



DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

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Secretary of State Debra Bowen Announces Arrest of Man Charged with Voter Registration Fraud

SACRAMENTO – The owner of a signature-gathering firm that works across California was arrested in Ontario on suspicion of committing voter registration fraud, Secretary of State Debra Bowen announced today.

Mark Anthony Jacoby, who owns the firm known as Young Political Majors (YPM), was arrested after allegedly registering himself to vote, once in 2006 and again in 2007, at an address where he did not live. An investigation by the Secretary of State's Election Fraud Investigation Unit revealed that Jacoby twice registered to vote at the address of a childhood home in Los Angeles although he no longer lived there.

The Secretary of State's fraud unit and the Ontario Police Department arrested Jacoby near an Ontario hotel just before midnight Saturday. An arraignment date has not been scheduled yet.

"Voter registration fraud is a serious issue, which is why I vigorously investigate all allegations of elections fraud," said Secretary Bowen, California's chief elections officer. "Where there's a case to be made, I will forward it to law enforcement for criminal prosecution."

For his business, Jacoby traveled California and a number of other states collecting petition signatures and registering voters. Under state law, signature-gatherers must sign a declaration stating that they are either registered to vote in California or that they are eligible to do so. Jacoby allegedly registered to vote at his childhood address to meet this legal requirement.

Under California law, it is a felony punishable by up to three years in prison to register yourself when you are not entitled to vote and it is perjury to provide false information on a voter registration card.

On October 3, the Public Integrity Unit of Los Angeles County District Attorney's office charged Jacoby with four felonies: two counts of voter registration fraud and two counts of perjury. A warrant was issued for his arrest and bail was set at \$50,000.

"This arrest wouldn't have been possible without the hard work of the Ontario Police Department and Los Angeles District Attorney Steve Cooley's office," Secretary Bowen said. "I thank them both."

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The Secretary of State's Election Fraud Investigation Unit helps maintain the integrity of the electoral process by investigating allegations of election and voter fraud in California. Potential Elections Code violations brought to the unit's attention are thoroughly investigated and referred to law enforcement officials for prosecution when there is sufficient evidence of wrongdoing. The Secretary of State's office does not disclose information about the status of ongoing criminal investigations, but the information from a case that results in a criminal complaint filed by a county or state prosecutor is a public record.

Anyone who has witnessed a violation of the California Elections Code is encouraged to contact the Secretary of State's Election Fraud Investigation Unit at (800) 345-VOTE or http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_fraud.htm.

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