



## ELECTION OFFICIALS ARE REGISTERING SELF-CONFESSED FOREIGN NATIONALS TO VOTE IN OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

### *PILF's Federal Lawsuit Reveals Pattern of Aliens Admitting Ineligibility to Vote*

**October 2024** – Imagine you are a county voter registrar. You receive a voter application containing the following: a full name you do not commonly see; a foreign birthplace; and a checkbox indicating that the applicant is *not* a U.S. citizen. Do you approve that application without question? In dozens of records disclosed to PILF in a federal lawsuit this year, it appears **Alameda County, California, officials accepted self-confessed foreign nationals' applications for voting.**

In February 2024, PILF sued Alameda County for failing to disclose records relating to foreign nationals getting registered to vote and removed from the voter roll.<sup>1</sup> The case was settled months later after the documents were released. The County supplied records relating to more than **60 voter registration files**. This sampling from this county revealed two significant patterns: aliens admitted they were not U.S. citizens on the registration forms; and they often remain on the rolls for years until they try to naturalize and must ask election officials to remove them from the voter roll. California counties are not performing citizenship verification and must rely on foreign nationals to remain honest about their ineligibility – often more than once.

#### Alameda County Core Figures

As part of the lawsuit settlement agreement, Alameda County disclosed to PILF a dataset in 2024, illustrating trends in foreign nationals registering to vote.

- **Total Disclosed Cancellations for Non-Citizenship:** 54
- **Years with Most Registrations Cancelled:** 2023 (18)
- **Earliest Known Year of Registration:** 2004
- **Longest Known Period of Registration:** 14 years
- **Average Time on Voter Roll:** 4 years

The County also included 12 voter registration files where foreign nationals still admitted their ineligibility due to citizenship, but their applications were rejected. Why some admissions of

Quick Takes
PILF sued <b>Alameda County, CA</b> , to force the release of voter registration records related to alien residents.
Records show <b>foreign nationals were honest</b> about their <b>ineligibility</b> during voter registration and were still accepted to vote.
Despite their ineligibility, aliens remained on the roll for roughly <b>four years</b> .
Some documents show attempts to <b>vote</b> in person and evidence of <b>mail ballots</b> returned by alien registrants. These were likely rejected for counting.

<sup>1</sup> <https://publicinterestlegal.org/cases/pilf-v-dupuis/>

ineligibility were noticed and others were not is unclear. Several disclosed files included documents showing attempts by these foreign nationals to vote with references to mail and provisional ballots.

**Notable Alameda County Case Studies**

Documents disclosed by Alameda County during the lawsuit typically show how foreign nationals are honest or silent about their ineligibility during registration. Had they simply said they were U.S. citizens, no further verification would have occurred under California law. Below are case studies.

**Name:** Gang  
**Years Registered:** 3

Records disclosed to PILF show initial registration occurring in May 2020 with a cancellation in June 2023. The bilingual voter application clearly indicates foreign citizenship and place of birth in China.

**California Voter Registration/Pre-Registration Application**  
**加州選民登記/預先登記申請表**  
**SOS**

Print clearly using blue or black ink. Use this form if: (1) you are a new voter, (2) you are pre-registering to vote, (3) you have changed your name, (4) you have moved and need to update your voter registration address, or (5) you want to change your political party preference. You can also register to vote online at RegisterVote.ca.gov. 使用此表登記或更新您選民登記資料, 如果您屬於以下情況, 請使用此表: (1) 您是新選民, (2) 準備預先登記投票, (3) 已搬遷, (4) 已改姓名, (5) 已換選民登記地址, 或 (6) 希望改變您的黨派歸屬。您也可以到 RegisterVote.ca.gov 線上登記投票。

**1 Qualifications 資格要求**

I am a U.S. citizen and resident of California.  Yes-是  No-否 ← If "No," you CANNOT register. 如果您答「否」, 您不能登記。  
 I am 18 or older.  Yes-是  No-否  
 I am 18 or 17 and want to pre-register.  Yes-是  No-否 ← Only those over 18. 只有18歲以上。  
 I am 18 or older and want to pre-register.  Yes-是  No-否

**Your legal name 您的法定姓名**

1 First - 姓: **Gang** Middle - 中姓: [Redacted] Last (including suffix, such as Jr., Sr., III, etc.) (including suffix) [Redacted]

**Identification 身分識別**

3 California driver license or ID card # [Redacted] Social Security Number (SSN) [Redacted] U.S. state or foreign country of birth: **China**

**Name:** Victoria  
**Years Registered:** Unclear – Incomplete Records

Disclosed records do not definitively show prior attempts at registration. This case shows how a provisional ballot gave the alien resident the opportunity to be honest with their ineligibility. About eight months after this ballot was submitted, Victoria was recorded as cancelled from the voter roll.

**CONDITIONAL/BOLETA PROVISIONAL**  
**CONDICIONAL/BOLETA PROVISIONAL**

PRECINCT NUMBER: 01 SQ 062110  
 PARTY BALLOT ISSUED: 520730

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR ELECTION WORKER:**

1) Print Precinct number above.  
 2) Print the Party Ballot Issued (Primary election only).  
 3) Issue a ballot with this Conditional/Provisional Envelope.  
 4) Demonstration Officer: Review envelope, confirm that the voter filled out the "TO BE COMPLETED BY VOTER" section below, including the current residence address and signature.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR VOTER:**

Complete and sign the form below and enclose your ballot into this envelope or your ballot will not be counted. This envelope will also serve as a new voter registration form.

**1** First Name - Primer Nombre: **VICTORIA** Middle Name - Segundo Nombre: [Redacted] Last Name - Apellido: [Redacted]

**2** Date of Birth - Fecha de Nacimiento: **7-17-1988** U.S. state or foreign country of birth - Estado en los EE. UU. o país extranjero donde nació: [Redacted] Driver's License # or Last 4 digits of SSN - Número de su Licencia de Manejar o los últimos 4 dígitos de su Número de Seguro Social: [Redacted] Phone # (optional) - Número de teléfono (opcional): [Redacted]

Name: Wen  
Years Registered: 10

This registrant record begins in December 2005 and lasts to December 2015, clearly indicating foreign citizenship at the outset. Indicia on the document suggest it was completed at a DMV office. Disclosed records state the alien ultimately “called and stated not to be a citizen at the time of application” to help cancel the file.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
VOTER REGISTRATION FORM

1 FIRST NAME (Only) WEN  
LAST NAME (Only) [REDACTED]  
MIDDLE NAME (Only) [REDACTED]

2 CITY [REDACTED] STATE [REDACTED] ZIP CODE [REDACTED] COUNTY [REDACTED]

3 MAILING ADDRESS (if different from the address where you live, or PO BOX)  
CITY [REDACTED] STATE [REDACTED] ZIP CODE [REDACTED] FOREIGN COUNTRY [REDACTED]

4 DATE OF BIRTH 12/10/1953 PLACE OF BIRTH (if U.S. State or Foreign Country Only) [REDACTED]

5 CA DRIVER'S LICENSE OR CA ID CARD # [REDACTED] SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN) - (Last 4 digits) [REDACTED]

6 POLITICAL PARTY - Fill in one oval:  
 American Independent Party  Libertarian Party  Republican Party  
 Democratic Party  Natural Law Party  I Decline to State a Political Party  
 Green Party  Peace and Freedom Party  Other (Specify) [REDACTED]

7 HAVE YOU EVER BEEN REGISTERED TO VOTE? Yes  No  No, I have previously been registered to vote, you must provide your prior voter registration identification or Item 18 below

8 TELEPHONE [REDACTED] E-MAIL ADDRESS [REDACTED]

9 PERMANENT ABSENTEE VOTER  
Fall in the oval and initial here [REDACTED] to become a Permanent Absentee Voter. State Law now allows any voter, who so requests, to be a Permanent Absentee Voter. Once enrolled you will automatically receive an absentee ballot for every election in which you are entitled to vote. Failure to vote in a statewide general election, however, will cancel your Permanent Absentee Status (not your voter registration) and you will need to register for Permanent Status (FOR OFFICE USE)

10 STREET ADDRESS [REDACTED] CITY [REDACTED]  
STATE [REDACTED] ZIP CODE [REDACTED] COUNTY [REDACTED] POLITICAL PARTY [REDACTED]

11 OPTIONAL: Please check your ethnic background:  
 American Indian or Alaska Native  Black  Hispanic  White  
 Asian  Filipino  Pacific Islander  Other (specify) [REDACTED]

12 OPTIONAL SURVEY: Can you help in the following ways?  
 Provide a Polling Place Site  Biweekly Polling Place Worker  
 Polling Place Worker [REDACTED]

NOTICE: It is a felony if you sign this statement even though you know it is untrue; you can be fined and imprisoned for up to three years.  
 Yes  No Are you a citizen of the United States of America?  
 Yes  No Will you be 18 years of age on or before election day?  
If you checked, "no" in response to either of these questions, do not complete this form.

Name: Shahid  
Years Registered: At least 2 years

Registrant revealed their ineligibility at the polling place during the 2016 Presidential Election by seeking a provisional ballot after their original mail ballot was lost. Later, the registrant “came to office with documentation” confirming their foreign nationality and was cancelled in June 2018.

Voted VBM Ballot Enclosed  
Voter did not have Vote by Mail envelope

PROVISIONAL BALLOT ENVELOPE/VOTER REGISTRATION  
SOBRE NG PANSAMANTALANG BALOTA/FORM NG PAGPAPAREHISI

11-08-16

TO BE COMPLETED BY POLL WORKER - KUKUMPLETUHIN NG MANGGAGAWA SA HALALAN

Instructions for Poll Worker:  
1.) Print Precinct number above.  
2.) Print the Party Ballot Issued (Primary election only).  
3.) Check reason for issuing a Provisional ballot and/or envelope.

Reason for Issuing Provisional Ballot and/or Envelope:  
Check one of the following:  
A)  Vote by Mail voter who does not have ballot and envelope to surrender.  
Check one of the following:  
 Not received  Lost/Misplaced  Damaged  
B)  Vote by Mail voter who does not have their VBM envelope but has their voted VBM ballot. (Vote by Mail ballot enclosed).  
C)  Voter has not moved. Name not on Roster.

4.) Issue a ballot with this Provisional envelope (unless reason B is checked, then issue the Provisional envelope only and have the voter enclose their voted VBM ballot)  
5.) Demonstration Officer: Review envelope, confirm that the voter filled out the "TO BE COMPLETED BY VOTER" section below, including the current residence address and signature.

TO BE COMPLETED BY VOTER - IMPORTANT: READ INFORMATION ON OTHER SIDE - KUKUMPLETUHIN NG BOTANTE - MAHALAGA: BASAHIN ANG MGA IMPORMASYON SA LIKURAN

Instructions for Voter:  
Complete and sign the form below and enclose your ballot into this envelope or your ballot will not be counted. This envelope will also serve as a new voter registration form.

Mga Instruksiyon para sa Botante:  
Pumapalitan at pumapalitan ang form sa ibaba at isagap ang iyong balota sa loob ng sabong ito o hindi mabibilang ang iyong balota. Ang sabong ito ay magpapalitan ng form ng iyong pagpaparehistro.

1 First Name - Unang Pangalan Shahid Middle Name - Gitnang Pangalan [REDACTED] Last Name - Apelyido [REDACTED]

Are you a citizen of the United States?  
(Ikaw ba ay mamamayan ng Estados Unidos?)  
 YES/OO  NO/HINDI

Name: Mai

Years Registered: 1.5 years

This registrant's file is representative of many cancellation records provided to PILF by Alameda County. Here, the citizenship attestation boxes are left blank amid an admission of foreign birth in China. In 2016, the former registrant reportedly called the officials to inform them of their "green card status" at the time of the application.

**California Voter Registration Application**  
You must be a U.S. citizen and at least 18 years old by the next election to use this form. Use blue or black ink. Print clearly. Fill out this form if you are a new voter, have moved or changed your name, or want to change your political party preference.

1 Your legal name: First name **MAI** Middle name [redacted]  
Last name (may include name, such as Jr., Sr., III) [redacted]

2 [redacted] 3 Optional:  Mr.  Mrs.  Ms.  Miss  
4 [redacted] 5 [redacted] 6 [redacted] 7 [redacted] 8 [redacted] 9 [redacted] 10 CHINA  
11 [redacted] 12 [redacted] 13 [redacted]

14 Do you want to disclose a political party preference?  
Yes, my political party preference is (check one):  
 American Independent Party  Americans Elect Party  Democratic Party  
 Green Party  Libertarian Party  Peace and Freedom Party  
 Republican Party  Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_  
 No, I do not want to disclose a political party preference.  
(If you select no, you may not be able to vote for some parties' candidates at a primary election for U.S. President or party committee.)

15 I want to get my ballot by mail before each election.\* Initial here: \_\_\_\_\_ \*If initialed, you will get your ballot by mail before each election. If you want to vote in person, you must turn in your ballot or vote a provisional ballot.

16 If you were registered to vote before, fill out below:  
First name \_\_\_\_\_ Middle initial \_\_\_\_\_ Last name \_\_\_\_\_  
Previous address where you were registered \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Previous county \_\_\_\_\_ Previous political party preference, if any \_\_\_\_\_

17 I am a U.S. citizen. \_\_\_\_\_  Yes  No  
I will be 18 or older by the next election. \_\_\_\_\_  Yes  No

2015 JAN 28 A  
REGISTRATION  
RECEIVED  
CITY OF ALAMEDA  
REGISTRAR'S  
OFFICE

### Common Causes of Foreign Registrants, Nationally

The National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA or 'Motor Voter') provides the most common pathway for foreign nationals to get registered to vote. The 24 states plus D.C.<sup>2</sup> that have **automatic Motor Voter Registration**, meaning they are not giving the immigrant a chance to decline registration, exacerbate the problem. States giving **driver's licenses to illegal immigrants** increase

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/automatic-voter-registration>



traffic to DMVs. States with higher amounts of **legal immigration** mean even more driver's licenses or state IDs are needed for daily life (and increases the risk of screening immigrants for voter registration). **Border states** see a greater number of legal immigrants and individuals moving back and forth – especially those having twin cities on their border (like Nogales, AZ/Nogales, Sonora). Finally, battleground states with a high number of **third-party voter registration drives** can expose immigrants to improperly getting registered to vote. Every scenario where a foreign national encounters Motor Voter protocols creates risks for premature voter registration. Unfortunately, if an *illegal* immigrant becomes registered and has lived a life to avoid contact with the federal government at every opportunity, there are few data-driven tools to identify and remove them from a voter roll.

### Prior PILF Research, Litigation on Aliens Voting

This research brief would not have been possible without federal litigation under the National Voter Registration Act of 1993. For nearly a decade, PILF has uncovered government records of alien voter cancellations. These studies were carried out in places like Arizona, California, Illinois, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Michigan, Nevada, Texas, and sanctuary cities across the nation. Those reports are made available on the PILF website.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes research cannot occur without litigation. PILF has brought and won federal trial and appellate court cases in North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Maine, and Texas to secure access.<sup>4</sup> PILF is litigating against Alameda County, California, for similar records.<sup>5</sup> This campaign has made it easier to study alien election participation than ever before in the Motor Voter era.

### PILF President, J. Christian Adams

*“States should enact safeguards against noncitizens registering and voting. Americans deserve better than the honor system in voter registration. These records show incompetence by election officials. When someone admits they are not a U.S. citizen, they should never be registered to vote. California has the resources and data to better verify citizenship in voter registration if only Governor Newsom had a willingness to act.”*

### Support More of This Research

PILF is the pioneer in research techniques and litigation to uncover real foreign voting in American elections. The Foundation is committed to building a record of facts which policymakers can trust to address this problem for their communities. If you wish to support this work, please follow the QR code below to give a tax-deductible donation.



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<sup>3</sup> PILF Reports archive, <https://publicinterestlegal.org/foreign-nationals-voting/>

<sup>4</sup> PILF litigation archive, <https://publicinterestlegal.org/cases/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://publicinterestlegal.org/cases/pilf-v-dupuis/>