

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

DENNIS RICHARDSON  
SECRETARY OF STATE

LESLIE CUMMINGS, PhD  
DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE



ELECTIONS DIVISION

STEPHEN N. TROUT  
DIRECTOR

255 CAPITOL STREET NE, SUITE 501  
SALEM, OREGON 97310-0722

(503) 986-1518

June 30, 2017

Kris W. Kobach  
Vice Chair  
Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity  
[ElectionIntegrityStaff@ovp.eop.gov](mailto:ElectionIntegrityStaff@ovp.eop.gov)

Dear Vice Chair Kobach,

When I was elected last November, I committed to all Oregonians that my office would be transparent, and I would work to ensure that all eligible citizens were registered to vote. Through our vote by mail system and automatic voter registration, we have implemented tools and processes to establish and maintain very clean voter rolls.

Elections are, and should remain, governed and administered by the states. We encourage our sister states to look to the Oregon model of vote by mail with automatic voter registration. It works well for us and provides greater access for Oregonians, is easy and convenient for our voters, enables us to have cleaner voter rolls, is more secure, and is less costly to administer than traditional polling place elections. Our automatic voter registration system has enabled us, for the first time, to validate citizenship data of those that are registered through this method.

In April of this year, I launched a major expansion of voter access through a new Administrative Rule that protects the rights of an estimated 60,000 Oregonians. These individuals would have been removed from the active roles and not received ballots. This included those serving our country in the military, students attending schools out-of-state, and voters frustrated with the political system who may not have voted in a while. I highly recommend other states follow Oregon's example.

I do not believe the federal government should be involved in dictating how states conduct their elections. To that end, on January 27, I sent the President a letter requesting that he rescind former Department of Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson's designation of state election systems as "critical infrastructure."

The Commission can support state and local election administrators by making sure we receive prompt notice of known threats and can facilitate a greater partnership of information sharing among all levels of government. The Commission can also be an advocate for increased funding of election security so that we can stay ahead of the bad actors and continue to improve the security of our systems. Election security should be a priority and funding should be allocated to reflect that priority rather than waiting for an

intrusion to have us react. What hinders elections officials' ability to ensure election integrity, is a lack of state enforcement funding and the federal designation of state election systems as "critical infrastructure."

We have very little evidence of voter fraud or registration fraud in Oregon. Most of the cases we have involve a spouse signing the other's ballot or a parent obtaining permission from a college-aged child and then signing the student's ballot. We have procedures in place that prevent these ballots from being counted. There have been 15 individuals indicted or convicted of voter fraud since 2000.

We believe the best way to prevent voter intimidation or disenfranchisement is to follow the Oregon model of trying to get every eligible voter on the registration rolls through automatic registration and outreach efforts, and then, sending every registered voter a ballot.

Other issues the Commission may want to consider include how to educate the public so that they can have confidence in our elections whether their preferred candidates win or lose. There have been significant improvements in the administration of elections in the last 15 years, and our systems and processes are better than they have ever been.

Oregon policy prohibits disclosure of some of the information that you requested, such as social security numbers and drivers' license numbers. Please see ORS 247.945(4) and ORS 247.955. It is my duty to follow these statutes. Oregon law provides that any person may receive a statewide list of electors upon payment of \$500. It is a violation of Oregon law for voter registration data to be used for commercial purposes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dennis Richardson". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Dennis Richardson