

# Antrim County clerk says political operatives 'strong-armed' way to Dominion machines

by Zachary Halaschak, Economics Reporter | March 08, 2021 08:09 PM

## Just In...

[Chris Christie: Biden 'lying' about Georgia election law](#)

Antrim County officials say operatives who claimed they were tied to Rudy Giuliani, the ex-personal attorney to former President [Donald Trump](#), pushed local clerks to let them examine election data in the early days of a lawsuit focused on voting machines.

[Suspect detained after Asian American woman fatally stabbed while walking dogs](#)

Sheryl Guy, who is the Antrim County clerk, said Allied Security Operations Group, a Dallas-based cybersecurity firm that conducted what it called a "forensic audit" of Dominion Voting Systems machines in the small county, visited the day after Thanksgiving and began a blitz of calls to the clerks of villages and townships in an attempt to examine election data.

[Madison Cawthorn gets married in private ceremony](#)

Included in the group, which flew into the northern Michigan county in a chartered jet on Nov. 27, was Washington, D.C.-based lobbyist Katherine Friess. Local officials said Friess "bragged" at the time about having dinner with [Trump](#) and Giuliani, [who was](#) his personal attorney at the time, the night before they arrived in Michigan, according to [reporting](#) from the *Traverse City Record-Eagle*.

[Dominion demands ex-Michigan lawmaker retract voter fraud claims](#)

The team was able to gain access to the Central Lake Township office, where it was shown "two separate paper totals tape" from a precinct tabulator, according to court filings. The team also visited offices in the Village of Mancelona and in Star Township, which have populations of about 1,350 and 925, respectively.

[Rod Rosenstein takes 'wait and see' approach on whether Crossfire](#)

## **DOMINION CASE: JUDGE ORDERS MICHIGAN OFFICIALS TO TURN OVER COMMUNICATIONS WITH BIG TECH COMPANIES**

[Hurricane was justified](#)

[Capitol Police officer wounded in car-ramming attack released from hospital](#)

"They made calls to township people on Thanksgiving Day to set all this up, they were strong-arming local clerks to get in and see those machines," Guy told the newspaper.

[Barrasso says Biden administration is 'trying to hide' border crisis as migrants are crammed in facilities 'like sardines'](#)

"Some clerks said no or didn't answer their phones," she added. "And as soon as we could, we sent out an email telling the clerks not to let them in. Then we learn after the fact, they'd already been in three different locations."

Antrim County gained outside attention after the November election, when it was revealed that thousands of votes were initially and



revenue loss corrected and has since been attributed to  
after MLB pulls human error, not to inherent flaws in Dominion  
All-Star Game voting machines, as Trump's legal allies have  
over voting law alleged.

Guy, a self-identified Trump voter, has taken responsibility for that the tabulation mistake prior to the election, saying that after she learned a few local candidates were not showing up on the ballot, she had to update information on media drives tied to the voting machines. Guy said she accidentally updated the information in only some precincts, which resulted in mismatched information when the unofficial results were released.

Guy, who claims that the GOP backlash toward her has been so bad she might never vote Republican again, also said she is receiving threats.

"Antrim exploded before my eyes," Guy told the *Record-Eagle* in January. "Oh boy, I struggled so with the calls, emails and the complaints of fraud, the personal criticism, nasty comments, and groups expressing anger and making threats."

The Antrim County lawsuit, which was filed by resident William Bailey, is one of the few lingering legal challenges related to the Nov. 3 election. Bailey is objecting to a local marijuana retailer proposal that passed by a wire-thin margin after a retabulation that didn't include three damaged ballots. Because Dominion voting machines were involved, Trump's legal team and Trump-adjacent lawyers homed in on the case. The state's attorney general was allowed to intervene in the case on behalf of Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson.

Star Township Clerk Phyllis Hoogerhyde said that Giuliani's name was dropped by the group that jetted into Antrim County.

"Rudy's name came up when they presented themselves," Hoogerhyde recalled. "They called ahead of time and said, 'We'd like to examine your Dominion machines and take pictures.' I couldn't figure out what they thought they were going to get since all our information was already at the county."

In early December, Antrim County Circuit Judge Kevin Elsenheimer ruled that Bailey's legal team, headed by attorney Matthew DePerno, could conduct an audit of the county's voting machines as part of the lawsuit. ASOG concluded in its report that Dominion machines were "intentionally and purposefully designed with inherent errors to create systemic fraud and influence election results."



*Washington Examiner* around the time of the audit that ASOG's primary goal "is to continue spreading false information designed to erode the public's confidence" in the 2020 election.

"By doing so, they injure our democracy and dishonor the 5.5 million Michigan citizens who cast ballots," he added.

Dominion CEO John Poulos blasted the report in a hearing with Michigan lawmakers. Poulos testified under oath that the report was "categorically false" and was released by a "biased group." Dominion hit DePerno with a cease-and-desist order over the claims of election fraud, while Giuliani and Trump-aligned lawyer Sidney Powell are now facing \$1.3 billion defamation lawsuits filed by Dominion because of their public statements about the company's machines.

Attorney Greg Schmid, who is an expert in Michigan election law, said that while unsanctioned by a court, the Nov. 27 visit prior to the court-sanctioned Dec. 6 audit wasn't illegal, but the clerks could have shot down their requests. He also asserted that it would have been proper for them to file a Freedom of Information Act request, which Guy said they did not do.

"The township clerk had the voting record lawfully, and anybody can knock on the door and ask for anything, but the clerk also could have refused, and without a FOIA, no one could have forced it," Schmid said.

Michigan Senate Oversight Committee Chairman Ed McBroom, a Republican, said he was less concerned with the visit itself than the notion that the team had seen the "accurate" voting tapes in Central Lake Township and still concluded in the December audit that there was election fraud pegged to the Dominion machines.

"I'm more disturbed by the fact that the group looked at the tapes and clearly ignored that the tapes were accurate," the lawmaker said. "It then made its so-called forensic report that claimed that the machine had been in error, which was clearly inaccurate. It was at the county clerk's office where the mistake was made."

The *Washington Examiner* has reached out to McBroom's office about the Nov. 27 visit.

Following the national controversy with the lawsuit and audit by the ASOG team, a hand recount was conducted of the nearly 16,000 votes cast in Antrim County and found that Trump's lead increased by only a dozen votes in total.



for the disinformation campaigns to end, and for all leaders to unequivocally affirm the Nov election was secure, accurate & fair," said Benson in a Dec. 17 tweet after the risk-limiting audit.

The *Washington Examiner* contacted Dominion Voting Systems for comment about this report but didn't immediately receive a response.

**[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE FROM THE WASHINGTON EXAMINER](#)**

Biden  
ended  
up  
winning

Michigan's 16 Electoral College votes 50.6% to Trump's 47.8% and emerged victorious in the entire election, with 306 Electoral College votes and a popular-vote edge of more than 7 million ballots.