



The Office of Secretary of State

Brad Raffensperger
SECRETARY OF STATE

2/27/23

Hon. Kevin McCarthy
Speaker of the House
Washington, D.C. 20515

CC:

Georgia's Congressional Delegation
Chairman Bryan Steil, Committee on House Administration
Chairman James Comer, House Committee on Oversight and Accountability
Hon. Claudia Tenney, Co-Chair, Election Integrity Caucus
Hon. Mike Garcia, Co-Chair, Election Integrity Caucus

Mr. Speaker,

I write to you today to request your, and Congressional leadership's, support on two fronts. First, to remain steadfast in your opposition to a federal takeover of elections as embodied in bills like last session's HR1. Second, I ask for your support for a set of reforms to current national election law.

What I am requesting is your leadership in updating and modernizing current federal law, as well as your oversight in addressing what states need to do better in enhancing voter confidence in election outcomes.

First, the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), also known as "Motor Voter" needs to be updated and modernized. This law made sense as written in the early 90s. However, with a mobile society and improvements in technology, it must be updated. According to the US Census Bureau, over 7 million Americans move to a different state every year. The 90-day blackout periods, and the onerous procedures to remove voters who no longer live in a state, allow voter lists to be more and more out of date. This is especially true for states that do not prioritize even following the low bar set for list maintenance in the current NVRA. This must be addressed. Strong, more consistent list maintenance will enhance election administration, lower costs, and enhance confidence in election outcomes.

Second, for all federal elections, we need photo identification requirements in all modes of voting. Again, technology exists to make this easy. Election research shows that Voter ID laws do not impact turnout, which is consistent with the record turnout Georgia experienced in 2022. Nearly 80% of Americans support Photo ID for voting. SB202, Georgia's Election Integrity Act, moved Georgia away from a subjective verification method for absentee voting—signature match – and provided an objective form of verification – photo identification. Implementing a nationwide photo ID requirement would be a significant step in helping ensure the integrity of elections across the country.

Third, there needs to be a ban on ballot harvesting in federal elections. No one should get between the voter and the ballot box, especially not partisan political operatives. In Georgia, one of my first priorities was outlawing ballot harvesting. Ballot harvesting opens the door for vote buying on one side and voter intimidation on the other, and every state should promote free and fair elections by ending ballot harvesting.

Fourth, there should be risk-limiting audits performed in each state following a federal election. Most states have signed post-election audit procedures into law. However, those procedures are not uniform nor is there a minimum threshold across the board. As a result, the integrity of election results may differ state by state, as does the public's faith in those results. Congress should consider implementing a minimum standard for post-election audits across the board.

Finally, we should amend the US Constitution to state that only American citizens can vote in any American election. Since 1996, federal law has required American citizenship as a prerequisite to voting in federal elections. However as of 2022, 16 municipalities in the U.S. allowed noncitizens to vote in some or all local elections (two in California, 11 in Maryland, one in New York, and two in Vermont.) Only four state constitutions explicitly require United States citizenship to vote in state and local elections. Yet across the country, some jurisdictions have either current permissions or existing proposals to loosen that requirement and make exceptions for non-citizen voting.

The strongest and clearest codification to strengthen public trust and election integrity would be an amendment to the United States Constitution. This is a measure that could not be easily undone by future legislatures, and one that would send a unifying message to American citizens whether born or naturalized: American elections are decided by American citizens.

These requests are reasonable, common-sense reforms that have made Georgia a national model for a reasonable balance between election security and voter convenience – serving to unite the citizens of our Republic's faith in the most fundamental building block of American democracy - free and fair elections. I ask that you consider these measures to strengthen the integrity of every election in America, and to reassure the public that our Congress is committed to ideals upon which our great nation was founded.

Thank you for your consideration and service to our great nation.

Yours,


Brad Raffensperger