

PRESS RELEASE

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Ballot problems surfacing during early voting David Bacon calls for immediate clarification

Voters in Santa Fe and Bernalillo counties are reporting misinformation from poll workers regarding how to cast their ballots.

Voters who would like to cast straight party ballots and make exceptions for particular offices, such as PRC, have been told that they cannot do that or that they have to vote for each office separately.

This is clearly incorrect, according to Secretary of State Vigil-Jiron, and state and county election directors. But that information is not being conveyed to the precinct judges and poll workers who instruct the voters.

The David Bacon campaign calls on election directors to immediately clarify straight party voting procedures to all election workers, and **we request help from the media** in getting this information to the public.

What follows was hand delivered to the Secretary of State on October 25, 2006:

Ms. Rebecca Vigil-Giron
Secretary of State,
State of New Mexico
325 Don Gaspar Avenue,
Santa Fe, NM 87503

October 25, 2006

Dear Ms. Vigil-Giron:

Over the last day or two it has come to my attention that there is a great deal of confusion, at county election offices around the state, about voting a straight party ticket with exceptions; i.e., about voting a split ticket.

We have ascertained that a voter can simply mark the oval for a straight ticket and then proceed to mark the ovals of one or more candidates of another party, and that the tabulating machine will record his or her ballot as intended.

Unfortunately, however, we have also learned from several persons that when they went to vote (early), a poll worker told them that it is impossible to do that – that the only way to split one's ticket is to vote individually for each and every candidate. On inquiring with county election offices we find similar confusion, with most offices also saying, at least initially, that the voter must vote individually for each candidate.

I therefore urgently request that you take immediate steps to ensure that all New Mexicans voting from now through November 7th are (1) made aware that they can indeed vote a straight party ticket with exceptions, and (2) correctly informed how to do so.

Perhaps it would suffice to have every poll worker instructed that if he/she tells a voter how to vote a straight party ticket, he/she must also tell that voter how to vote for candidates of other parties together with the straight party ticket.

Time, of course, is of the essence here. I would greatly appreciate receiving your reply by the end of the day.

Sincerely,

David Bacon