

Thomas More Society: Wisconsin election officials violated election law in April 2022 voting

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Thomas More Society Attorneys Expose Illegal Absentee Ballot Harvesting by Green Bay City Clerk

(April 21, 2022 – Green Bay, Wisconsin) A Green Bay, Wisconsin, voter is alleging that the City Clerk of Green Bay is guilty of illegal absentee ballot harvesting in the April 5, 2022, Green Bay election. Thomas More Society attorneys filed a complaint on the voter's behalf with the State of Wisconsin Elections Commission on April 21, 2022. The voter who has lodged the formal complaint with the state's governing body over elections is one of several who witnessed the clerk accepting multiple absentee ballots from an individual voter – an act that is in violation of Wisconsin's election law.

“This is unbelievable,” stated Attorney Erick Kaardal, Special Counsel with the Thomas More Society. “Several voters reported watching Celestine Jeffreys, the City Clerk of Green Bay, Wisconsin, accepting multiple absentee ballots from the hand of a single person...and they witnessed this happening multiple times. This is ballot harvesting and it is illegal.”

The filing details that under Wisconsin law, it is deemed “illegal absentee ballot harvesting” for a municipal clerk to receive multiple ballots from an individual voter in the clerk's office. The only legally authorized methods of delivery of absentee ballots are personally delivering one's own absentee ballot to the clerk or personally mailing it – unless there is a statutory exception, which only applies under very

narrow circumstances.

“The action is galling enough in and of itself,” reported Kaardal, “but when the voters who observed Clerk Jeffreys engaging in this illegal act challenged her, Jeffreys replied that it was her ‘discretion’ to do so. One of the voters addressed Jeffreys, stating ‘You don’t have the discretion. The law doesn’t allow multiple ballots.’ Jeffreys then countered with the words, ‘I have the discretion. I’m taking the ballots.’”

The voter then approached Green Bay City Attorney Joanne Bungert to ask about Jeffreys’ acceptance of multiple absentee ballots from an individual voter. Bungert responded that it was a gray area and that the City Clerk had the discretion to accept multiple absentee ballots from an individual voter.

“There is nothing gray about Wisconsin’s election law,” explained Kaardal. “The clerk’s actions are patently illegal. What’s worse about it is the potential effect on the outcome of some very close elections that were decided via the April 5 ballot.”

Kaardal’s close vote comments referenced Green Bay City Council District 3 and District 6 elections, in which the victors won by a margin of 2.2% and 1.8% respectively.

“That’s a difference of only 23 votes for District 3’s winning candidate, Bill Morgan, and a mere 11 votes for Steve Campbell, who secured the win in District 6.

Both Morgan and Campbell are, of course, pleased with their victories, but Kaardal cautions that narrow victories are always a target for challenges and notes that questionable, and in this case illegal, actions by election officials can “upset the apple cart” regardless of the numbers.

Kaardal posed the dilemma, “Seriously, if a small group of voters observed multiple instances of illegal activity by the City Clerk of Green Bay, how many occurrences went unseen? Clerk Jeffreys’ decision to act in a manner contrary to the law has

jeopardized the election for everyone. She has risked the integrity of the vote and violated the trust of Wisconsin voters.”

Read the Complaint filed April 21, 2022, in the State of Wisconsin before the Elections Commission by Thomas More Society attorneys, alleging illegal absentee ballot harvesting in *Matt Roeser v. Celestine Jeffreys, City Clerk of Green Bay* [here](https://thomasmoresociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Green-Bay-Absentee-Ballot-Harvesting-Complaint-4-21-2022.pdf) [<https://thomasmoresociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Green-Bay-Absentee-Ballot-Harvesting-Complaint-4-21-2022.pdf>].

About the Thomas More Society

The Thomas More Society is a national not-for-profit law firm dedicated to restoring respect in law for life, family, religious liberty, and election integrity. Headquartered in Chicago and with offices across the country, Thomas More Society fosters support for these causes by providing high quality pro bono legal services from local trial courts all the way up to the United States Supreme Court. For more information, please visit thomasmoresociety.org.

The Thomas More Society officially launched its own Election Integrity Initiative in 2022 to preserve and protect Americans’ sacred right to vote against those who would use money or other illegal means such as conditional “gift” or “grant” agreements to distort, evade or compromise electoral laws and safeguards.