

GUEST OPINION – 500 WORDS
Idaho Secretary of State Lawrence Denney

There are times when it is not worth fighting to correct being misquoted or straighten out a misperception. **There are certain times, however**, when for the benefit of others, the battle for transparency must be fought. In light of recent media coverage surrounding a letter from The Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity, I feel strongly that right now is one of those times.

A July 19 article penned by the Associated Press led with the headline stating “Idaho won't comply with Trump voter panel request”. While technically accurate, it is far from the complete story. The article goes further to say that “Idaho now joins 17 other states and the District of Columbia also refusing to comply with the commission's request.” **The reality is that Idaho has not refused to comply**, but rather, with the suspension of the request by the Designated Federal Officer for the commission, no “refusal” was necessary.

When I was asked recently by a reporter to confirm if we were sending anything in response to the Commission’s request, my answer was “No” The better answer would have been, “No - not to this request, at this time, in the manner in which it has been presented, and since the request is suspended.”

Regarding the lawsuit, the AP article quoted Democratic Party Chair Bert Marley’s statement, “We are very pleased to tell Idahoans that we have protected their privacy by negotiating for an agreement that Secretary Denney will not send the voter information sought by the Trump Commission.” Chairman Marley - you negotiated for no such thing, and you did nothing to protect the privacy of Idahoans. That privacy was already well protected, and I take significant offense to the fact that you would insinuate otherwise. What you did do, however, was file an absolutely unfounded and frivolous lawsuit, (that you eventually dismissed) playing and preying upon public fear, and compounding the problem through misinformation. I will not allow that to continue.

The AP article led with the line “Secretary of State Lawrence Denney announced Tuesday he will not hand over detailed voter information to President Donald Trump's commission on election fraud *as part of a settlement with the Idaho Democratic Party.*” **I made no such announcement, and the decision to not send any information was made outside the context of the Democratic Party’s dismissal of the suit, not because of it.**

As such, I will be providing a comprehensive timeline of the events and details surrounding this issue on the Secretary of State website to bring further clarity.

Citizens of Idaho – when it comes to your private information and your election decisions, know that both I and my staff are working diligently and daily to preserve and protect your rights. Know also that we are subject to the laws of Idaho as they are written, and those laws include the Idaho Public Records Act. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you, and to present the truth on this matter.

Lawrence Denney
Idaho Secretary of State

###