

PRESS RELEASE

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O.C. Registrar's Rejection of CUSD Recall Petitions Questioned

Inspection Demonstrates Thousands of Signatures Improperly Rejected

Last December, many people were shocked when the Orange County Registrar's Office announced they had decided not to certify the petitions to recall all seven Trustees of the Capistrano Unified School District. What went wrong?

The CUSD Recall Committee sent teams of inspectors to the Registrar's Office to find out. They reviewed the petition signatures rejected by the Registrar. The inspection has been completed and the results are quite alarming.

The Orange County Registrar improperly rejected thousands of petition signatures, thereby disenfranchising thousands of registered voters.

For example, the Registrar rejected thousands of signatures claiming the signatories were not registered voters. Astonishingly, our inspectors found the Registrar erred 24% of the time when rejecting these signatures. Stated another way, the Registrar should have validated roughly 700 additional signatures per Trustee, but they didn't.

The Registrar rejected thousands of signatures claiming that each signatory, while validly registered within CUSD boundaries, was registered at a different address. In other words, the registered voter simply had not updated his/her voter registration information. Since the Registrar allows these voters to vote in regular elections, the CUSD Recall Committee believes the Registrar also should have counted their signatures. This decision by the Registrar negated nearly 1,000 signatures per Trustee.

The Registrar rejected thousands of signatures from registered voters who personally signed all seven Recall petitions, claiming the voters may not have personally filled in their addresses on each petition. Despite numerous assurances from the Registrar's Office that petition gatherers could assist voters in filling in address information (not to mention a statute permitting this), the Registrar excluded roughly 2,600 signatures per Trustee for this reason alone.

The Registrar used at least eleven categories like these to liberally reject thousands of signatures.

The complete results of our inspection are set forth in a detailed report you can review on our website at www.CUSDRecall.com.

The CUSD Recall Committee was honored to submit more than 177,000 petition signatures to recall all seven CUSD Trustees. Each of these voters expected their voices would be heard – but they weren't.

Steve Knoblock, San Clemente City Councilman, said it well: "As the scorekeeper of democracy, there is no room for error with the Registrar of Voters. If their counts are inaccurate or their protocol defective, we will all suffer the quiet and potential mortal illness of governance gone wrong. This can not be allowed."

The voters of Orange County deserve better. As the November elections draw near, the public has to have faith their votes will be accurately counted. We all hope our public institutions work properly, but when they do not -- for whatever reason – the people must find out why. In this case, many questions remain unanswered.

Was the Registrar's Office properly staffed to review more than 177,000 petitions in 30 days?

Were the employees at the Registrar's Office properly screened and trained?

Were the employees overworked or preoccupied with handling upcoming special elections?

Was there a bias in favor of the CUSD Trustees?

Was the Registrar unduly influenced by information, arguments, pressure or threats of litigation from CUSD and their high-powered legal counsel (to the detriment of the recall volunteers)?

The answers to these questions remain unknown. In order to protect the Constitutional rights of those who were disenfranchised, and to preserve the public's confidence in our electoral system, the authorities need to investigate what went wrong at the Registrar's Office – and why.

This is something we all should agree upon, whether we supported the CUSD Recall or not.

Full Disclosure, an Emmy Award winning, nationally recognized, independent news program has just released a news program relating to these issues. The program is entitled "*Citizens Revolt Widens as Recall Corrupted*" and can be viewed on the Full Disclosure website at:

<http://www.fulldisclosure.net/>

(If the link doesn't take you straight to the webpage, please cut and past it into your web browser and you'll see it). This informative news program is approximately 12 minutes long and reports on the key findings, observations and recommendations set forth in the final inspection report prepared the CUSD Recall Committee.

To learn more about these important issues, please visit our website at

www.cusdreCALL.com

or contact:

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