 1-660,000 chance for this to have occurred.
- African Americans, students, and Democrats in Ohio on Election Day were vastly more likely to: Not have received an absentee ballot; have had their polling place moved at the last minute; have been sent to the wrong polling place; have their vote not counted; have been intimidated, threatened, or given false voting information; have been illegally removed from voter lists and forced to fill out provisional (that were more likely NOT to be counted) ballots.

Jim Crow is Alive and Well: African American Voter Disenfranchisement

- The misallocation of voting machines led to unprecedented long lines that disenfranchised scores, if not hundreds of thousands, of predominantly minority and Democratic voters. Though there were 700,000 newly registered urban voters in 2004, 42 precincts in Franklin County had less voting machines than in the PRIMARIES, yet 39 machines were found unused on Election Day in a nearby warehouse.
- Also in Franklin County, 27 of the 30 wards with the most machines per registered voter showed majorities for Bush while six of the seven wards with the fewest machines delivered large margins for Kerry.
- Fewer voting machines were available in low-income precincts throughout the state, creating lines of up to 10 hours. 73 of 77 precincts that were extremely crowded on Election Day due to voting machines being subtracted were heavily Democratic.
- Dr. Norman Robbins of Cleveland testified that over 10,000 voters in Cuyahoga County alone were disenfranchised by various means; and nearly all were "youth, poor and minorities."
- In one Cleveland ward, 51% of the provisional votes cast were thrown in the trash, virtually all of them from African-Americans.
- At Kenyon College and Oberlin College, liberal arts institutions, there were severe shortages of voting machines (and up to 11 hour lines), while at nearby religious-affiliated schools there was no waiting at all. Poll watchers in Cleveland and Columbus have testified that most provisional ballots were given to minority and young voters.
- A team of 25 men calling themselves the “Texas Strike Force” made intimidating phone calls to likely Democratic voters, “targeting people recently in the prison system.” The Ohio Republican Party reportedly paid for the Texans’ hotel rooms. A “hotel worker heard one caller threaten a likely voter with being reported to the FBI and returning to jail if he voted.”
Unexplainable Vote Counts: Evidence of Fraud

- There were impossibly high turnouts in heavily Republican districts, nearly all of them adding to Bush's official margin. In the heavily Republican southern county of Perry, Blackwell certified one precinct with 221 more votes than registered voters. Two precincts -- Reading S and W. Lexington G -- were let stand in the officially certified final vote count with voter turnouts of roughly 124% each. But in pro-Kerry Cleveland, there were certified precinct turnouts of 7.10, 13.15, 19.60, 21.01, 21.80, 24.72, 28.83 and 28.97 percents. Seven entire wards reported a turnout less than 50%. But if the actual Cleveland turnout were 60 percent, as registered statewide, Kerry would have netted an additional 22,000 votes. Kerry is also thought to have lost 7,000 votes in Toledo this way.

- In Cleveland, there were three precincts in which minor third-party candidates received 86, 92 and 98 percent of the vote respectively, an outcome completely out of synch with the rest of the state (a similar thing occurred during the contested election in Florida, 2000).

- South Concord managed a 98.5% turnout heavily tilted toward Bush: requiring that all but 10 voters in the precinct cast ballots. But, a freepress.org canvas easily found 25 voters who said they did not vote. The nearby Cleveland precinct that was heavily tilted toward Kerry managed just a 7.1% turnout, but the day’s overall voter turnout indicated eight or nine times as many voters.

- In Cleveland Ohio thousands of people claimed their vote for Kerry on electronic voting machines was turned into a vote for Bush.

- C. Ellen Connally, an African-American candidate for Ohio Chief Justice, who was little known and outspent in the southern part of the state, received hundreds of thousands of more votes than Kerry.

- Of the 147,000 combined provisional and absentee ballots counted by hand after Election Day, Kerry received 54.46% of the vote. In the 10 largest Ohio counties, Kerry’s margin was 4.24 to 8.92 percent higher than in the certified results, which were predominantly machine counted.

The Recount that Wasn’t

- More than 106,000 Ohio ballots remain uncounted. Most uncounted ballots come from regions and precincts where Kerry was strongest. There is no legal reason for not inspecting and counting each of these ballots. In Shelby County, election officials admitted that they discarded crucial tabulator records, rendering a meaningful recount impossible. In many cases, the recounts were conducted not by public election officials, but by private corporations, many of them with Republican ties. The final recount tested roughly 3% of the roughly 5.7 million votes cast in the state. But contrary to the law governing the recount, many precincts tested were selected not at random, but by Blackwell's personal designation. Experts with the election challenge suit noted many of the precincts selected were mostly free of the irregularities they are seeking to investigate, while many contested precincts were left unrecounted.

- The final certified count does not include thousands of people who did not vote, despite intending to do so in Ohio’s inner cities due to a lack of voting machines, lack of available ballots, intimidation, manipulation of registrations, denial of absentee ballots and other means of documented voter suppression.

Sources: Columbus Free Press, Preserving Democracy: What Went Wrong in Ohio, by House Judiciary Committee, Dr. Stephen Freeman

United for Secure Elections

For more facts and information on the 2004 election, see: election.solarbus.org