



Via Certified Mail and Electronic Mail

February 13, 2026

Harmeet K. Dhillon
Assistant Attorney General
Civil Rights Division
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave., NW 4CON
Washington, D.C. 20530

Re: DOJ Request for Ohio's Statewide Voter Registration Data

Dear Assistant Attorney General Dhillon,

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that I have directed my staff to immediately initiate the secure delivery of Ohio's statewide voter registration data to the Department of Justice ("the Department" or "DOJ"). This action is taken in response to written correspondence to my office on August 6, 2025, and August 14, 2025, in which the Department states an intent to assess the state of Ohio's compliance with federal law and to assist my office with the verification of our statewide voter file.

The Department's August 6 letter specifically requests an electronic copy of Ohio's statewide voter registration list "for purposes of enforcing" the National Voter Registration Act ("NVRA"), 52 U.S.C. § 20501 et seq, and the Help America Vote Act ("HAVA"), 52 U.S.C. § 20901 et seq. The letter argues that "[t]he NVRA requires each state ... to make available for inspection 'all records concerning the implementation of programs and activities conducted for the purpose of ensuring the accuracy and currency of official lists of eligible voters.'" DOJ Letter (Aug. 6), at 1 (quoting 52 U.S.C. § 20507(i)(1)). The letter further contends that the "plain text of § 20507(i) requires disclosure." *Id.*

The Department's August 14 letter restates this position and posits additional authority for the requested actions. Specifically, the August 14 letter states that the Department is requesting

Ohio's voter registration list ("VRL") "to assess your state's compliance with the statewide VRL maintenance provisions" of the NVRA. DOJ Letter (Aug. 14), at 1. It indicates that the request is made pursuant to the Attorney General's authority under Section 11 of the NVRA. See *id.* The Department further contends that it has the authority to seek the state's voter list pursuant to Section 401 of HAVA. See *id.* at 1-2 (citing 52 U.S.C. § 21111). Finally, the letter separately contends that DOJ is empowered to request the voter registration list under Title III of the Civil Rights Act of 1960 ("CRA"). Section 303 of the CRA provides that "[a]ny record or paper required by section 20701 of this title to be retained and preserved shall, upon demand in writing by the Attorney General ... be made available for inspection, reproduction, and copying ..." 52 U.S.C. § 20703; see DOJ Letter (Aug. 14), at 2.

Accordingly, I met with you in person on December 15, 2025, to discuss this request, and I confirmed in writing on December 19, 2025, that I would instruct my staff to begin fulfilling it. In the subsequent weeks, I communicated regularly with senior personnel at the Department to explain the steps my office was taking to remediate several subsets of the database with our state bureau of motor vehicles and the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS), specifically the SAVE service administered by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) agency.

As every chief election officer can attest, Ohio's voter registration database is dynamic, continuously updated to reflect real-world events that affect voter eligibility. The list I am sending you, however, is a static snapshot. This means that at no point in time will I be able to give the Department a demonstrably perfect image of our database. Voter list maintenance is always a work in progress, as Ohio's 88 county boards of elections and my office work to verify new registrations and identify registrants who lack citizenship status, have moved to a new address, have died, or are otherwise ineligible to vote. Even today, my staff is working to verify subsets of registration data with state and federal partners, and I am proud to say that Ohio has helped USCIS develop and deploy SAVE search capabilities for use nationwide by the other 49 states.

To that end, the following list maintenance processes remain ongoing, and the records on the provided list are pending removal upon completion of the required notice period. Such records include:

- Individuals who moved and subsequently voted out of state.

- Non-citizen records confirmed by SAVE.
- Deceased records confirmed by SAVE.
- SAVE/USCIS records requiring additional documentation to confirm citizenship. My office is working with the Ohio bureau of motor vehicles to obtain the documentation and receive a final determination from USCIS. Following such final determinations, additional removals will be ordered where warranted.

My team is also working with USCIS to enhance the SAVE system to support more frequent reviews of deceased records and improved matching of non-citizen records. These enhancements are scheduled to go live in March and include:

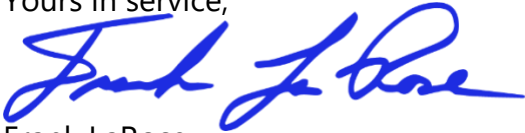
- Case submission using U.S. Passport Number – expands the available non-DHS enumerators available for case submission to assist in verifying citizenship status.
- Voter List Maintenance Checks for Recurring Updates (Citizenship, Death, etc) – allows periodic checks as part of list maintenance procedures after a case has been processed for voter registration eligibility.
- SAVE Webservice Connection API – allows states to directly integrate SAVE case submission and response retrieval into existing systems.
- User Enumerator Attribute Field – allows states to easily match response records with existing voter IDs.
- Save Response PDF Generator – allows states to generate PDFs of SAVE response case details to store as part of the voter file.

After consultation with our state attorney general’s office, I am satisfied that the Department has a lawful interest in reviewing our compliance with federal law. However, I must reiterate my statutory obligation to safeguard the personal identifying information of Ohio’s nearly eight million registered voters. We have a hard-earned national reputation as the Gold Standard for election administration, and we remain committed to maintaining the security of voter data while simultaneously verifying the eligibility of each Ohio voter. In accordance with the Department’s August 14, 2025 letter and our subsequent communications, my office understands that the Department of Justice will use the records only for legitimate governmental purposes and will not disclose any of the provided records to any entity except

as authorized to do so under 52 U.S.C. § 20704. Further, it is our understanding that all federal data-privacy laws, including, but not limited to, the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. § 552(a), and Section 304 of the CRA, 52 U.S.C. § 20704, will be strictly followed. Consistent with this understanding, I have approved the secure transfer of the requested data. We also appreciate your assurance that any notice regarding records identified throughout this process will contain sufficient information to explain why the record is flagged and why DOJ believes it is permissible to remove under federal law.

This action should serve to reinforce that election integrity will always be the top priority of my administration, and that begins with our duty under the law to maintain accurate voter rolls. We remain ready and grateful to partner with you in this effort. Thank you for your leadership.

Yours in service,



Frank LaRose
Ohio Secretary of State