

Walker: “Not enough time”

An RMLC comment on recall fraud detection.

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Don’t be Disappointed: The headlines February 28, 2012 disappointed many volunteers who worked on "True the Vote" and "Verify the Recall." Unfortunately, Scott Walker's staff didn't have enough time to verify the 819, 233 signatures turned over to the Government Accountability Board (GAB). Although volunteers successfully entered data into a searchable data base, in some cases three times to ensure accuracy, the GAB decided not accept any “third party” input. Once they realize access to our searchable data base is in everyone’s best interest, they might change their mind.

Don’t lose heart! Once fraud has been perpetrated, it’ll only a matter of time before those responsible will be prosecuted. Before the sun had set rumors were already circulating of 9 felony charges ready to be filed in Racine County alone; two for voter fraud and seven for felony identity theft. Once the searchable data base has time to link to county birth, death, voter, and court records, those who forged or intentionally submitted fraudulent signatures will be prosecuted to as they say, “The full extent of the law.” Depending on the charges those convicted could go to prison and/or be required to pay heavy fines.

Facts are Facts: We now know there were not over one million signatures gathered. At last count, the total was holding at 819,233 which included 55,608 considered to be ineligible and another 228,940 signatures that needed further investigation. While current technology may not be the silver bullet we need to stop the recall or the fraud, it should help to flag obvious fraud and support the GAB’s efforts to verify legitimate entries as well as testify to the honesty of those supporting the recall efforts.

Face-to-Face: Auditors know the most reliable way to verify someone’s signature is to meet them face-to-face and ask them. As a CFE, “Certified Fraud Examiner,” I assure you that may be the best but it’s not the quickest nor is it cost effective. Consequently, it’s generally accepted account practice to conduct surprise spot check verifications over-the-phone directly speaking to the person who signed or witnessed the signature signing. The call should be made to the residence number in an effort to at least discourage fraud and forgeries. A major weakness identified during the recall was the majority of signers failed to provide their home or personal cell phone contact numbers making it virtually impossible to quickly conduct spot check verifications. One benefit of the searchable data base is we’ll be able to identify call back numbers that were under to control of those running the recall. Call back numbers used more than once deserve further investigation.

Your Most Valuable Asset: In forty years teaching forgery and fraud deterrents, few have ever implemented what I recommended to safeguard their money or property. Yet, when I convinced them their good name and reputation was on-the-line, all most everyone would consistently practice everything I preached. Those who should be most concerned are those who

circulated petitions, especially through the mail, or in any way took it upon themselves testify that the person signing was in fact the person they claimed to be.

Search for Your Name: In my opinion, the most valuable benefit of the searchable data base will come when anyone and everyone will be able to search for their name or the name of someone suspected of being used without their permission. Anyone attempting to block the use of the data base as a way to verify the honesty of all involved should be considered a prime suspect.

Handwriting Analysis 101: Of the estimated 700 line entries I made, few looked authentic enough for me to lend them my money based only on what I saw. For example, when petitioners fill in all but the signature they deprive auditors the opportunity to compare beginning, connecting, and ending strokes common in the script signature, or the height, slant, and size of the printed name. I'd not be afraid to bet anyone \$100 they could tell the name of some signers looking only at the person's signature. .

On the bright side: The GAB has hired an outside firm to download names and addresses, etc. into a data base designed to identify duplicate signatures. As I understand, they are limited legally as to what they can and are required to do. The problem from a forensic standpoint is what's being done is only going to scratch the surface. Hopefully, in the future, recall petitions will include detailed instruction for those signing, higher performance standards for those collecting signatures, and more affective audit control procedures for those call on to detect and discourage fraud and forgeries.

FYI: The GAB does not "verify" the person is a real person, is of voting age, lives at the address given, or for that matter is even alive. Now that we have the names in a data base, we will be able to conduct searches that will eventually quantify the actual fraud perpetrated during this recall effort. I assure you, based on what I've seen and the hostile political environment we will find additional fraud and forgeries. Once we follow the fraud indicators to their logical source, we'll be able to hold those who perpetrated the fraud responsible for their actions and accountable for violating our trust. .

In my opinion, the recall process is seriously flawed. I'm sure if the recall petitioners had wanted to, they could have easily made Cliff Klavin and Nancy Grace winners of Dancing with the Stars.