

Republicans Admit Voter ID Laws Are About Suppressing Democratic Voters

Written by People for the American Way
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<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/glenn-grothman-congress-s5.jpg>



Comments made by Rep. Glenn Grothman (R-WI) at the Ted Cruz victory party Tuesday night in Milwaukee are added to examples of other Republicans who have discussed the real purpose of voter ID laws and other restrictive voting measures.

MILWAUKEE - Wisconsin Rep. Glenn Grothman has always stood out, even within the GOP, [for his extreme views and statements](#), so it only makes sense that Sen. Ted Cruz [touted](#) the congressman's [endorsement](#) prior to last night's Wisconsin presidential primary.



At Cruz's victory party, a Milwaukee television reporter asked Grothman why he thinks the GOP has a chance to win Wisconsin in the general election, since no Republican has won the state since 1984. Grothman [replied](#) by arguing that "Hillary Clinton is about the weakest candidate the Democrats have ever put up and now we have voter ID and I think voter ID is going to make a little bit of a difference as well."

Grothman's claim confirmed yet again what voter ID opponents have been saying all along: that GOP lawmakers throughout the country have tried to [pass laws making it more difficult to vote](#) in order to reduce the voting share of young people and people of color, who [studies have consistently found](#) are less likely to have the required identification documents. In Wisconsin alone, [approximately 300,000 voters could be impacted](#)

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by a new voter ID law, and many observers [blamed](#) the law for the [long lines seen at the polls](#) on Tuesday.

All of these restrictions, however, are ostensibly to solve the problem of in-person voter fraud, a crime so rare that one study found [just 31 possible cases of it out of over a billion ballots cast](#) in primary and general elections since 2000. Conservatives have often pointed to [discredited](#) and [debunked](#) claims about widespread voter fraud to justify their support for these voter suppression measures.

While serving in the Wisconsin legislature, Grothman was a vocal supporter of voting restrictions, even going so far as to say that such measures would [help Mitt Romney carry the state in 2012](#) :

Grothman was the [chief sponsor of a bill to limit early voting and prohibit weekend voting](#) in Wisconsin, a direct assault on turnout efforts in Democratic-leaning districts. Grothman also proposed a measure to [weaken campaign finance reporting requirements](#) and another to make it [more difficult for the elderly to seek assistance in voting](#), and even tried to [end same-day voter registration](#) in the state, which in 2012 had the nation's [second-highest turnout rate](#).

Last year, Grothman co-sponsored a bill that would [weaken local courts](#) that had ruled against voter suppression measures. He supported a state voter ID law in 2012, which [he admitted he thought would help Romney](#) “in a close race” and implied that voters without ID probably [didn't want to vote anyway](#). After the election, he claimed that President Obama and Sen. Tammy Baldwin [both won their elections due to fraud](#).

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Grothman isn't the only conservative who has inadvertently revealed [the true purpose of voter ID laws and other restrictive voting measures](#), such as efforts to limit early voting.

Mike Turzai

Mike Turzai, who is now the speaker of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, confidently predicted at a GOP gathering in 2012 that a new restrictive voter ID law would [secure Romney's victory](#) in the swing state.

"Voter ID, which is going to allow Governor Romney to win the state of Pennsylvania: done," he said.

John Fund

John Fund, a conservative commentator who has [frequently warned of the scourge of voter fraud](#), once admitted that voter ID laws do little to stop absentee ballot fraud, which he called "the tool of choice amongst fraudsters," since voter ID laws only impact in-person voting.

"I think it is a fair argument of some liberals that there are some people who emphasize the voter ID part more than the absentee ballot part because supposedly Republicans like absentee ballots more and they don't want to restrict that," he [admitted](#), before adding: "But

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the bottom line is, on good government grounds, we have to have both voter ID laws and absentee ballot laws.” (Indeed, while all types of voter fraud are extremely rare, PBS [notes](#) that “election law experts say it happens more often through mail-in ballots than people impersonating eligible voters at the polls.”)

Fund once [pointed to](#) 19 possible cases of voter fraud out of 421,997 ballots cast in one Ohio county as proof that voter ID laws are necessary. Out of the already small number of cases that authorities were investigating, [just two](#) involved alleged in-person voter fraud and neither involved someone impersonating someone else, the supposed target of voter ID laws.

Phyllis Schlafly

Eagle Forum founder Phyllis Schlafly cheered on another way the GOP has tried to suppress the vote: by reducing voting hours.

Schlafly said in 2014 that Republican lawmakers must restrict early voting opportunities [because high voter turnout helps Democrats](#)

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Democrats promote early voting for the same reason they oppose voter ID: because they view early voting as helping their side. In the absurdly long 35-day period of early voting in Ohio in 2012, Democrats racked up perhaps a million-vote advantage over Republicans before Election Day was ever reached. Republicans have been slow to realize how early voting helps the Democrats.

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Fran Millar

Georgia state Sen. Fran Millar, like Schlafly, has [condemned](#) attempts to increase voter turnout. He was particularly critical of an effort in DeKalb County, the state's third largest, to open an early voting center in a mall near a predominantly black megachurch and "dominated by African American shoppers." Millar wrote in 2014:

Now we are to have Sunday voting at South DeKalb Mall just prior to the election. **Per Jim Galloway of the [Atlanta Journal-Constitution], this location is dominated by African American shoppers and it is near several large African American mega churches such as New Birth Missionary Baptist.**

Galloway also points out the Democratic Party thinks this is a wonderful idea – what a surprise. I'm sure Michelle Nunn and Jason Carter are delighted with this blatantly partisan move in DeKalb.

Is it possible church buses will be used to transport people directly to the mall since the poll will open when the mall opens? If this happens, so much for the accepted principle of separation of church and state.

He later [added](#) : "I would prefer more educated voters than a greater increase in the number of voters."

Doug Preisse

Doug Preisse, the chairman of the Republican Party in Franklin County, Ohio, the home of Columbus, plainly [admitted](#) in the run-up to the 2012 election why he believed the state should curb early voting hours: "I guess I really actually feel we shouldn't contort the voting process to accommodate the urban — read African-American — voter turnout machine."

The state party chairman later [defended](#) Preisse by explaining that his statement wasn't

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meant to be on the record.

Ohio Gov. John Kasich, who is currently running for president, [signed legislation](#) in 2014 that cut early voting and eliminated same-day registration in his state.”

Jim Greer

In 2012, after stepping down as chairman of the Florida Republican Party, Jim Greer [told the Palm Beach Post](#) that GOP strategists are committed to restricting voting access in order to hurt Democrats and simply use the menace of voter fraud as “a marketing ploy.”

Former Republican Party of Florida Chairman Jim Greer says he attended various meetings, beginning in 2009, at which party staffers and consultants pushed for reductions in early voting days and hours.

“The Republican Party, the strategists, the consultants, they firmly believe that early voting is bad for Republican Party candidates,” Greer told The Post. “It’s done for one reason and one reason only. ... ‘We’ve got to cut down on early voting because early voting is not good for us,’” Greer said he was told by those staffers and consultants.

“They never came in to see me and tell me we had a (voter) fraud issue,” Greer said. “It’s all a marketing ploy.”

Another Republican leader in the state, Wayne Bertsch, told the newspaper that Republicans [used voting curbs to undercut the Democratic vote](#)

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Don Yelton

One GOP official in North Carolina, Don Yelton, was quite candid about why he thought the state should enact voter restrictions.

“This law is going to kick the Democrats in the butt,” he said. “If it hurts a bunch of college kids that’s too lazy to get up off their bohunkus and go get a photo ID, so be it. If it hurts the whites, so be it. If it hurts a bunch of lazy blacks that wants the government to give them everything, so be it.”

As captured in 2013 in an [incredible interview with The Daily Show](#) : [VIDEO [HERE](#)].

While Yelton [eventually resigned from his position while still standing behind his remarks](#) , that wasn’t much of a comfort to the [thousands of North Carolina voters who could lose their ability to vote](#) thanks to recent voting restrictions, [despite the fact that](#)

“North Carolina officials made just two referrals of cases of voter impersonation fraud out of 35 million votes cast in primary and general federal elections between 2000 and 2014.”

But hey, at least he’s honest.