

Press Release from Jim Brannon regarding Idaho Supreme Court Decision November 16, 2012

First, I would like to thank my friend and attorney Starr Kelso for the immense number of hours that he donated to this effort. Each and every day during the Election Contest, my appreciation for this man of unchallenged integrity grew. I would also like to thank his son, Matt Kelso for his assistance throughout the trial; including setting up testimony via Skype with a voter residing in Canada. His intelligence and the way he conducts himself with honor make me proud to call him a friend.

I am disappointed that the Idaho Supreme Court ruled as it did, but this lawsuit contesting the 2009 Coeur d'Alene Municipal Election was always about the integrity of Idaho's Elections.

The lawsuit focused public attention throughout Idaho on many flaws in Idaho's Election Laws which need correction. The recent Legislative changes which took effect in 2011 have partially resolved some of these issues, but there is more work to be done.

This lawsuit had several beneficial effects:

It resulted in the resolution of an important issue: The Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) does not apply to municipal elections. Until now, that issue was unresolved. With an increasingly mobile workforce, this clarification is extremely important.

It encourages the Idaho Secretary of State and the Idaho Legislature to address many issues and potential vulnerabilities in absentee voting, residency requirements and Idaho's Election Laws in general. Many of Idaho's Election Laws remain largely unchanged since they were written. Components of those laws are simply unworkable; for example the 30-day trial requirement for election contests to be heard or that malconduct in administering an election is not clearly defined.

It focused local attention on the quality of performance or non-performance of official duties by the now-former Kootenai County Clerk.

I hope that our Idaho Legislature, the Idaho Secretary of State and county clerks throughout the state will use this lawsuit and decision to improve the integrity and quality of Idaho's Elections.

I have a sincere gratitude for my many friends who lent their support to my wife Christine and I and to our attorney throughout this long process. Thank you from the Brannon's and from the Kelso Law Office.

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