

Comments of Michael Fletcher to the Montgomery County BOE, July 31, 2023.

At the last BOE meeting, I discussed how the trend towards diminishing local control of elections is not a benefit to election integrity. One of the strengths of our voting system is its decentralization. States run their voting systems. Counties conduct elections and certify the results. This makes it very difficult for those who would manipulate elections to affect state-wide or country-wide election results. I urge you, the Board Members and the Elections Staff, to resist further centralizing control of our election system and even to find ways to roll back some of the actions already implemented that hinder your ability to conduct and certify the accuracy of our elections.

In my discussion of centralizing factors in our elections, I mentioned the Electronic Registration Information Center, ERIC, another non-profit that is supposed to assist the states in improving the accuracy of their voter rolls. ERIC compiles voter information from over half of our states; although the number of states participating in ERIC is diminishing as they discover that ERIC is not doing its job. Recently, I have provided data to the Election Director that shows thousands of discrepancies in Montgomery County's voter rolls that should have been identified by ERIC. These discrepancies are in the exact areas (registrants who have moved or died) that the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) requires reasonable effort be taken to remove ineligible registrants from the rolls.

In May and June, I provided information to the Election Director that identifies 27,813 Montgomery County registrants who filed a *permanent* change of their mailing address with a state destination that does not match the state of their residence (Maryland) in the voter registration database and 2,626 Montgomery County registrants who filed a *permanent* change of their mailing address with a destination that does not match the county of their residence (Montgomery) in the voter registration database.

In June and July, my team provided information containing the results of a review of registrants on the Montgomery County voter rolls who are 100 years old or older. The county has 1,170 of these. The purpose of the review was to identify registrants who have died and, therefore, should have been removed from the rolls in accordance with the NVRA. The conclusion of the review is that at least 55% of the centenarians on the voter rolls in the county are no longer living.

As an aside, I found the research of centenarians to be sobering and edifying. These people were part of the greatest generation – many are buried in Arlington National Cemetery. There was an Italian countess with half a dozen names who married a GI and moved to the US after WWII. Then, when investigating Rockville centenarians, I came across Mr. Roscoe Nix. This was memorable because I found a discussion of the Roscoe Nix Award in a Linked in post authored by your president, Mr. Naiman. I was edified to learn about Mr. Nix who passed away in 2012.

The Election Director has indicated that he would like to meet with my team to discuss the results of our voter roll reviews. We look forward to this meeting.