

Voting

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my office has referred seven more suspected noncitizens to the attorney general.”

The only specific case he identified was that of Ceballos.

After an event in Topeka on May 19, The Capital-Journal asked Schwab how many cases in addition to that of Ceballos had been filed.

“We’ve turned three or four over to the attorney general that SAVE has flagged,” Schwab said. “They don’t share with us where they’re at in the investigation.”

Meanwhile, Kobach has publicly identified three cases of alleged noncitizen voting that his office is prosecuting.

The first is Ceballos, whose charges in Comanche County were announced at the November press conference. After The Capital-Journal obtained the affidavit in that case, Ceballos’ attorney said his client didn’t realize he wasn’t allowed to vote as a permanent resident.

A plea deal in April reduced Ceballos’ charges from six felony election crimes to three misdemeanors, and the state judge sentenced him to probation and \$2,000 in total fines. Federal officials subsequently ordered Ceballos to report to immigration detention.

The second is Jose Luis Gomez Sr. He was charged in Reno County in December.

Court records indicate there has yet to be a hearing in the case — and it is unclear if there ever will be. When Kobach publicly announced the case in January, he said Gomez “is currently in custody in Oklahoma pending deportation, following federal immigration proceedings.”

The third is Edwin Francisco Ramirez-Guerra. He was charged in Sedgewick County in December. While Kobach didn’t issue a press release announcing the case, he did identify it in a footnote of an amicus brief filed with the U.S. Supreme Court in March. The Ramirez case doesn’t appear to have been previously reported by Kansas media.

The affidavit in the case, made public after a request from The Wichita Eagle, written by an investigator for Kobach’s office alleged Ramirez voted in 2024 after becoming a permanent resident. The criminal case remains ongoing with a preliminary hearing scheduled for June



Secretary of State Scott Schwab told reporters that his office had turned over three or four cases on potential noncitizen voting to Attorney General Kris Kobach. EVERT NELSON/THE CAPITAL-JOURNAL

18.

A spokesperson for Kobach’s office didn’t respond to a request for comment, including questions on whether there have been any cases beyond those three and why the number of cases isn’t in the hundreds or thousands.

Schwab says SAVE system wasn’t used in Ceballos case

President Donald Trump’s administration has taken steps to provide state election officials with data from Social Security and the SAVE system. Schwab has said the Social Security data will help identify deceased voters in registration databases while the SAVE data will help remove noncitizens.

SAVE is a federal program intended to help government agencies confirm citizenship and immigration status. It is administered by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Schwab told Congress that SAVE is “one of the most important tools states have to verify voter information” on citizenship.

When the Ceballos case was first an-

nounced, Schwab and Kobach refused to say whether the SAVE system was used because it was part of the investigation.

But that didn’t stop the two state officials and the Trump administration from using the Ceballos case to tout the SAVE program. Schwab and Kobach talked at length about SAVE.

Matthew Tragesser, the then-spokesperson for USCIS, said in a November statement on the Ceballos case, “This is just the beginning — SAVE is exposing bad actors and safeguarding the integrity of our elections like never before.”

A second press release that month quoted the DHS’s then-assistant secretary Tricia McLaughlin praising the SAVE program as “a critical tool for state and local governments to safeguard the integrity of elections across the country.”

After Ceballos was convicted in April, acting assistant secretary Lauren Bis also praised the SAVE system. DHS touted that SAVE had identified more than 24,000 cases of “potential” noncitizen voting.

In a written submission to Congress from January, Schwab referenced the Ceballos case and said, “His name was

flagged by both the SAVE program and the state’s temporary driver’s license report.”

But speaking to reporters in Topeka on May 19, Schwab said the SAVE system wasn’t actually used in the Ceballos case.

“No, in that one, it was not used in that one,” Schwab said in response to a question from The Capital-Journal. “What happened is he was going through immigration process to become a U.S. citizen. When you do that, they always ask you, ‘Have you ever voted?’ He goes, ‘Yeah, as a matter of fact I’m a mayor.’”

“The reason why he was on the voter rolls was because he registered before HAVA, and so we didn’t even ask for tax ID numbers or anything. If you wanted to register, you just registered. So he’s basically grandfathered.”

Schwab indicated the SAVE system has been used to identify other Kansas cases.

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