Exhibit 5
Post at <http://www.michiganmessenger.com/4414> (September 15, 2008)
Former GOP operative explains why Republicans will use foreclosure lists to block voters

By Eartha Jane Melzer 9/15/08 10:06 AM

Cover: "How to Rig an Election" by Allen Raymond

Unfair but "probably" legal, using foreclosure lists provides a cheap and effective strategy for McCain campaign

Last week we reported about Republican plans to use home foreclosure lists to block voters from the polls after James Carabelli, chair of the Macomb County Republican Party, told Michigan Messenger that on election day Republican volunteers will "have a list of foreclosed homes and make sure people aren't voting from those addresses."

Republican leaders have since disavowed plans to use foreclosure lists as part of their plan to challenge the eligibility of some voters, but an attorney for the party, Eric Doster, did confirm that the party would use returned mail to challenge voters based on residency. As veteran Republican activist Allen Raymond told Michigan Messenger in a recent interview, holding down Democratic turnout is a key part of Republican strategy for victory in November.

Raymond knows about Republican campaign tactics. For almost a decade he managed campaigns for Republicans running for state and national office. In the 2002 New Hampshire elections, he ran a phone-jamming operation aimed at blocking elderly people from arranging rides to the polls, an illegal action that he says was
approved by the highest levels of the party. He spent three months in federal prison. Earlier this year, Raymond published a book about his life and work as a Republican operative, titled “Confessions of a Republican Operative: How to Rig an Election.”

As for our report that the Michigan GOP planned to use foreclosure lists to block likely Democratic voters, Raymond said: “It's a very good tactic. It works. It is actually a very smart thing to do,” he went on, “particularly in this climate with so many foreclosures.”

For Republicans, he said, targeting the foreclosures would be a cost-effective and “probably” legal method of reducing Democratic votes.

If he were still in the election business, he said, “I’d be doing that all day long.”

Raymond explained how he would use foreclosure lists.

“You would go into certain geo-political areas and make a selection based on voter history and performance, and then what you would do is look for foreclosures within those geopolitical areas, and you would mail letters, and then those letters would come back and say that that person’s not there any more because their house has been foreclosed on, and they get challenged,” he said.

He explained why it makes sense for Republicans to seek to disqualify people who have lost their homes.

“If you look at who is being foreclosed upon, it is going to be sub-prime [borrowers]. Sub-prime [borrowers] are generally going to be low-income people, and low-income people are generally going to be Democratic voters. "You got to remember this is a cost-per-contact business," he explained. By targeting households in foreclosure, for the price of a letter and first-class postage, Republicans get a high rate of return, because people in foreclosure are very likely to move and to have their mail returned.

Raymond estimated that people might have moved out of as many as a third of homes listed as foreclosed. "That is a huge number," he said, noting that people enduring the stress of foreclosure are not likely to think to change the address of their voter registration.

Raymond said that, barring some legislative action, Republicans will be free to challenge voters who’ve lost their homes.

“They will get challenged and they will get denied,” he said.

Raymond admitted the practice is not fair to people facing foreclosure.

“You can call them a victim or a bad business person in terms of their personal finances," he said. "Whatever you call them, they still should have the right to vote."

On Friday, the McCain campaign refused to meet with members of the Jobs with Justice campaign and the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, which came to deliver a letter opposing using foreclosure lists to challenge voters.

The McCain/Palin Great Lakes campaign headquarters is located in Farmington Hills in the Trott Financial Center. The law firm Trott & Trott specializes in representing banks in foreclosures. The office building is also home to Trott & Trott’s subsidiary American Processing Company, LLC, which uses proprietary software to provide mortgage default processing services nationwide.

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