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More charges filed in Gingrich election fraud

By: Peter Vieth August 1, 2013

A new set of election fraud charges have been filed against a Martinsville man accused of forging thousands of signatures in a bid to get former U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich on the ballot in Virginia's presidential primary last year.

Adam Ward pleaded guilty to 35 counts of election fraud in Augusta County in June. He now faces 33 additional charges in Martinsville.

Ward, 28, worked for election contractor Stillwater LLC, according to reports from the Augusta County case. A co-defendant, Jennifer Derrebery of Bassett, agreed to help prosecutors.

Martinsville Commonwealth's Attorney Joan Ziglar explained the State Board of Elections notified the Virginia State Police about the possible large-scale forging of signatures on ballot petitions in December 2011. The VSP and the attorney general's office investigated and referred the cases to local prosecutors.

Augusta County went first. "We decided to go round robin – to go one at a time," Ziglar said.

Additional charges against Ward are possible in Henry County, Ziglar said.

Traci Foley of Richmond also faces charges in the Martinsville case.

Ward is scheduled to be sentenced in December in the Augusta case.

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