Securing the 2020 Election: Absentee ballots

October 16, 2020
Outline

● Security checks on absentee voting
● The absentee voting wars
● In-person voter intimidation
The life of an absentee ballot: Steps and security measures

VOTER REGISTRATION
- Identifying info, signature
- Sworn statement

BALLOT APPLICATION
- Identifying info match
- Sworn statement
- Signature match

BLANK BALLOT MAILED
- Unique barcode linking to voter

VOTER COMPLETION AND RETURN
- Sworn statement
- Signature match

BALLOT IS PROCESSED
- Paper weight check
- Barcode check
- Signature check

Genuine Signature

Questioned Signature

Richard Nixon

Secretary

Secretary

Cynthia

Cynthia
The life of an absentee ballot: Steps and security measures

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Impossible to (except in the case of major error by officials):
- Print and mail fake ballots
- Vote twice

An individual committing voter fraud would have to:
- Make (possibly multiple) false attestations
- Know information about other specific voters
- Put themselves at risk of severe penalties
145 criminal convictions of absentee ballot fraud over the last 20 years, out of 250 million ballots cast by mail
- 0.00006 percent of all ballots

425K absentee ballots were disqualified in 2018, out of 30.4M ballots cast
- 1.4 percent of all ballots

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage of Rejected Ballots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Other” reason given</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballot not received on time/missed deadline</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-matching signature</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No voter signature</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No witness signature</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All additional reasons</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voter already voted in person</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Heritage Foundation’s Election Fraud Database; Election Assistance Commission, Election Administration and Voting Survey, 2018.
Loosening restrictions vs. weaponizing restrictions

- Ballot and ballot application mailings
- Deadlines
- Drop off points
- Witness(es)/notary signature requirements
- Signature verification
- Notification-and-cure processes

Court blocks extension of Wisconsin absentee ballot deadline

Appeals court allows Texas governor’s mail ballot drop-off restrictions to stay in place

Supreme Court restores witness signature rule for absentee ballots in South Carolina

'Naked ballots,' explained: In Pennsylvania, new court ruling complicates mail-in voting

Washington Post; AP; USA Today; The Hill; NBC News
In-person voter intimidation

- Poll-watching
- Voter caging
- “Army for Trump”