

# 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 uncounted.
- **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](http://election.solarbus.org)