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[00:00:28] **Speaker 1** There could be a scramble ahead of 2026 elections in Wisconsin after a Waukesha County Circuit Court ruling that directs the Wisconsin Elections Commission to verify whether people registered to vote are U.S. Citizens. Republican-appointed Commissioner Don Millis is here with reaction, and thanks very much for being here. So the judges' ruling requires election officials to verify citizenship by matching voter registrations to state DOT files with a spring primary coming up in February. How reasonable is that timeline?

[00:01:04] **Speaker 2** Well, I think it's gonna be a challenge if that's the way the order sticks. We know that there's going to be another hearing on October 31st, and it's always possible that there could be modifications. Certainly the commission does have a role in making sure that people who are on the list are eligible to vote. And we work with local clerks, 1,850 local clerics to make sure that happens. So we will see what the order ends up being and we will do our best to comply. At least that's how I think we should be acting.

[00:01:31] **Speaker 1** So you do think it's reasonable to prevent non-citizens from being on the voter rolls or to remove them.

[00:01:40] **Speaker 2** Well, the commission has a role in doing that. A year ago, there was a concern about a couple of Department of Transportation types of licenses that were handed or provided to visa holders and green card holders. There was a concerned that those identification cards would be used for registration and or voting. And so we issued a directive to all the clerks in the state to be on the lookout for those to see if someone presents that, indicate that that's a. Like great likelihood that that person is not a citizen, not impossible, they could be a citizen and we provided instructions on how to deal with it. So we've taken that on that task before and I think we'll take it on again it just depends on the degree and how widespread we're required to.

[00:02:26] **Speaker 1** As to that issue of non-citizens holding IDs, state IDs that otherwise could be used as part of the voter ID law to vote, your commission told us when we did some reporting on this that there were only three non-citizens that have been referred for prosecution since 2019 in that way. Is this a solution in search of a problem then?

[00:02:54] **Speaker 2** I don't doubt that the issue of non-citizens voting is a very minor one, it doesn't happen very often, but part of our role is to make sure that there's confidence in the elections. I know I've told you in the past that, you know, despite the fact that we have some of the best technology available, we can assure that our elections are fair and the results are valid, but these things come up, and part of my role is still confidence. We have in the past. Like last year, when we sent that circular out, we were concerned that there was a perception that there's gonna be widespread use of those IDs, regardless of whether there was widespread use, it was important that we instill confidence. Back in 2022, there were a couple of examples of improper requests for absentee ballots. Now those were handled properly, those ballots were never issued, but because of the public perception, we acted and we took steps to... Make sure that if that happened on a widespread basis, there'd be a way of making sure that those ballots wouldn't be issued or that people, if they were issued, there'd a way to remedy that. Again, just because something in fact doesn't happen on a wide spread basis, doesn't mean that it's not important for us to address the perception to instill public confidence in the validity of our elections.

[00:04:13] **Speaker 1** As you mentioned, the Wisconsin Department of Justice has appealed this Waukesha County Circuit Court ruling, and while that's under consideration, the Waukeesha judge put on hold his ruling that local clerks cannot register new voters without proof of citizenship. But how would citizenship be proved?

[00:04:34] **Speaker 2** Right, well, I didn't have a huge problem with much of the decision. That was one aspect of the discussion. I don't think it's a good look to tell people you can't register, especially if we have an opportunity to later verify. I think that it is a challenge because some of our identifications that are provided to citizens are also provided to non-citizens. So that is a challenges. I think it is more incumbent on the authorities, the Department of Transportation, the Elections Commission, working with local clerks to try to identify people who might not be citizens or are in fact not citizens and take remedial action.

[00:05:15] **Speaker 1** But when you register to vote, you have to check a box saying that you are a citizen under penalty of law. Is that not good enough then?

[00:05:25] **Speaker 2** I think that for 99.99% of the registrants, that is good enough. But there is, again, a perception that this could happen. And again, we shouldn't take it lightly, that it doesn't happen. We have examples of double voting. We make referrals to district attorneys, because things like that do happen. It's not widespread. But it's important to instill confidence and take action appropriately.

[00:05:48] **Speaker 1** Alright, we leave it there. Commissioner Don Millis, thanks very much.

[00:05:52] **Speaker 2** Thank you. Have a good weekend.

[00:05:58] **Speaker 1** That was excellent

[00:06:00] **Speaker 2** I have a problem my eyes wandering and I look at these things and I'm saying I'm looking up like this and

[00:06:06] **Speaker 1** You were great. You were fine. It's just like...

[00:06:08] **Speaker 2** I had to just

[00:06:10] **Speaker 1** It didn't look like that.

[00:06:12] **Speaker 2** Well, I have to remember that I use an iPad. And so right here is my camera. Oh, and you're over here. And

[00:06:20] **Speaker 1** No, I think it looked fine. It looks just like how you might talk to somebody in real life where you're using your hands or whatever. Yeah, that was great. Thank you.

[00:06:30] **Speaker 2** Okay. Well, thank you very much. Have a good show.

[00:06:33] **Speaker 1** Have a good weekend.