

## CLEAR CHANNEL OUTDOOR TO REMOVE BILLBOARDS WARNING ABOUT VOTER FRAUD



# CLEAR CHANNEL OUTDOOR

Clear Channel Outdoor billboards began appearing in black and Hispanic communities in Cleveland, Columbus and Milwaukee in mid-October 2012, according to the advocacy group ColorofChange.org. ColorOfChange.org formed to strengthen Black America's political voice. The group's goal is to empower its members - Black Americans and its allies - to make government responsive to the concerns of Black Americans and to create positive political and social change. ColorOfChange.org argued that the billboards were designed to intimidate voters. The billboards, which do not identify their sponsor, state: "Voter Fraud is a Felony." The ads warn people of penalties such as jail time and \$10,000 fines. ColorofChange.org said on its website: "Allowing an anonymous advertiser to create an atmosphere of fear around voting just as the early-voting period begins is unacceptable." According to AdAge, a Clear Channel Outdoor spokesperson said the ads should say who paid for them: "We reviewed the situation, and in light of the fact that these billboards violate our policy of not accepting anonymous political ads, we asked the client how they would prefer to work with us to bring the boards into conformance with our policy." Clear Channel Outdoor did not identify the client, but the spokesperson for Clear Channel Outdoor said: "The client thought the best solution was to take the boards down, so we are in the process of removing them." Clear Channel Outdoor is a recognized leader in outdoor advertising products. Clear Channel Outdoor began doing business as Foster & Kleiser Outdoor Advertising in 1901, and now does business in 33 major United States markets, and has expanded internationally. ColorofChange.org stated the billboards were a nasty voter suppression scheme, and was pleased the billboards were being taken down. ColorofChange.org said on its website: "It was too much of a coincidence for these ads to just pop up in swing states, particularly in neighborhoods of color. Although the donors behind the ads remain anonymous, it is clear that these billboards are part of a massive right wing effort to suppress the votes of African Americans, Latinos and other people of color for political gain." ColorOfChange.org uses the Internet to enable its members to speak in unison, and is comprised of folks from every economic class. Getting political messages across are key when keeping people informed on pressing issues. Both state and local laws regulate the posting of political signs and distribution of handbills on public and private property. Some states require prior consent before placing advertising on private property, and some states make it a misdemeanor for any person to place or maintain any sign, picture, or advertisement, without the consent of the owner, lessee, or person in lawful possession of property.