



OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

TODD SPITZER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

Date: November 5, 2024
Case #: 24NF2706

Kimberly Edds
Director of Public Affairs
Office: 714-347-8405, Cell: 714-504-1917
media@ocdapa.org

Canadian Citizen Pleads Guilty to Illegally Voting in 2016 Primary, General Elections in Orange County

SANTA ANA, Calif. – A Canadian citizen pleaded guilty Monday to three misdemeanors for casting votes in both the primary and general elections in 2016 after illegally registering to vote. The illegal voting was recently reported through the Orange County District Attorney's Election Fraud Hotline.

In a negotiated plea deal with the government, Robert Soutar, 76, of Fullerton pleaded guilty to two misdemeanor counts of violating the California Elections Code for not being entitled to vote in an election and one misdemeanor count of voter registration fraud. In exchange for his guilty plea, one felony count of perjury was dismissed.

As part of his guilty plea, Soutar agreed to remove himself from California's voter registry, provide his DNA, and pay fines and fees. He was also sentenced to one year informal probation and order and be subject to search and seizure during his probation period.

Soutar is currently registered to vote with the Orange County Registrar of Voters, but there is no evidence at this time that he voted in the current election.

According to the California Elections Code, in order to vote a person must be registered as a voter by filling out and submitting an Affidavit of Registration which includes the voter's name, residence, mailing address, date of birth, political party preference and a certification that the voter is a citizen of the United States. The affidavit must be signed under penalty of perjury.

Soutar, a Canadian citizen, is a legal permanent resident of the United States but is not a United States citizen and therefore is not eligible to vote. The Orange County Registrar of Voters does not independently verify the citizenship of people attempting to register to vote.

Despite being ineligible to vote due to his citizenship status, Soutar registered to vote in 2016 and illegally cast ballots in the 2016 primary and general elections.

"The privilege to vote is one of the most sacred rights we have as American citizens," said Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer. "I refuse to allow anyone to subvert our electoral process in anyway and interfere with the will of the voters who are making decisions on how they want their government run. Any allegation of electoral

interference will be thoroughly investigated and if there is evidence beyond a reasonable doubt that a crime was committed, we will hold those responsible accountable for their actions.”

Anyone with information regarding any suspected election-related irregularities is asked to call the Orange County District Attorney’s Election Fraud Hotline at 657-707-4048 or by emailing 2024.elections@ocdapa.org

Deputy District Attorney Heather Heslep-Morrissey of the Special Prosecutions Unit prosecuted this case.

###