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NEWS

Election misconduct case shows need for ID law, Schultz says

By Jason Noble jnoble@dmreg.com

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Iowa Secretary of State Matt Schultz is claiming victory in a voter fraud case.

Schultz, who has made identifying and prosecuting voter fraud a centerpiece of his administration, on Tuesday highlighted a Dallas County case resolved last month in which a man pleaded guilty to election misconduct and trespassing.

Tehvedin Murgic was fined \$1,325. Third-degree election misconduct is a serious misdemeanor. The trespass charge also was a misdemeanor.

A spokesman from Schultz's office was unaware of the specifics of Murgic's case and Dallas County Attorney Wayne Reisetter wasn't immediately available for comment.

According to online court records, Murgic pleaded guilty to interfering or attempting to interfere with a voter while the voter was marking a ballot during a general election.

A report last November said Murgic was ineligible to vote because he was not a U.S. citizen, but registered and cast a ballot in the 2010 general election.

A Secretary of State's Office spokesman also said Murgic is a felon, another factor that could make him ineligible to vote.

The criminal complaint was initially filed in October 2012 by the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigations.

An investigator with the division has been working on behalf of Schultz's office for more than a year specifically investigating instances of voter fraud.

Murgic pleaded guilty on Aug. 8 and the case was closed Sept. 27.

Schultz, a Republican, ran for office in 2010 as a strong proponent of voter ID laws, and his term in office has been defined by his efforts to uncover instances of voter fraud. His efforts

to rewrite voter rules to better screen out those ineligible to vote are the subject of an ongoing lawsuit with the American Civil Liberties Union of Iowa.

The DCI investigator also has found instances in which noncitizens allegedly registered to vote and voted in state and local elections.

According to Schultz's office, Murgic is the fifth guilty plea or conviction to result from the voter fraud investigation.