



Written by [Walter E. Williams](#) on November 4, 2015

## Destroying Your Vote

Voter ID laws have been challenged because liberal Democrats deem them racist. I guess that's because they see blacks as being incapable of acquiring some kind of government-issued identification. Interesting enough is the fact that I've never heard of a challenge to other ID requirements as racist, such as those: to board a plane, open a charge account, have lab work done or cash a welfare check. Since liberal Democrats only challenge legal procedures to promote ballot-box integrity, the conclusion one reaches is that they are for vote fraud prevalent in many Democrat-controlled cities.



There is another area where the attack on ballot-box integrity goes completely unappreciated. We can examine this attack by looking at the laws governing census taking. As required by law, the U.S. Census Bureau is supposed to count all persons in the U.S. Those to be counted include citizens, legal immigrants and non-citizen long-term visitors. The law also requires that illegal immigrants be a part of the decennial census. The estimated number of illegal immigrants ranges widely from 12 million to 30 million. Official estimates put the actual number closer to 12 million.

Both citizens and non-citizens are included in the census and thus affect apportionment counts. Counting illegals in the census undermines one of the fundamental principles of representative democracy — namely, that every citizen-voter has an equal voice. Through the decennial census-based process of apportionment, states with large numbers of illegal immigrants, such as California and Texas, unconstitutionally gain additional members in the U.S. House of Representatives thereby robbing the citizen-voters in other states of their rightful representation.

Hans von Spakovsky, a Heritage Foundation scholar and former member of the Federal Election Commission, has written an article, "How Noncitizens Can Swing Elections: Without Even Voting Illegally." He points to the fact that 12 million illegal aliens, plus other aliens who are here legally but are not citizens and have no right to vote, distort representation in the House. Spakovsky cites studies by Leonard Steinhorn of American University, scholars at Texas A&M University and the Center for Immigration Studies. Steinhorn's study lists 10 states that are each short one congressional seat that they would have had if apportionment were based on U.S. citizen population: Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma and Pennsylvania.

On the other hand, states with large numbers of illegal aliens and other non-citizens have congressional seats they would not have had. They are: California (five seats), Florida (one seat), New York (one seat), Texas (two seats) and Washington state (one seat). Moreover, the inflated population count resulting from the inclusion of illegal immigrants and other non-citizens increases the number of votes some states get in the Electoral College system, affecting the actual process of electing the president of the United States.



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There is a strong argument for counting non-citizens, whether they are here legally or illegally. An accurate population count is important for a number of public policy reasons as well as national security — we should know who is in our country. But as professor Mark Rozell, acting dean of the School of Policy, Government, and International Affairs at George Mason University, and Paul Goldman, a weekly columnist for the *Washington Post*, say in their Politico article, there is no “persuasive reason to allow the presence of illegal immigrants, unlawfully in the country, or noncitizens generally, to play such a crucial role in picking a president.”

Hans von Spakovsky concludes his article saying, “It is a felony under federal law for a noncitizen to vote in our elections because voting is a right given only to American citizens. It is a precious right that must be earned by becoming a citizen. Giving aliens, particularly those whose first act was to break our laws to illegally enter the country, political power in Congress and allowing them to help choose our president strike at the very heart of our republic and what it means to be an American.”

*Walter E. Williams is a professor of economics at George Mason University. To find out more about Walter E. Williams and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at [www.creators.com](http://www.creators.com).*

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