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Falsely changing address to vote is fraudulent, and El Dorado County will investigate

Submitted by [paula](#) on Tue, 06/04/2024 - 11:34am



By Paula Peterson

SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, Calif. - The proposed tax measure on the November ballot in South Lake Tahoe will directly affect people who do not live in the area as it proposes to tax second homeowners up to \$6,000 per year if they live in the house less than six months.

The problem for many is the fact that they cannot vote on the vacancy tax that will affect them due to their voter registration being at their main residence.

Letters have been sent out to property owners in the city limits who don't live or vote in South Lake Tahoe to alert them of the Vacancy Tax citizen-led initiative.



Two of the letters have drawn the attention of a "high-ranking California official" due to their potential for voter fraud. This official owns a second home in South Lake Tahoe and was sent a letter from two people who live in Sunnyvale, Calif. who suggested they change their mailing address on property taxes to a South Lake Tahoe Post Office Box and have all utilities billed via email only.

El Dorado County Registrar of Voters Bill O'Neill said he was contacted by the concerned official as they felt that voter fraud was being suggested and was upset at the level of fraud.

The letters being mailed are not condoned by the Stop The Vacancy Tax group formed to fight the tax.

"We are aware that some individuals who have a home both in the City of South Lake Tahoe and at another location are considering registering to vote in South Lake Tahoe so that they can vote on the upcoming vacancy tax election. Please know that our campaign and coalition cannot offer any individual advice on where to register to vote. We can only point you to the relevant guidance," said the Stop The Vacancy Tax group.

"The decision on where each citizen registers to vote is left up to them, but it must be at their domicile, as defined in the Elections Code," they continued. "You can only have one domicile, even if you own more than one home. Please note that when you sign a voter registration card, you are signing under penalty of perjury that the information on the card is accurate and truthful. In short, if your residence in South Lake Tahoe is not your domicile, please do not register to vote here."