

Vermont Public Interest Research Group Files to Intervene in Justice Department Lawsuit Seeking Vermont's Voter Rolls

The Justice Department is demanding Vermont's complete voter files, which include driver's license numbers, partial Social Security numbers, and other sensitive data. Campaign Legal Center, Brennan Center for Justice, and Wilschek Iarrapino Law Office PLLC represent VPIRG in motion to intervene.

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[Voting & Elections](#)

Today the Vermont Public Interest Research Group (VPIRG) [filed a motion](#) [\[link-1\]](#) to intervene in [United States v. Copeland Hanzas](#) [\[link-2\]](#), a lawsuit brought by the U.S. Department of Justice against Secretary of State of

Vermont Sarah Copeland Hanzas for refusing to provide the department with the state's voter file. The file contains sensitive data, such as voters' driver's license numbers and partial Social Security numbers. VPIRG seeks to intervene

in the lawsuit to protect Vermont voters' privacy. The organization is represented by the Campaign Legal Center, the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU Law, and Wilschek Iarrapino Law Office PLLC.

"VPIRG applauds the Secretary of State for doing her job," said **Paul Burns, executive director of the Vermont Public Interest Research Group**. "Vermonters do not want to see their sensitive voter information handed over to the Trump administration where it may be used to undermine our democracy or to spread false information about our elections."

In September, the Department of Justice requested Vermont's complete voter file. Secretary of State Copeland Hanzas replied that she couldn't comply unless the department confirmed that it would follow federal and state privacy laws when managing voters' information. In response, the Justice Department filed suit in December.

"The Justice Department's ongoing attempt to access sensitive voter data in numerous states, including Vermont, is an improper overreach by the federal government to exert control over our elections," said **Kate Hamilton, Legal Counsel for Litigation at Campaign Legal Center**. "This overreach will not make our elections any safer or more secure; it simply violates voters' privacy and could discourage voters from participating in the democratic process. The U.S. Constitution is clear that Congress and states have the power to administer and regulate elections, not the executive branch. We will keep fighting for our nation's electoral system to be one that promotes the freedom to vote, participation in our democracy and trust in our elections."

[United States v. Copeland Hanzas](#) [\[link-3\]](#) is one of [22](#) [lawsuits](#) [\[link-4\]](#) the Justice Department has filed nationwide

seeking copies of voter rolls including driver's license numbers and partial social security numbers, in 21 against states and the District of Columbia.

"This lawsuit against Vermont is part of the Justice Department's national effort to force states to give the federal government highly sensitive voter data," said [Eileen O'Connor](#) [\[link-5\]](#), **Brennan Center senior counsel and a former attorney in the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department.** "This is dangerous. A sweeping federal database of voter

information would do nothing to improve election security and would invite misuse. The lawsuit against Vermont is one piece of the Trump administration's campaign to undermine the midterms and future elections."

In addition to Vermont, Campaign Legal Center and the Brennan Center are working together against the Justice Department's lawsuits seeking voter files from

[Maine](#) [\[link-6\]](#), [New York](#) [\[link-7\]](#), and [Oregon](#) [\[link-8\]](#).

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Links

link-1: filed a motion <https://www.brennancenter.org/media/14898/download/019-1-mol-iso-vt-pirg-2025-12-30.pdf?inline=1>

link-2: United States v. Copeland Hanzas https://www.justice.gov/crt/media/1419826/dl?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

link-3: United States v. Copeland Hanzas https://www.justice.gov/crt/media/1419826/dl?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

link-4: 22 lawsuits <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/tracker-justice-department-requests-voter-information>

link-5: Eileen O'Connor <https://www.brennancenter.org/experts/eileen-oconnor>

link-6: Maine <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/coalition-working-protect-sensitive-voter-information-seeks-intervene>

link-7: New York <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/coalition-working-protect-sensitive-voter-information-seeks-intervene>

link-8: Oregon <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/league-women-voters-oregon-and-aclu-oregon-file-amicus-brief-defend>