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## Unfounded claim

### Former judge's challenge of election results has no basis in reality

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Former Franklin County Judge Carole Squire is trying to convince a magistrate that the Nov. 7 election was stolen from her. Her groundless challenge is further evidence that voters made the right decision in ousting her from office.

Chris Geer's victory over Squire for the Domestic Relations Court judgeship was reasonably close, but not tight enough to trigger a mandatory recount paid for by taxpayers. In the official tally, Geer won by 13,064 votes. A recount in 35 precincts, which was requested and funded by Squire, added five votes to Geer's victory margin.

A magistrate from Cleveland, Joel Sacco, is hearing Squire's challenge. His decision is expected to be ruled on by a three-judge panel appointed by the Ohio Supreme Court.

Ohio has had more than its share of elections controversies in the past few years, but most observers, who represent both major political parties, believed last year's general election was fair and well-managed.

The new generation of voting machines worked as intended, and voters in the busy gubernatorial election didn't suffer the nightmarish long lines experienced in the presidential election two years earlier.

Squire's election challenge is separate from a disciplinary hearing in which she is facing four counts of judicial misconduct. The Supreme Court's disciplinary board has yet to decide that matter.

Squire, represented by her husband, Percy, based her election appeal on claims that voting machines were configured improperly, that absentee votes were inaccurately counted and that signatures on the poll books didn't match vote totals.

Franklin County Elections Director Matthew Damschroder acknowledged during his testimony that poll-book signatures didn't match vote totals in about 1 percent of the cases, noting that elections completely free of errors are rare.

Perhaps Squire's court case will have one benefit: The results could diminish further the outlandish claims that Ohio's elections are fixed to favor certain candidates.

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