Sir:
The SoS news release indicates the Colorado Voter Access and Modernized Elections Commission will be meeting September 3rd, and solicits input.

In recent news, an amazingly high percentage of petition signatures have been rejected by the Secretary of State's office. Most recently, a would-be libertarian candidate reportedly submitted 834 signatures of which only 408 were deemed qualified, a rejection rate of 51%. That candidate is thus denied access to the ballot. In other recent petitions, news media reported rejection rates above 30% were experienced.

I suspect that the extremely high rejection rates are due in large part to inaccurate, out of date, unmaintained voter registration rolls. If the Secretary of State compares petition signatures and associated data against inaccurate data in the voter registration rolls, the Secretary's office is, as I understand it, bound to reject signatures when the associated data does not match.

I recently compared sign-in data for a public hearing in our community with vote registration rolls. While I did not attempt to quantify the mis-match percentage, in the small community where people are known it was obvious in many cases that the current information on individuals, such as their residence addresses or the surnames of women who had married in the past five or ten years, no longer matches the voter registration rolls, but that these were the same individuals.

It appears logical that the longer the voter rolls are not properly maintained, i.e. updated with current information on voters and removal of no longer eligible voters, that the rolls no longer properly serve the purposes for which they are intended. In the example above, it is quite possible that many petition signatures were properly rejected simply because the voter rolls have not been maintained. Clearly this denies voters their right to petition. At the same time, failure to update voter registration rolls when individuals move to a different residence in a different precinct or county or other jurisdiction fails to maintain a proper voter-jurisdiction relationship. Similarly, there is a continuing problem with second-home owners who own property locally, but only reside here for two or three months in the summer and two weeks of skiing season in the winter, yet are registered to vote in Colorado.

I urge the commission to take action which will cleanse the voter rolls of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of voters no longer eligible to vote in jurisdictions on the rolls of which they are listed, and to provide for frequent maintenance of the voter rolls, to include updates to names and addresses and removal of those no longer residing there. The longer such action is delayed, the more it will cost and the more confusing and difficult it will be to implement.
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