



JIM CROW RETURNS

MILLIONS OF MINORITY VOTERS THREATENED BY ELECTORAL PURGE

Election officials in 27 states, most of them Republicans, have launched a program that threatens a massive purge of voters from the rolls. Millions, especially black, Hispanic and Asian-American voters, are at risk. Already, tens of thousands have been removed in at least one battleground state, and the numbers are expected to climb, according to a six-month-long, nationwide investigation by Al Jazeera America.

At the heart of this voter-roll scrub is the Interstate Crosscheck program, which has generated a master list of nearly 7 million names. Officials say that these names represent legions of fraudsters who are not only registered but have actually voted in two or more states in the same election — a felony punishable by 2 to 10 years in prison.

Until now, state elections officials have refused to turn over their Crosscheck lists, some on grounds that these voters are subject to criminal investigation. Now, for the first time, three states —

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An elderly voter makes her way to a polling station in Atlanta, Georgia, on Oct. 13, 2014, the first day of early voting, after having been driven there by a van supplied by the Coalition for the Peoples' Agenda, a get-out-the-vote group.

Georgia, Virginia and Washington — have released their lists to Al Jazeera America, providing a total of just over 2 million names.

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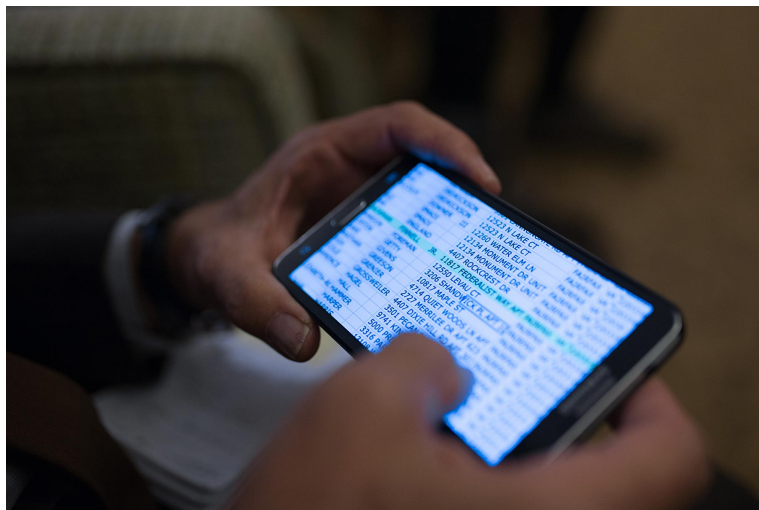
The Crosscheck list of suspected double voters has been compiled by matching names from roughly 110 million voter records from participating states. Interstate Crosscheck is the pet project of Kansas' controversial Republican secretary of state, Kris Kobach, [known for his crusade against voter fraud](#).

For more on the efforts to challenge Interstate Crosscheck, read [Al Jazeera America's on-the-ground update from North Carolina and post-election analysis](#).

The three states' lists are heavily weighted with names such as Jackson, Garcia, Patel and Kim — ones common among minorities, who vote overwhelmingly Democratic. Indeed, fully 1 in 7 African-Americans in those 27 states, plus the state of Washington (which enrolled in Crosscheck but has decided not to utilize the results), are listed as under suspicion of having voted twice. This also applies to 1 in 8 Asian-Americans and 1 in 8 Hispanic voters. White voters too — 1 in 11 — are at risk of having their names scrubbed from the voter rolls, though not as vulnerable as minorities.

If even a fraction of those names are blocked from voting or purged from voter rolls, it could alter the outcome of next week's electoral battle for control of the U.S. Senate — and perhaps prove decisive in the 2016 presidential vote count.

"It's Jim Crow all over again," says the Rev. Joseph Lowery, who cofounded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference with Martin Luther King, Jr. Lowery, now 93, says he recognizes in the list of threatened voters a sophisticated new form of an old and tired tactic. "I think [the Republicans] would use anything they can find. Their desperation is rising."



The Interstate Crosscheck list, as viewed on a mobile device, left. Parishioners at the historically black Ebenezer Baptist Church register to vote, right. *(Click to enlarge images)*

Though Kobach declined to be interviewed, Roger Bonds, the chairman of the Republican Party in Georgia’s Fulton County, responds, “This is how we have successfully prevented voter fraud.”

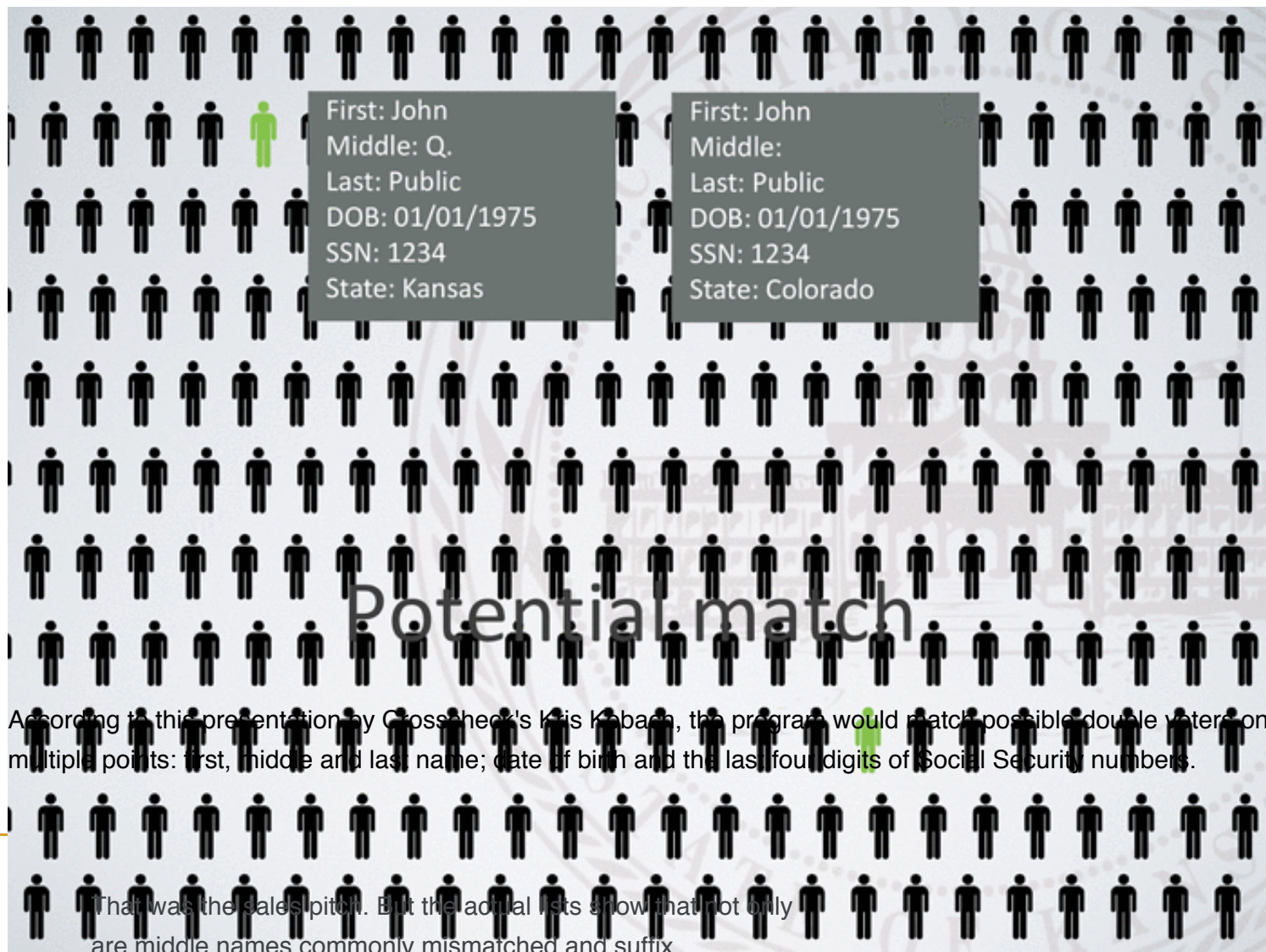
Based on the Crosscheck lists, officials have begun the process of removing names from the rolls — beginning with 41,637 in Virginia alone. Yet the criteria used for matching these double voters are disturbingly inadequate.

Is your state in the Crosscheck program?

See [a table](#) of participating states and the election officials responsible for running Crosscheck.

MILLIONS OF MISMATCHES

There are 6,951,484 names on the target list of the 28 states in the Crosscheck group; each of them represents a suspected double voter whose registration has now become subject to challenge and removal. According to a 2013 presentation by Kobach to the National Association of State Election Directors, the program is a highly sophisticated voter-fraud-detection system. The sample matches he showed his audience included the following criteria: first, last and middle name or initial; date of birth; suffixes; and Social Security number, or at least its last four digits.



According to this presentation by Crosscheck's Kris Kobach, the program would match possible double voters on multiple points: first, middle and last name; date of birth and the last four digits of Social Security numbers.

That was the sales pitch. But the actual lists show that not only are middle names commonly mismatched and suffix

discrepancies ignored, even birthdates don't seem to have been taken into account. Moreover, Crosscheck deliberately ignores Social Security mismatches, in the few instances when the numbers are even collected. The Crosscheck instructions for county election officers state, "Social Security numbers are included for verification; the numbers might or might not match."

March 2013 document explaining the Crosscheck program to county election officers, the instructions say Social Security numbers "might or might not match." In the lists obtained by Al Jazeera America, alleged double voters were matched on first and last name only.

Office of the Kansas Secretary of State

Interstate Voter Registration Data Crosscheck

Instructions for County Election Officers

In practice, all it takes to be on the list is having a first and last name with a voter in another state. Typical "matches"

identifying those who may have voted in both Georgia and Virginia include:

Program Description

In 2006 an interstate data crosscheck was conducted for the first time in the midwest, based on a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the chief state election officials of the states of Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri and Minnesota. In 2007 the crosscheck was repeated, with the addition of South Dakota. Over the years more states have joined the program; in 2012 there were 15 states with nearly 48 million records involved, and in 2013 there were 22 states with

- Kevin Anthony Hayes of Durham, North Carolina. Is a match

The crosscheck is part of the comprehensive Kansas voter registration list maintenance program. It is similar in some respects to the NCRA program, which each county is required to participate in, as an alternative, to conduct its own countywide mailings to identify possible changes of address. Both programs result in the mailing of confirmation notices and the addition of records to the inactive file.

- John Paul Williams of Alexandria is supposedly the same man as John P. Williams of Atlanta, Georgia.

Program Design

The program compares voter registration data using the following fields:

- first name
- middle name or initial
- last name

- Robert Dewey Cox of Marietta, Georgia is matched with

- last four digits of Social Security number (if available)

Robert Glen Cox of Springfield, Virginia

NOTE: If a voter's record is included on the list provided to the CEO, it means the records matched exactly on first name, last name and date of birth. For the middle name or initial, if the records are included it means they were either a match or not a non-match (ex: James in one record, J. in another would not be excluded). Social Security numbers are included for verification; the numbers might or might not match.

ARE YOU ON THE CROSSCHECK LIST?

A field called "Match" is included for each pair of matching records. The number in this field indicates the strength of the match—the higher the number, the stronger the match. Numbers range from 10 to 95; in some cases the field is blank. We ask that you process all the apparent

LAST NAME

FIRST NAME

SHOW MATCHES FROM

- ☒ Georgia
- ☒ Virginia

Or choose one of these last names: *Rodriguez, Lopez, Lee*

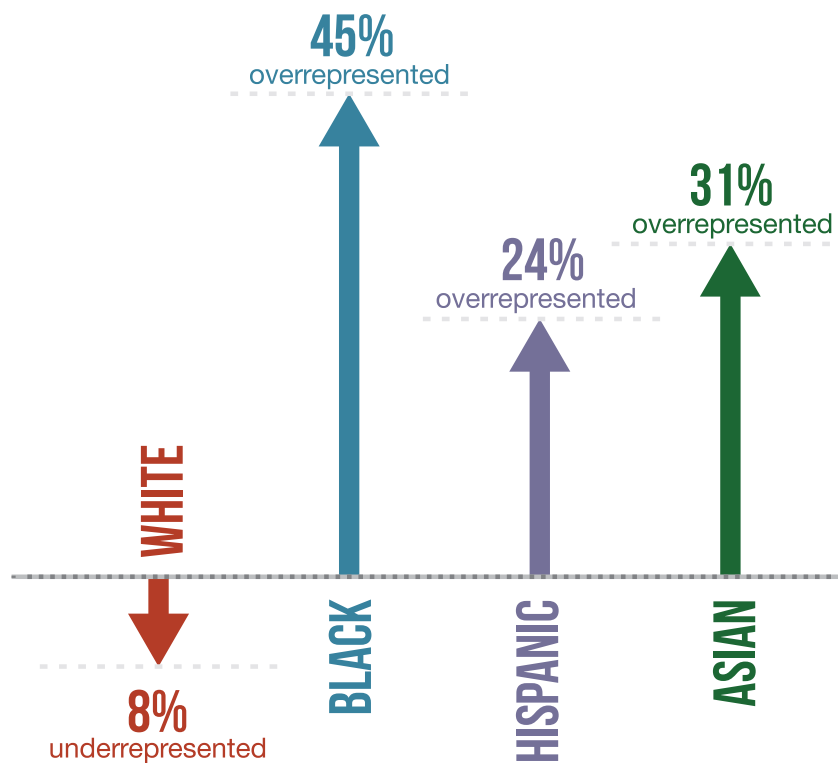
Al Jazeera America visited these and several other potential double voters. John Paul Williams of Alexandria insists he has never used the alias “John R. Williams.” “I’ve never lived in Georgia,” he says.

Jo Cox, wife of suspected double voter Robert Glen Cox of Virginia, says she has a solid alibi for him. Cox “is 85 years old and handicapped. He wasn’t in Georgia. Never voted there,” she says. He has also never used the middle name “Dewey.”

Twenty-three percent of the names — nearly 1.6 million of them — lack matching middle names. “Jr.” and “Sr.” are ignored, potentially disenfranchising two generations in the same family. And, notably, of those who may have voted twice in the 2012 presidential election, 27 percent were listed as “inactive” voters, meaning that almost 1.9 million may not even have voted once in that race, according to Crosscheck’s own records.

Al Jazeera America met with Kevin Antonio Hayes at his home in Durham. He is listed as having voted a second time, in Virginia, with the middle name Thomas, Hayes and his mother insist that he did not vote at all.

MINORITY LAST NAMES ARE OVERREPRESENTED IN CROSSCHECK LISTS



Mark Swedlund is a specialist in list analytics whose clients have included eBay, AT&T and Nike. At Al Jazeera America's request, he conducted a statistical review of Crosscheck's three lists of suspected double voters.

According to Swedlund, "It appears that Crosscheck does have inherent bias to over-selecting for potential scrutiny and purging voters from Asian, Hispanic and Black ethnic groups. In fact, the matching methodology, which presumes people in other states with the same name are matches, will always over-select from groups of people with common surnames." Swedlund sums up the method for finding two-state voters — simply matching first and last name — as "ludicrous, just crazy."



Elderly voters board a van that will take them to a polling station in Atlanta on the first day of early voting, Oct. 13, 2014.
(Click to enlarge images)

Helen Butler is the executive director of Georgia's Coalition for the Peoples' Agenda, which conducts voter drives in minority communities. Any purge list that relies on name matches will contain a built-in racial bias against African-Americans, she says, because "We [African-Americans] took our slave owners' names." The search website PeopleSmart notes that 86,020 people in the United States have the name John Jackson. And according to the 2000 U.S. Census, which is the most recent data set, 53 percent of Jacksons are African-American.

GEORGIA DEMOCRATS ANGERED BY STEALTHY PURGE

In North Carolina, Republican officials are **loudly proclaiming** their

hunt for **alleged double voters** using Crosscheck. But in nearby Georgia, Democratic leaders say they are shocked that they have been kept in the dark about the state's use of Crosscheck lists — and the racial profile of the targeted voters.

“It’s biased, I think, both in form and intent,” says Rep. Stacey Abrams, leader of the Democrats in the Georgia state legislature. “But more concerning to me is the fact this is being done stealthfully. ... We have never had this information presented to us.”

Abrams, in her second role as founder of New Georgia Project, a nonpartisan voter registration group, has, in coordination with the NAACP, already sued Georgia’s Republican secretary of state, Brian Kemp, on behalf of 56,001 voters who filled out registration forms but have yet to see their **names appear on voter rolls**.

Abrams is especially concerned that the Crosscheck list was crafted by GOP official Kobach. “I believe that Kris Kobach has demonstrated a very aggressive animus towards people of color ... in voter registration,” she says. Abrams is now threatening legislative and legal action against Kemp.

Butler is particularly incensed that she was not informed of the use of Crosscheck’s list, because she is also a member of the board of elections in Morgan County, Georgia.



Helen Butler, left, is the executive director of Georgia’s Coalition for the People’s Agenda. Joseph Naylor, 62, right, said that he had to file a sworn and witnessed affidavit that he had not voted in two states in order to save his vote. *(Click to enlarge images)*

Butler invited Al Jazeera America to join a group of elderly African-Americans taking a van to Adamsville Recreation Center in Atlanta on Oct. 13, the first day of early voting. All were from a senior home next to Ebenezer Baptist Church, from where, six decades ago, King, Jr. led the movement for voting rights for African-Americans. It is also, according to Crosscheck, a hive of suspected double voters, 10 at that single address. One of them, Joseph Naylor, 62, told Al Jazeera America that to save his vote he had to file a sworn and witnessed affidavit that he had not voted in both Georgia and Louisiana.

“That is just total voter suppression,” Butler says. According to her, the idea of hundreds of thousands of Georgians illegally voting twice is “crazy. That is totally crazy. for someone to vote in



Double Voting | 1 Jim Crow returns | 2 Challenging Crosscheck

Kemp did not respond to requests for comment.

THE ASIAN-AMERICAN CRIME WAVE

Al Jazeera America showed the Crosscheck lists to Martin Luther King III, who succeeded his father and Lowery to lead the SCLC. He notes that using shoddily put-together lists of supposed matches is not a new tactic. The capture of common names is certain to ensnare black voters, he says, and reminds him of the presidential race of 2000, when Florida Secretary of State Katherine Harris **wrongly purged** voters from a list of nearly 58,000, many of them African-American. They were purged on the grounds that they were felons and thus banned from voting, which helped to hand the presidency to George W. Bush. Yet not one was found guilty of voting illegally. Once again, King notes, this minority-heavy list falsely flags fraudulent voters. Compared to the prior purge, this new one is more sophisticated, he says. “I hate to characterize it as a trick [but] it really is. It really is about trying to control who can and cannot vote.”

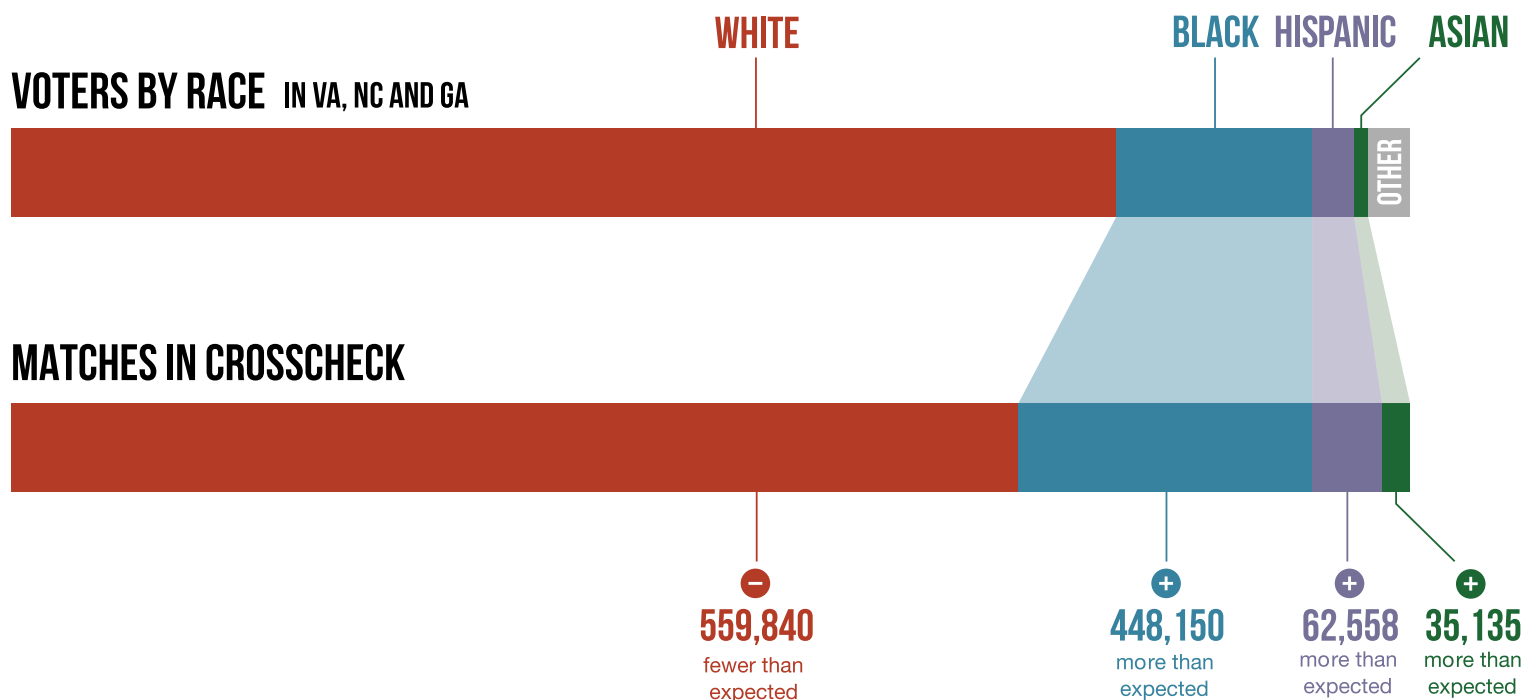
Interviewed at his home, King stands in front of a photo with his father and grandfather, taken when he was nine years old. “And I think [of] my dad, my grandfather, my mother and so many others

who fought and gave their lives ... so we might have the right to vote,” King says. “We purport to be the greatest in the world. But yet, in 2014, we are tying people’s hands and keep — trying to keep them from voting?” he asks. “We should be making it easier.”

Now, for the first time, the accusation of double voting threatens a new, fast-growing demographic: Asian-Americans.

MINORITIES MORE LIKELY TO BE TAGGED AS DOUBLE VOTERS

Fully 1 in 7 African-Americans in the participating 27 states, plus the state of Washington (which enrolled in Crosscheck but has decided not to utilize the results), are listed as under suspicion of having voting twice. This also applies to 1 in 8 Asian-Americans and 1 in 8 Hispanic voters. White voters too — 1 in 11 — are at risk of having their names scrubbed from the voter rolls, though not as vulnerable as minorities.



“I think the Asian community would be shocked to see that we are the most criminally suspect of the bunch,” says Helen Ho, commenting on the number of Chungs, Parks and Kims on the suspected double-voter lists.

Ho is a civil-rights attorney who heads Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta, based in Doraville, a legal-advocacy center in the heart of the Asian immigrant community in Georgia.

“Most of us are naturalized citizens,” she says. “Most of us have to take the citizenship exam. So we know the Constitution and the rules much better than most Americans. ... So the question is, ‘Why would a disproportionate number of Asian-Americans risk breaking the law to vote twice?’ ”



Helen Ho, the founding executive director of Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta, stands in her office in Doraville, Georgia, left. Voter outreach materials at the office, right. *(Click to enlarge images)*

On seeing his name on the list of potential double voters, Sang Park, an elderly volunteer with the advocacy center, mutters, “It’s outrageous!” Park is not upset that his name appears in the list — Sang Park is roughly as common in Korea as John Jackson is among African-Americans — but that Crosscheck has obviously not cross-checked Social Security numbers.

Ho explains that a crude purge based on common names is sure to include disproportionate numbers of Asian-Americans. “I think anyone that actually paid some mind to the way Asian-American names work, our last names and first names in common usage, would know that there’d be a disproportionate impact. I’m sure the Latino community’s the same.” In fact, a sixth of all Asian-Americans share just 30 surnames and 50 percent of minorities share common last names, versus 30 percent of whites.

AAJA is a nonpartisan group, but Ho understands, she says, why one party would be tempted to purge voters from her community. While it was widely reported that more than 90 percent of African-Americans voted for Barack Obama in 2012, many may not realize that **73 percent of Asian-Americans**, whether from India, China or the Pacific Islands, favored the Democrat.

A CRIME WAVE WITHOUT CRIMINALS

With millions of suspects, one question keeps arising: Why have there been no mass convictions? Kobach proudly proclaims that Kansas has “referred” 14 voters for prosecution for double voting. And none of them has been convicted.

Yet demands to purge lists of double voters have reached a histrionic volume. In April of this year, former presidential counselor **Dick Morris told Fox TV audiences** that “probably over a million people that voted twice in [the 2012] election. This is the first concrete evidence we’ve ever had of massive voter fraud.”

In North Carolina, state officials have **hired former FBI agent** Charles W. “Chuck” Stuber, who played a major role in the campaign finance fraud case brought against former North Carolina Sen. John Edwards, to, in the words of their **press release**, “investigate cases of possible voter fraud identified by an interstate cross-check comparing election records from 28 states.”



Charles Whitfield inquires about his voter registration status at the North Carolina Board of Elections office, left. Voter

registration forms sent to the state board of elections office are distributed to the counties where the registrants reside for entry into the voter rolls. *(Click to enlarge images)*

But despite knowing the names and addresses of 192,207 supposed double voters in the state, Stuber has not nabbed a single one in his five months on the job. Josh Lawson, a spokesman for the board of elections, says, “This agency has made no determination as to which portion of these [lists] represent data error or voter fraud.” In fact, to date, Lawson admits that Stuber has found only errors and not one verified fraudulent voter.

But Lawson did shine a light on the great benefit of the Crosscheck manhunt to the state’s Republican Party, now locked in a tight battle over the U.S. Senate seat of incumbent Democrat Kay Hagan. While the use of Crosscheck has yet to produce a single indictment of a double voter, Lawson says, the program could be used for “list maintenance.” That is, voters on the list, proven guilty or not, could be subject to a process of removal from the voter rolls.

PURGE BY POSTCARD

Crosscheck instructs each participating state to send a postcard or letter to suspected double voters, requiring them to restate and verify their name and address, sign the card and return it. While this seems a benign way to save one’s voting rights, the problem, says voter advocate Butler, is that few people are likely to notice, fill out and return such a card. She reviewed the one being sent out in Georgia, which she says “looks like a piece of trashy mail that you get every day that you just throw away.”

Direct-mail expert Michael Wychocki was shown a sample postcard. First, he says, 4 percent to 20 percent of any mailing goes astray — leaving voting rights at risk for more than a million citizens simply from wrong and changed addresses. And, crucially, there’s an enormous difference between rich and poor. “The African-American Williams family, renters, may move every year,” he says, “but the Whitehall family in the million-dollar home is barely likely to have moved.”

“It looks as if they’ve broken every direct-marketing rule,” creating a card that seems guaranteed to not be returned, says Wychocki. He explains that marketers know people glance at unsolicited mail for no more than two seconds apiece, and this “single-touch” approach — no follow-up phone calls, emails, radio campaigns or other secondary-outreach methods — ensures a low response rate. Notably, neither Kansas nor other Crosscheck states will reveal how many cards are returned or how many people thereby lose their vote.

To Wychocki, the mailings are suspect, designed by people who “attempted to purposely suppress response through obfuscation.” These are likely quite different than Kansas’ income-tax demands, he says, and from Kobach’s campaign mailings. The direct-mail expert questions why people are asked to prove where they live. “American Express knows where you live,” he says.

WASHINGTON STATE DROPS CROSSCHECK

According to Crosscheck, close to a quarter of a million voters in Washington state are potential double-voting fraudsters. The Republican secretary of state, Kim Wyman, has no plans to use the Crosscheck list, preferring instead a far narrower matching program, the Electronic Registration Information Center, funded by the research and public-policy nonprofit the PEW Charitable Trusts. Notably, the ERIC lists require an exact match in several of these fields — among them, driver’s license number, Social Security number, email and phone — as opposed to just name and date of birth. **Eleven states**, plus the District of Columbia, are members of ERIC.

Virginia agreed to supply Al Jazeera America with the state’s ERIC match list despite a contract requiring confidentiality. That list, with only 37,405 names, was a fraction the size of Crosscheck’s, which tagged over a third of a million Virginians.

Al Jazeera America reached one of ERIC’s creators, the Pew Trusts’ David Becker, in Baltimore. He is dismissive of Crosscheck’s claim of finding legions of fraudulent double voters. Even of ERIC’s own lists, he says, “99.999 percent of those

people would not be thinking of voting twice in two states.” He adds, “There’s no widespread evidence of voting in two states. There’s a real problem of millions of people registered in more than one state — though this is hardly an indication of fraud.”

In fact, the purpose of ERIC is not just to remove names but also to add those who are eligible to vote but have not yet registered, Becker says. States that use the ERIC lists must agree, by contract, to find those who have moved or who have an outdated registration in another state and add them to the voter rolls. Postcards or letters must be sent to the unregistered to get them on to the rolls and to the dual registered to update their information.

THE VIGILANTE INTEGRITY PROJECT

What pushed North Carolina to use an ex-FBI agent in tracking down alleged double voters through the Crosscheck list? Al Jazeera America traced the state’s involvement in Crosscheck to lobbying by a group of self-proclaimed vote-fraud trackers, the Voter Integrity Project. Al Jazeera America met the vote-theft vigilantes at their offices in a strip mall in Raleigh.

VIP’s director, Jay DeLancy, exhibits a stern and sincere concern over keeping fraudsters off the voter rolls. His group has **garnered much media attention** for exposing suspected **voting by the dead**, by **foreigners**, by **felons** and, now, by **double voters**. This has made him a **welcome guest** at **Tea Party events**. Unfortunately for DeLancy and VIP, not a single zombie, alien, criminal or body double has, in fact, been captured based on their accusations. Nevertheless, DeLancy says his group did convince the Republican leadership of North Carolina’s legislature to adopt Crosscheck and hire FBI agent Stuber.

DeLancy says he is on the trail of an unnamed double voter who is “currently on the run.” The unnamed man is, he admits, a traveling salesman, so “on the run” may mean “on the job.”

What DeLancy does not have, however, are the Crosscheck lists. Stuber has denied all requests, including several from Al Jazeera America, for a copy of the North Carolina list of supposed double

voters. But unlike VIP, Al Jazeera America was able to construct much of the North Carolina roll from lists released by other states.

One of those suspected of voting twice lives a five-minute walk from the VIP offices. When confronted with his name on the Crosscheck list as a voter in both Fairfax, Virginia and in Raleigh, North Carolina, Robert Blackman Finnel Jr. confesses that he indeed once lived and voted in Virginia. But, he protests, “I swear on a stack of Bibles” that he was not in, nor voted in, that state in the 2012 election. His oath is in doubt, however, as, from his wheelchair, the senior-home resident did not appear to be able to lift more than one Bible at a time.

STATES PARTICIPATING IN CROSSCHECK

STATE	SECRETARY OF STATE*	PARTY
Alaska	Mead Treadwell	R
Arizona	Ken Bennett	R
Arkansas	Mark Martin	R
Colorado	Scott Gessler	R
Georgia	Brian Kemp	R
Idaho	Ben Ysursa	R
Illinois	Jesse White	D
Indiana	Connie Lawson	R
Iowa	Matt Schultz	R
Kansas	Kris Kobach	R
Kentucky	Alison Lundergan Grimes	D
Louisiana	Tom Schedler	R
Massachusetts	William F Galvin	D
Michigan	Ruth Johnson	R
Mississippi	Delbert Hosemann	R

Missouri	Jason Kander	D
Nebraska	John A. Gale	R
Nevada	Ross Miller	D
North Carolina	Kim Strach	Non-partisan
Ohio	Jon Husted	R
Oklahoma	Chris Benge	R
Pennsylvania	Carol Aichele	R
South Dakota	Jason Gant	R
South Carolina	Mark Hammond	R
Tennessee	Tre Hargett	R
Virginia	Edgardo Cortés	Non-partisan
West Virginia	Natalie Tennant	D

Source: Al Jazeera reporting

Note: *Officials are secretaries of state, except in Alaska (lieutenant governor), North Carolina (director of the state board of elections) and Virginia, (department of elections).

Editor's note: The top election official in Virginia is Edgardo Cortés, Commissioner, Department of Elections, not Levar Stoney, who is Secretary of the Commonwealth.

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Quintan Park

2 days ago

I think that a day without pizza is like a day without ice cream.

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0