



## Democrat Election Official Charged in Massive Voter Fraud Scheme – Media Blackout

### Description

**USA: A top Democrat election official has been charged in a massive voter fraud scheme that has had a “far-reaching impact at all levels of government,” according to reports.**

An explosive new report reveals that a Democrat Philadelphia politician conspired with a high-level elected officials in a voter fraud scam.

This week, Jennifer Arbittier Williams, the acting U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, filed federal charges against Democrat politician Marie Beren of South Philadelphia.

The charge alleges that Beren took part in a criminal voter fraud scheme from 2015 through 2019 in three voting divisions across South Philadelphia.

Williams charged Beren with four counts of voter fraud and related offenses, including conspiracy.

According to prosecutors, the conspiracy involved Beren and an unnamed person currently identified in the complaint only as Consultant #1, who is described as a former elected official who *“held himself out as an effective and successful political operative capable of ensuring his clients’ electoral success.”*

[Phillymag.com](https://www.phillymag.com) reports: That consultant “exercised influence and control in Philadelphia’s 39th Ward by distributing cash payments and supporting family, friends and allies for elective office in the 39th Ward, and installing Ward Leaders, Judges of Elections, and Democratic State Committee,” the complaint

alleges.

The feds say the consultant recruited and installed Beren as a committee person for the Democratic Party in South Philadelphia's 39th Ward in approximately 1984. Four years later, that same consultant recruited Beren to serve as a judge of elections for the 39th Ward's second division, the judge of elections essentially being the person in charge of a polling place during the primary and general elections. In this case, that polling place was located at the Seafarer's Union Hall at 4th and Shunk streets. Two other divisions — the 11th and the 16th — vote at that same location. As the feds put it, Beren was the "de facto judge of elections" for all three divisions.

In 2015, Beren stepped down as judge of elections to become a poll watcher. She "installed" her replacement, prosecutors say. And according to the federal government, Beren "continued to effectively run all three divisions located at the Seafarer's Union Hall from 2015 through at least 2019" even though she was no longer officially in charge.

And 2015 is when the alleged conspiracy begins.

The government claims that the consultant in question directed Beren to add fraudulent votes to candidates supported by the consultant. In some cases, the candidates were clients of the consultant. Prosecutors say that these fraudulent votes were cast for candidates at every level of government, from municipal to state to federal.

When Election Day came around, the consultant would drive Beren to the polling place in the morning, giving her instructions along the way. According to the feds, Beren perpetuated the voter fraud in a variety of ways. She would allegedly advise in-person voters how to vote, a violation of election law. She allegedly cast fraudulent votes herself in place of voters she knew wouldn't be coming to the polls. (The government doesn't make clear how she knew they wouldn't show up.) The government also alleges that she would encourage and permit in-person voters to vote on behalf of absent family members, "steering" those voters in support of the consultant's candidates of choice.

Beren and others, who are unnamed in the criminal complaint, falsified the "voting book" for the day, writing down names of voters who didn't actually show up so that the count would all make sense at the end of the day.

Prosecutors haven't specified exactly how many fraudulent votes Beren allegedly cast or caused to be cast or whether these votes had any impact on the results of an election.

On Wednesday morning, Beren's name still appeared online as a staffer in Councilmember Squilla's office, and an email sent to her at her City of Philadelphia address didn't bounce back. Anne Kelly King, Squilla's chief of staff, tells Philly Mag that Beren was a hand-me-down from the office of former City Councilmember Frank DiCicco, whom Squilla replaced in 2012. King says Beren is no longer employed by Squilla's office.

In 2020, a former election judge in the same South Philadelphia ward [pleaded guilty](#) to accepting bribes from a consultant to add fraudulent votes on Election Day. The prosecutors in Beren's case haven't alleged that any money changed hands between her and Consultant #1.

“These allegations are an encouraging sign that our partners in law enforcement continue to investigate and prosecute voter fraud at polling places, as they’d done in the past in conjunction with our office,” said Philadelphia City Commissioner Al Schmidt, whose office oversees all elections in Philadelphia, when reached for comment on Wednesday morning.

A call placed to Beren’s South Philadelphia home went unanswered. According to court records, she is not yet represented by an attorney.

by Sean Adl-Tabatabai

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