COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK
12400 IMPERIAL HWY. – P.O. BOX 1024, NORWALK, CALIFORNIA 90651-1024

CONNY B. McCORMACK
REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK

December 8, 2006

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Conny B. McCormack, Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

ERRORS IN ABSENTEE BALLOTING MATERIALS IN NOVEMBER 2006 ELECTION

At the November 8, 2006 Board meeting, by motion of Supervisor Gloria Molina, your Board asked that the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC):

1. Thoroughly and methodically examine the instances of erroneous absentee ballot informational materials in the 39th Congressional District; and

2. Report back in 30 days with a corrective action plan to avoid these errors in future elections.

Overview

The nature and complexity of Absentee Voting (AV), as well as other election processes, is reliant upon human interface and, therefore, is susceptible to inadvertent and sporadic instances of error. While the overarching goal is to conduct mistake-free election processes, the ability to respond and remediate when inadvertent errors inevitably occur is equally vital.

We sincerely regret those instances when a voter's experience is disrupted as a result of administrative error. When an error does occur, every effort is made to immediately contact the affected voter to resolve the specific problem while simultaneously assessing the scope of the error to identify whether other voters may have been similarly impacted.

In addition to responding to the specific request to analyze errors in AV ballot packets in the 39th Congressional District, the scope of this report was widened to address other such errors throughout the County. This report also includes a description of the quality assurance procedures in the AV ballot insertion and mailing processes. Additionally, the report examines increased complexities in light of State legislation enacted in this year's session adding new AV processing requirements. This legislation, coupled with the ever-increasing number of voters who are choosing to cast their ballots via the absentee/mail process, will further complicate AV processing in future elections beginning in 2008.

Reported Incident

On October 17th the RR/CC received a phone call from Cynthia Guerrero of Congresswoman Linda Sanchez' campaign regarding a voter in the 39th Congressional District who reported receiving the wrong absentee voter (AV) guide inside his AV packet (i.e. listing the 38th Congressional District candidates instead of the 39th candidates). RR/CC responded immediately by contacting the voter, verified the problem occurred with both he and his wife's AV ballot guides, and issued replacement AV packets with corrected materials to both voters. We then proceeded to contact all 104 voters whose ballots were included in the same print group to determine if there were similar occurrences of incorrect AV ballot guides. As a result of this contact, we identified two other voters in this print group who experienced the same problem and quickly rectified the mistake by providing them with replacement AV ballot packets. Staff research determined that this error was the result of pulling off the shelves a small number of AV ballot guides for the 38th Congressional District and mistakenly inserting these into AV packets for the 39th Congressional District ballot group.

On October 23rd we received a letter from Laurence S. Zakson, counsel to Congresswoman Sanchez' campaign committee, stating two voters had contacted their law office about the receipt of incorrect AV ballot guides. This letter revealed these voters were the same two described above and also expressed concern that the error might be widespread. Upon receipt of the letter, RR/CC Chief Deputy Dean Logan telephoned Mr. Zakson to describe our contact with these two voters as well as our processes to investigate whether the problem was isolated or widespread. In that conversation Mr. Logan also explained that the instructions (Attachment A) sent with all AV ballot packets contains colorful pictures showing AV voters how to review their materials to verify their AV packets include materials listing the correct candidates in their specific geographic areas. During that telephone conversation, Mr. Zakson mentioned hearing about another voter receiving an incorrect AV ballot guide but he was not able to provide a name or contact information for us to research and investigate.

On November 1, 2006, Mr. Zakson sent a letter (Attachment B) to Supervisors Michael Antonovich, Don Knabe and Gloria Molina regarding the three absentee voters in the 39th Congressional District – two residing in the City of Cerritos (subjects of the original call) and one in the City of South Gate (no name provided) – who received incorrect AV ballot guides listing incorrect congressional candidates. The next day RR/CC responded via letter (Attachment C) to Mr. Zakson explaining the actions taken in this matter. The response letter documented that there had been reports of eight (8) persons countywide, out of more than 670,000 absentee ballots sent as of that date, who had received erroneous AV ballot materials. Our response was copied to Congresswoman Sanchez and to Supervisors Antonovich, Knabe and Molina.

Reasoned Conclusion and Determination

Whenever RR/CC staff receives a report of a voter receiving incorrect AV balloting materials, whether the report originates from the voter or from another source, staff immediately takes a number of steps to determine whether the problem appears to be isolated or is more widespread. This protocol involves reviewing all reports regarding other voters experiencing a similar problem as well as examining computer-generated daily audit reports to detect possible AV packet assembly errors.

Based on staff research, including comprehensive review of daily AV extraction files, computer audit reports, quantity of second AV ballot requests and number of confirmed cases of voters receiving incorrect AV materials, our analysis concluded these were isolated occurrences and

not indicative of a widespread or systemic problem. This conclusion was based on the following findings:

- common print group assignments and mailing dates for the voters who reported the error;
- review of AV ballot guide inventory to determine if a disproportionate volume of one guide might have been inserted over the other;
- direct voter contact and confirmation of receipt of accurate AV voting materials within the impacted print group; and
- the total number of requests countywide for replacement or second ballot mailings.

All reported AV mailing problems are tracked and researched to determine the extent of the problem and to take immediate corrective action. For the November 7, 2006, election there were 707,195 AV ballot packets prepared and mailed. Of these, a total of 3,246 requests were received for replacement AV packets. Twenty-five (25) of these 3,246 voters reported receiving erroneous materials while the remaining 3,221 were re-issued packets due to voters reporting they had made mistakes on their ballot cards when voting and wanted a replacement ballot.

Background

The California Elections Code requires mailing of AV ballots to commence 29 days before the election (with the exception of overseas/military voters who, upon request, may be mailed their ballots up to 60 days prior to an election). During the most recent statewide elections, the RR/CC has prepared and mailed up to 800,000 absentee ballot applications, the vast majority of which must be processed and mailed within the 29-day period.

The mail preparation process involves the verification of AV application forms for completeness as well as voter registration eligibility, generation of daily AV extraction files for preparation of voter-specific materials, followed by manual staging of AV ballot material for insertion into envelopes individually prepared for each voter. Prior to mailing, staff utilizes computer-generated audit reports from daily AV ballot extraction files to determine the quantity of AV guides and ballot cards required for each ballot group (there were 517 separate ballot groups for this election). Daily preparation of materials within ballot groups containing 16 or more voters are machine inserted into envelopes; groups of 15 or less voters are manually inserted. This is a very labor intensive and time sensitive operation that requires both automation and manual intervention to complete the huge absentee ballot workload within legally established timelines.

Quality Assurance Procedures

Over the years, comprehensive quality control checkpoints and procedures have been put in place in a continuing effort to limit occurrences of error including:

- Materials for all ballot groups are maintained separately throughout the AV mail preparation process;

- Each tray of AV guides and ballot cards is inspected for correctness and matching ballot group prior to machine or hand insertion into envelopes;

- Counts for number of AV mailing envelopes produced for inserting ballot materials are reconciled to number of voters on daily AV extraction file and discrepancies resolved before mail processing continues;

- AV voter guides and ballot cards are fanned through twice to verify correct group numbers are placed in trays – once prior to staging and again prior to inserting into envelopes;

- Ballot group numbers printed on the AV guides, ballot cards and mailing envelopes are compared during material staging preparation and again before materials are inserted inside envelopes;

- Problem-solving sessions are held with technical support staff and election contract vendors to identify and resolve issues that arise during AV preparation process.

Partnership with Voters

Each voter is asked to perform a final quality assurance check upon receipt of his/her AV ballot packet. Step 1 of the AV guide Instructions (Attachment A) asks the voter to check all voting material to verify receipt of the correct ballot card, AV ballot guide and the ballot return envelope before voting. If the ballot group reference numbers do not match, the voter is instructed to call the RR/CC so we can provide the correct material.

We believe this partnership with the voters in confirming the accuracy of AV voting materials is unique to Los Angeles County. For the November 7, 2006 election, at least two other California counties experienced significant errors with their mailing of AV balloting materials (news articles at Attachment D). As a result, one of these counties had to send a follow-up mailing to hundreds of thousands of absentee voters (Attachment E) instructing them to review their AV materials to determine if erroneous materials had been sent (in much the same manner as our process instructs every absentee voter on the front end to verify accuracy).

Future Quality Assurance Enhancements

In an effort to strengthen existing quality control checkpoints and to implement additional enhancements for future elections we plan to do the following:

- Revise daily second ballot request log and telephone survey form to capture additional information regarding absentee and sample ballot mailing problems to expedite research and resolution;

- Highlight with line staff the importance of remaining vigilant with regard to quality control steps and rotate line staff assignments to minimize staff fatigue due to repetitive work;

- Review absentee voting instructions with a focus group to identify potential improvements to clarify the importance of voters checking AV material to verify receipt of correct information.

New Legislation Will Further Challenge AV Accuracy

Newly adopted state legislation (AB 2770) will, beginning with the 2008 elections, require absentee ballots to be sorted and tabulated by precinct in all statewide and certain special elections rather than by ballot group as is presently the case. This new law will require re-engineering of all aspects of absentee ballot processing. As the largest electoral jurisdiction in the U.S., the challenges of meeting this new level of precision are significant and daunting.

For perspective, had this law been in effect for the November 2006 election, we would have been required to sort absentee balloting materials into more than 5,000 unique groups (by precinct) – nearly ten times the current 517 ballot groups. This will greatly increase complexity and, therefore, the likelihood of inadvertent errors in the distribution of AV voter materials in future elections will be magnified. Consequently, in addition to enhanced staff vigilance with regard to quality control, it will be even more imperative to rely upon voters as the last step in the quality assurance process to verify that their AV materials are correct before voting.

Conclusion

The RR/CC is responsible for conducting secure, accurate and transparent electoral processes. Our staff takes this responsibility very seriously and is committed to continual improvement in all areas of the election process. Despite numerous quality assurance steps, sporadic errors do occasionally occur in the AV preparation and mailing process for which we apologize. As described in this report, we will strive to enhance the current quality control procedures with proposed enhancements in our ongoing efforts to improve all areas of election processing.

This report details the small number of reported problems with AV ballot packet accuracy for the November 7, 2006 election (25 out of 707,195 mailed). While it is likely that some unknown number of additional errors in AV ballot packet assembly occurred that were not reported, there is no evidence to support errors were widespread. Additionally, post-election review of election results for both the 39th and the 38th Congressional Districts, when comparing precinct vote results to absentee voting results, supports the conclusion that the AV packet assembly problems were isolated in this regard.

Should you have additional questions or comments with regard to this matter, please let me know.

c: CAO
Executive Officer

STEP 1 CHECK YOUR MATERIAL

Circled Numbers MUST Match! *

We need your help. Before you vote, check to see if you received the correct:

- Ballot Card
- Instructions and Guide Booklet
- Lavender Ballot Return Envelope

Instructions and Guide Booklet

Ballot Return Envelope

Official Ballot Card

*** If they don't match, please call (562) 466-1323 or (800) 815-2666. We will immediately provide you with the correct material.**

STEP 2 MARK YOUR CHOICES IN THIS BOOKLET AND VOTE YOUR BALLOT CARD

- Use only black or blue ink pen to mark your ballot.
- Fill the entire bubble under the number matching your choice.
- **Do not** punch ballot card.

TO VOTE FOR A CANDIDATE OR MEASURE:

Mark Instructions and Guide Booklet... ... then vote your Ballot Card.

STATE

Vote for One			
	CANDIDATE NAME	Political Party	2 ○
	CANDIDATE NAME	Political Party	3 ○
	CANDIDATE NAME	Political Party	4 ●
	CANDIDATE NAME	Political Party	5 ○

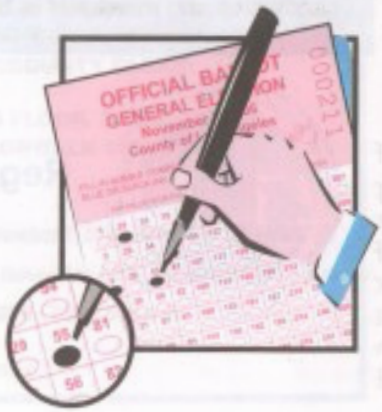
JUDICIAL - COURT OF APPEAL JUSTICE

Vote Yes or No for Each Office

For Associate Justice, Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, Division Nine Shall Associate Justice **Candidate Jones** be elected to the office for the term provided by law?	81 YES ● 82 NO ○

STATE MEASURE

34 **DECLARATION OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY AS THE LEISURE AND SUN CAPITAL OF THE WORLD.** Amends the Constitution of the great State of California to proclaim the County of Los Angeles as the leisure and sun capital of the world until the year 2050. Fiscal impact unknown.	56 YES ● 57 NO ○



Attachment B

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CARLOS R. PEREZ
DEBRA S. GOLDBERG
PETER A. HUTCHINSON
ANDREW BIRNBAUM
WILLIAM Y. SHEH

JULIUS MEL REICH
(1933 - 2000)

November 1, 2006

Via Facsimile and Overnight Mail

Hon. Gloria Molina, Supervisor
856 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012
Fax No. (213) 613-1735

Hon. Don Knabe, Supervisor
822 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012
Fax No. (213) 626-6941

Hon. Michael D. Antonovich, Supervisor/Mayor
869 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012
Fax No. (213) 974-1010

Re: Erroneous Absentee Ballot Instruction Booklet for 39th Congressional District

Dear Supervisors Antonovich, Knabe, and Molina:

This law firm is counsel to Congresswoman Linda Sanchez and her campaign committee, Committee to Re-Elect Linda Sanchez (Committee).

By this letter, the Committee calls to your attention that at least three (3) absentee voters in the 39th Congressional District received the absentee ballot instruction booklet for the 38th Congressional District along with his/her absentee ballot. Two of the absentee voters reside in the City of Cerritos while the remaining absentee voter resides in the City of South Gate. These absentee voters noticed the error and contacted the Committee for assistance. However, other absentee voters may not notice such an error and may be misled as to how to cast their ballots.

In addition to calling these facts and those set forth below to your attention, by this letter, the Committee also asks you to ensure that the County takes appropriate steps to investigate this matter thoroughly and remedy any actual or potential errors uncovered in the investigation. Such remedies may include additional mailings and notices to voters and may cause the County to incur additional cost. While no public official likes to incur additional costs, there is nothing

more central to our representative democracy than the right to vote and, thus, it is of paramount importance that the County take all prudent steps to ensure that this right is vindicated.

The error at issue has genuine and potentially outcome determinative significance to at least one race. Thus, the ballot order listing for many, if not all, voters in the 39th Congressional District and the 38th Congressional District has the candidates for Congress appearing in the same spot, numbers 62 and 63. However, in the 38th Congressional District, the incumbent officeholder and Democratic nominee is listed as number 62, and in the 39th Congressional District, the incumbent officeholder and Democratic nominee is listed as number 63. This could lead to a voter who votes according to the instructions he has been given, but who does not notice that his/her district is incorrectly reflected on the absentee ballot instructions, to inadvertently cast a ballot for a candidate for whom he or she did not intend to vote.

The Committee and this office have been in communication with the Los Angeles County Registrar/Recorder's Office (Registrar) since the discovery of this issue. The Registrar's office has been actively investigating this matter and the Committee is appreciative of the Registrar's efforts in addressing the three errors called to its attention. The Registrar's office has also been willing to listen to the Committee's concerns and has communicated with the Congresswoman and Committee regarding its investigation.

The Registrar's office has stated that the two absentee ballot voters from the City of Cerritos were from the same printing group totaling one hundred four (104) absentee voters. The Registrar's office has informed the Committee that it will contact each of the absentee voters within this printing group by telephone to inform them of this incident and to let them know about the potential that they are victims of the same error. It is our understanding, however, that the Registrar's office views these errors as isolated incidents. The Committee is not convinced that this is an accurate conclusion and is concerned that the incident not be minimized given the importance to the democratic process of each individual voter's right to cast a ballot and to have that ballot counted according to the voter's intention. Moreover, the fact that there were three voters who have come forward is likely not a reflection of the totality of the error, but rather just the "tip of the iceberg" and, thus, it is at least as likely that the distribution of erroneous absentee ballot instruction booklets is more widespread than the three absentee voters who have come forward thus far as it is that these are three isolated incidents. This is especially true given that there is at least one absentee voter from the City of South Gate who experienced this error and who was not within the same printing group as the two absentee voters from the City of Cerritos.

The Committee would appreciate any assistance you could provide.

Please contact me or my associate, William Y. Sheh, should you have any questions or need any further information.

Very truly yours,

Laurence S. Zakson
of REICH, ADELL, CROST & CVITAN

LSZ/caw
cc: Conny McCormack, Los Angeles County Registrar/Recorder

141608.1

Attachment C

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK
12400 IMPERIAL HWY. – P.O. BOX 1024, NORWALK, CALIFORNIA 90651-1024

CONNY B. McCORMACK
REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK

November 2, 2006 Via FAX and U.S. Mail

Laurence S. Zakson
Areich, Adell, Crost and Cvitan, PLC
3550 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 2000
Los Angeles, CA 90010-2421

Dear Mr. Zakson:

This is in response to your letter faxed yesterday to County Supervisors Michael D. Antonovich, Gloria Molina and Don Knabe regarding three (3) absentee voters in the 39th Congressional District who contacted Congresswoman Linda Sanchez' office when they received an incorrect voter guide in their absentee ballot package. As you know, our office immediately contacted the two voters for whom you provided us information and re-issued them the correct voter guides.

From the moment we first learned of this issue via a phone call on Oct. 17 from Cynthia Guerrero with the Sanchez campaign our office took immediate and appropriate action to determine the extent of the problem. Our first priority was to ensure that the voters who contacted the campaign and/or our office were immediately provided with the accurate materials to cast their ballots. With regard to the first two voters in the same household in Cerritos, we contacted all 104 voters whose ballots were included in the same print group to determine if there were other occurrences of incorrect ballot guides. We identified one other who experienced this problem and rectified it. As for the voter living in South Gate who contacted you, it is my understanding that you were unable to provide us with his/her name or address to conduct similar print group research.

Our office has issued more than 670,000 absentee ballots for this election, the second highest in our history. Our absentee ballot process includes a number of quality assurance check points to mitigate against incorrect materials being issued to voters. We also have an additional final check on the accuracy of absentee voting materials that, to my knowledge, is unique. That is the absentee voter guide instructions requests that each absentee voter check his/her packet materials – absentee guide, ballot card and ballot return envelope - to ensure that they all match before voting (sample of colorful instructions attached). Our experience has shown that this partnership with the voters as a final point of verification is useful in identifying the very sporadic and occasional mistakes that are made in absentee ballot packet assembly. For this election we have documented a total of eight persons countywide, including the three who contacted the Sanchez campaign, who have reported receiving erroneous materials. While we strive for perfection, I am sure we can all agree that goal is never completely attainable.

On October 30 I spoke with Congresswoman Sanchez personally regarding this issue and explained our processes to identify and rectify problems including our telephone contact with

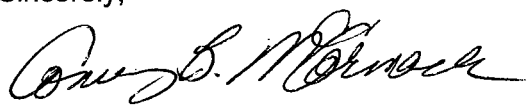
104 voters as described above. Also, the following day I contacted Cynthia Guerrero of Congresswoman Sanchez' staff to further describe our thorough processes in this regard.

We certainly regret that any absentee voter experienced a problem with their absentee ballot packet as a result of an error by our office. We immediately rectified the identified problems and personally apologized to each of these voters.

We appreciate the prompt conveyance of the identified problems by the Sanchez campaign which provided us with the opportunity to both thoroughly research and respond quickly to ensure the affected voters received the correct information to cast their ballots in a timely manner. We agree that our office should take all prudent steps to ensure voters' rights. However, we believe it would be unwise and confusing to voters to follow your suggested remedy of sending a mass mailing to hundreds of thousands of absentee voters who have not identified a problem with their absentee balloting materials.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please call me at (562) 462-2716.

Sincerely,



Conny B. McCormack
Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

ATTACHMENT

c: Congresswoman Linda Sanchez
Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Don Knabe

Attachment D

Sacramento Bee

Absentee voter alert is widened

Sacramento County urges all 210,000 to examine their ballots after irregularities are reported.

By Ed Fletcher - Bee Staff Writer
Published 12:00 am PDT Saturday, October 28, 2006

Sacramento County election officials have taken the unprecedented step of warning all 210,000 people who regularly vote by mail to be on the lookout for ballot irregularities.

That represents a larger number of voters than the county had planned to contact after botched absentee ballots for the Nov. 7 election were discovered, county officials said Friday.

Initially the county had planned to send the postcard warnings to about 120,000 absentee voters who live in zones where others had complained about receiving incomplete or flawed absentee ballots.

"We just wanted to be extra sure," Alice Jarboe, an elections spokeswoman, said of the wider mailing.

Absentee voters should have received two double-sided paper ballots -- one listing candidates for local and state races and the other listing state and local ballot measures.

County officials have instructed voters to check that absentee ballots match their sample ballots.

To date, 439 voters -- from Natomas to Elk Grove -- have reported problems with their absentee ballots. The problems have affected 46 ballot types for special voting districts, such as water, school and fire boards.

The plainly worded postcard warning from registrar Jill LaVine offers no explanation of the cause of the problem. It asks residents to call (916) 875-6155 to report a problem. It was printed in both English and Spanish.

There are always some glitches with getting each of the 178 different ballot types to voters, but the current difficulties far outpace those normal problems, said Jarboe.

"That is way more than the number of calls we get during a regular election," said Jarboe, who estimated that her office usually gets 20 to 30 calls about ballot problems each election.

She said both the printer and mailing house share some of the blame. Each, she said, has agreed to pay for the yet-to-be-determined cost of the postcard mailings.

Of the 439 voters reporting errors in their mailing, 198 received two of the same cards and 241 received only one card.

Jarboe said the county would meet with the print and mailing vendors after the election and develop new measures to prevent future gaffes.

Meanwhile, Jarboe said, absentee ballots are being returned at a pace that's slower than normal.

As of Friday, 51,810 absentee ballots had been mailed in by voters -- about 21 percent of the number sent out, Jarboe said.

This close to an election, the county normally has 30 percent to 35 percent of the absentee ballots back, Jarboe said.

Absentee ballots received early can be opened and processed up to seven days before the election. Those results are the first to pop up when the polls close the evening of Election Day.

Absentee votes handed in Election Day are the last to be counted.

Ventura County Star

Voters facing new problems in mix-up

County gives more time to request absentee ballots

By Charles Levin, clevin@VenturaCountyStar.com
October 31, 2006

Absentee voters in parts of the Conejo and Ojai valleys will have a few more days to request new ballots if they were mailed ones listing the wrong races, the county's election chief said Monday.

Warning letters went out last week explaining the ballot problem to voters in both areas. But 870 Conejo Valley residents who registered as absentee voters got the wrong warning letter, Gene Browning, Ventura County's assistant registrar, said Monday.

The printing company mistakenly sent letters to the Conejo Valley that discussed the Ojai Valley problems, Browning said.

Under state law, officials can start opening absentee ballot envelopes and counting votes today, marking an unofficial deadline for requesting a new absentee ballot.

Now, however, the Elections Division will not open absentee ballots for the two valley areas until later this week, giving people a few more days to get a new ballot. Browning, however, declined to be more specific on a new deadline.

"It's going to depend on how the rest of my workload goes and if I get many more calls" about the problem, Browning said.

Browning seemed confident that the absentee problem, which surfaced last week, had not spread to other parts of the county. "It's just isolated to that handful," Browning said.

Absentee ballots come as two cards. Candidate races and measures are listed on both sides of each card.

About 15 absentee voters near Mira Monte in the Ojai Valley got cards showing a county Board of Supervisors race for a Simi Valley-based seat. At the same time, the cards didn't show a board race in the Casitas Municipal Water District, which serves the Ojai Valley.

In parts of the Conejo Valley, about eight absentee voters got ballots with the Casitas race but not elections in Ventura County Community College District Area 2, Conejo Unified School District and Conejo Recreation and Park District.

A Sequoia Voting Systems employee caused the problem by putting the wrong ballots into envelopes. The printing company that mailed the subsequent warning letters is a subcontractor for Oakland-based Sequoia, Browning said.

The letters urge voters to contact the county Elections Division if they believe that they got a wrong ballot. Absentee voters in the Conejo Valley should get the correct warning letters today, Browning said. Ojai Valley

voters apparently got the right letters.

The county can't recall absentee ballots once it opens the returned envelopes, Browning said. If voters mistakenly cast ballots in the wrong race, they will not count for that race only. New county voting machines, which scan votes like educational tests, are programmed to process votes for specific races.

County Clerk-Recorder Phil Schmit and a Sequoia official said last week that they don't believe the mix-up will affect the outcome of any races.

Several voting experts contacted last week by The Star were not so sure.

The problem is not out of the ordinary, said Kim Alexander, president of the California Voter Foundation. Many counties contract out for their voting services, and "vendors ... are overburdened at this time of year," Alexander said.

Alexander noted that voter participation drops off in low-profile contests such as park districts or water boards.

"So the voters who do vote in those races do have a lot of influence," Alexander said. Such races "can be decided by a relatively small margin."

Schmit vowed last week to ensure that the problem doesn't happen again. A Sequoia official said the company would meet with county officials about the matter.

County Supervisor Linda Parks, who represents the Conejo Valley, said Monday that she wants to make sure that every absentee voter gets a correct ballot.

"If it takes an official knocking on everyone's door, giving everyone a correct ballot, then that's what needs to happen," Parks said.

Several candidates in the races that didn't appear on some ballots said they were concerned.

Pat Phelps, who's seeking a third term on the Conejo Unified school board, said it's hard to know if the mishap will influence the race. Asked if she would seek a special election to contest a close race, Phelps couldn't say.

"I would have to see how close it was," Phelps said. "If it was close, yes, then I think that would be only fair."

If you think that you have received an incorrect absentee ballot, call 654-2664 or 654-2735.

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Attachment E

Countywide
Services Agency

Voter Registration and Elections

County of Sacramento

Terry Schutten, County Executive
Penelope Clarke, Agency Administrator

Jill LaVine, Registrar of Voters

October 17, 2006

Dear Absentee Voter,

You should have received two ballot cards for this election. One card should have candidates to vote on (Card A) and the other card should have the state propositions and local measures (Card B). If you received only one card or two of the same cards, please contact our office at (916) 875-6155 to request a replacement ballot packet.

If you have already voted your ballot and believe there was a problem with the ballot cards, please contact our office at (916) 875-6155 so that we can send you a replacement ballot. Your original voted ballot will be held in our office until your replacement ballot is received. Please note that your replacement ballot must be received in our office no later than 8 p.m. on election night, November 7, 2006.

If you have any questions about this issue, you can call our office at (916) 875-6155.

Very Truly Yours,
Jill LaVine, Registrar of Voters

7000 65th Street, Suite A • Sacramento, California 95823-2315 • Phone (916) 875-6451 • FAX (916) 875-6516
Toll-Free (800) 762-8019 • Speech and Hearing Impaired • (TTY) 1-800-735-2929 • www.saccounty.net

We proudly conduct elections with accuracy, integrity and dignity