

STATE OF COLORADO
Department of State
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Scott Gessler
Secretary of State

Suzanne Staiert
Deputy Secretary of State

July 9, 2012

Secretary Janet Napolitano
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528
Via email

Re: Request for cooperation to improve voter roll integrity

Dear Secretary Napolitano,

The enclosed memorandum and request from the Colorado Attorney General renews my efforts to work with the Department of Homeland Security to verify the accuracy of Colorado's voter records. Outlining a path forward will help design a uniform template for all states to follow as we safeguard the integrity of our nation's elections and improve voter confidence. The elections officials listed below share this approach and expect to request a memorandum of understanding.

As you know, federal law requires states to maintain accurate voter records and to ensure reliable elections by verifying voter identities through state and national databases. Despite our best efforts, our voter records remain subject to vulnerabilities that allow people to illegally register to vote. Many of those disallowed to vote legally have even cast ballots. Indeed, 430 Colorado residents have submitted documents or letters self-identifying themselves as non-citizens and ineligible to vote. We know some of these registrants have voted. Like my colleagues across the nation, I have sought to identify and remove anyone not legally allowed to vote, but without access to citizenship information from the Department of Homeland Security I have no avenue to verify the citizenship status of voters. This vulnerability erodes confidence in our elections.

Our electoral system must have safeguards to verify eligible voters and prevent illegal ballots from being cast. An unenforceable honor system does not build confidence in our elections.

For most states, secretaries of state are responsible for ensuring the integrity of our elections through enforcement of both federal and state laws. These laws begin with maintaining the statewide voter registration system mandated by the Help America Vote Act and ensuring clean voter rolls. We already compare our voter rolls with the Department of Public Health and Environment to remove deceased voters and with the Department of Corrections to remove voters convicted of a felony. We also verify driver's license numbers and social security numbers through the Department of Revenue and Social Security Administration. A comparison using your databases will similarly improve the integrity of our system.

I remain hopeful that this final effort will elicit the co-operation from your office that Congress contemplated when it enacted 8 USC 1373.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



Scott Gessler
Colorado Secretary of State

- c: Greg Bell, Lieutenant Governor, Utah
- Ken Bennett, Secretary of State, Arizona
- Dianna Duran, Secretary of State, New Mexico
- Jon Husted, Secretary of State, Ohio
- Ruth Johnson, Secretary of State, Michigan
- Kris Kobach, Secretary of State, Kansas
- Brian Kemp, Secretary of State, Georgia
- Mark Martin, Secretary of State, Arkansas
- Sam Reed, Secretary of State, Washington
- Matt Schultz, Secretary of State, Iowa
- Mead Treadwell, Lieutenant Governor, Alaska