

Good afternoon members of the subcommittee. It is my honor to be invited to represent the Great State of Alabama as its Chief Elections Official.

I bring a unique perspective to today's proceedings, as my career in elections began more than a decade prior to my election as Alabama's 54th Secretary of State, when I served for nearly ten years as Probate Judge, the chief elections official in Pike County, Alabama. That position allows me to view elections with direct knowledge of the administration of elections at both the local and state level. I would impress upon the members of this committee that, although Secretaries are the most visible election officials, many of the most important election functions in Alabama are performed by probate judges, circuit clerks, sheriffs, board of registrars and poll workers who work together with my office to make Alabama's elections system one of the best in the nation.

This perspective motivated my official support for legislation increasing the pay for poll workers, launching programs to assist Probate Judges in

recruiting poll workers and advocating for legislation criminalizing threats to election officials, including poll workers.

In my office, we committed to redirecting federal funds to provide Geographical Information Systems software, GIS, to counties statewide. By making GIS available to county election officials, we achieved a significant improvement in the accuracy of the assignment of voters to the proper precincts, ensuring that each voter receives the proper ballot style when casting their vote.

In Alabama, we have had a strong photo voter ID law on the books for over ten years. We require the use of paper ballots and prohibit the connection of tabulators to the internet. We have also banned ballot harvesting and ranked choice voting. We do not accept any ballot received after election day with the exception of UOCAVA ballots which must be postmarked no later than the date of the election.

I was the state's first Secretary to require a verifiable driver's license or social security number as part of the voter registration process. Upon taking office, we found that more than 340,000 Alabama voters had no verifiable number associated with their voter record. Further, nearly 25,000 of those voters had no number on their record whatsoever. For those without either of these required numbers, sufficient justification is required by sworn affidavit to assign a unique identifier.

The foundation of election integrity is voter file maintenance. Moments after I was sworn in, I signed the letter notifying the Electronic Registration Information Center, also known as ERIC, that Alabama would no longer participate in their program.

My team and I developed and implemented the Alabama Voter Integrity Database, better known as AVID, which utilizes state to state data sharing agreements, partners with the driver license division of the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency, the National Change of Address Database and the

Social Security Administration's national death master index to identify individuals who should be placed on a path for removal from the voter file.

Since taking office more than half a million ineligible voters have been removed from our state's voter file. Our voter file, which was a bloated mess on the day I took office, is now the most accurate record of eligible voters our state has ever had.

Alabama's 2024 Election Cycle was administered with election integrity as the primary goal and that goal was achieved. Alabamians cast 2,272,911 votes in the November 5, 2024 election.

However, two major hurdles remain.

First, the immediate removal of deceased voters from our voter file should be common sense. However, obtaining access to the Social Security

Administration's National Master Death Index was absurdly time consuming and overly burdensome. Unnecessary red tape makes it more difficult than it should be. You, as members of Congress, can cut through that red tape and make this important data immediately available to all 50 states.

Second, my efforts to gain access to noncitizen data held by the United States Citizenship & Immigration Services, USCIS, were repeatedly denied by the previous administration. Fortunately, President Trump's EO directing DHS to cooperate with states to eliminate non-citizens from our voter file will allow batch comparisons of DHS noncitizen data to our state-level voter files, allowing for the immediate removal of those who are illegally registered to vote. Granting states immediate access to this data is crucial. Only United Citizens should participate in our elections.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today. It has been my honor.