

Election Law Center

Prison Time for Non-Citizen Voter

A must read story from a sentencing hearing in Michigan:

A Berrien Springs woman who is not a U.S. citizen was given jail time for signing a voter registration form and voting in the 2008 presidential election.

*Dilsa Maria Saddler, 46, got a tongue lashing from sentencing Judge Dennis Wiley in Berrien County Trial Court Monday. **She also heard the assistant prosecutor on her case speculate that Saddler was the victim of an overzealous voter registration drive by the campaign of then-U.S. Sen. Barack Obama in 2008.***

Wiley sentenced Saddler to 10 days in jail and 100 hours of community service.

Wiley gave a lecture during sentencing.

"When people zealously or otherwise go through voter registration efforts to register people to vote who can't vote, (it's) offensive," Wiley said. "That's not the way this country was founded. Every person has one vote, from the president to the most lowly of citizens. I think what struck a chord with me was that we have people out to undermine that."

Wiley said the case is an argument for requiring photo identification for voting.

"When I hear the hue and cry about denying people the right to vote by requiring an ID, I think about how people have to have papers to get on a plane, but it seems like people can sign a piece of paper and show up to vote," he said. "It shows the vulnerability of the system."

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