

Hawaii

Hawaii Unlikely To Cooperate With Trump's Voter Fraud Panel

State law doesn't allow for the sharing of personal information with the federal government.

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By Chad Blair    / July 3, 2017

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More than two dozen states have rejected a request from the Trump administration for data about their registered voters, but Hawaii is not among them.

That's because the 50th state has not yet received a formal inquiry from what's known as the Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity.

Even if Hawaii officials should hear from the commission, they might be tempted to tell it to go jump in the Pacific Ocean.

[Hawaii Revised Statute 11-19](#) says that a voter's full name, district and precinct designation and voter status are public, "but all other personal information, as provided on the voter registration affidavit, shall be confidential except for election or government purposes in accordance with rules adopted by the chief election officer, pursuant to chapter 91."



A woman votes at Kahaluu Elementary School in November.

A spokeswoman for Gov. David Ige said that as of Monday afternoon, the offices of the governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general and state elections had not heard from the voter fraud commission.

Ige later emailed a statement: “Taking a look at what other states have received, I’m skeptical. At this point, we have no assurance that personal information would be secured. It also appears that the commission aims to address voter fraud.”

The governor continued: “By all accounts, incidents of actual voter fraud are extremely rare. I’m concerned this type of investigation would lead to a denial of voter access. When we get the request, I will share my concerns with state and county elections officials. From what I’ve heard, I don’t think we should share these records.”

A spokeswoman for the lieutenant governor said the office had received a handful of inquiries from Hawaii voters and referred them to the state Office of Elections, which coordinates Hawaii contests.

President Donald Trump has claimed repeatedly — and without any evidence — that up to 5 million illegal voters cast ballots in the 2016 election, denying him the popular vote majority.

A recent [article in Slate](#) argued, “The noncitizen focus fits in with Trump’s anti-immigrant rhetoric as well as the rhetoric of Kris Kobach, the Kansas secretary of state who has been advising Trump on voter fraud issues. Kobach has repeatedly lost in lawsuits against the American Civil Liberties Union on account of his actions to make it harder for people to register and vote.”

The commission has been asking states for voters’ dates of birth, partial Social Security numbers, voting histories and even party identification.

Hawaii does not require voters to identify with a party, except in selecting primary ballots.

‘Go Jump In The Gulf Of Mexico’

On Monday, Maryland became one of the latest states to reject the commission’s request.

Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh, a Democrat, [called the inquiry](#) a “repugnant” maneuver to “intimidate voters and to indulge President Trump’s fantasy that he won the popular vote.”

Also on Monday, a legal group [filed a complaint](#) against Kobach, “questioning whether he violated federal law by highlighting his role on the commission in his campaign for Kansas governor in the 2018 election.”

On Friday, Mississippi Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann — a Republican — said Trump’s voter fraud commission can [“go jump in the Gulf of Mexico.”](#)

Trump responded to the backlash from states on Saturday, tweeting, “What are they trying to hide?”

Hawaii's lieutenant governor is technically secretary of state, but the Office of Elections and a chief election officer were established in 1995 to handle elections.

In 2003 the office was permanently moved from the lieutenant governor's office to the Department of Accounting and General Services for administrative purposes.

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