

NEWS

Canadian man convicted of voting illegally here

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A second non-U.S. citizen admitted Monday he illegally voted in the 2012 election.

Jean Gobeil, 61, pleaded guilty to the reduced charge of obstruction of justice, a second-degree misdemeanor. Hamilton County Common Pleas Court Judge Norbert Nadel sentenced Gobeil, a Canadian citizen, to 90 days in the Justice Center but suspended the jail time. That means Gobeil will serve no jail time as long as he stays out of trouble.

The original illegal voter charge against him was a low-level felony that carried a maximum prison sentence of 18 months but also carried the presumption of probation.

Gobeil signed up as a registered voter when he went to register his car with Ohio.

Bernus Charmont, 47, also was charged with illegal voting but he pleaded guilty Nov. 6 to the reduced charge of falsification. Common Pleas Court Judge Leslie Ghiz sentenced Charmont to one year of probation, fined him \$1,000 and ordered him to pay court costs. Prosecutors didn't know Charmont's country of origin. Charmont is a legal resident but not a U.S. citizen.

A third person charged with illegal voting, Carmen Lockhart, 65, is in court on her charge Thursday. She also is legally in the U.S. but not a citizen.

The trio was indicted after allegations of illegal voting were made in Hamilton County in the 2012 presidential election. Some cases were referred to the Ohio Secretary of State's office and these three were recommended for prosecution.

Hamilton County's 48 cases represented 0.011 percent of the 421,997 votes cast in Hamilton County in the 2012 general election.