



PHIL McGRANE
IDAHO SECRETARY OF STATE

**TESTIMONY OF PHIL MCGRANE
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE STATE OF IDAHO**

**BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS ON
“REVISITING THE 2024 ELECTIONS WITH SECRETARIES OF STATE”**

APRIL 8, 2025

Madam Chair Lee, Ranking Member Sewell, and Members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to participate in today’s hearing. My name is Phil McGrane, and I have the honor of serving as Idaho’s Secretary of State. Before becoming our state’s Chief Election Official, I started in elections the old-fashioned way—counting punch cards and training poll workers back in 2005 as a young election specialist in the Boise area. Since then, I’ve clerked for the U.S. Election Assistance Commission and served as both Chief Deputy and then the elected County Clerk for Idaho’s largest county. Nearly two decades later, I’m still in this work because I believe deeply in the integrity of our democracy and the people who make it function.

Judicial Review

I became known to this subcommittee through an Idaho law that I wrote allowing for [judicial review of elections](#). This law was used in 2023 for a school board race in Jerome County, where two voters residing in the same household were issued absentee ballots for the incorrect school board zone. When the votes were counted, a difference of one vote between the two candidates was found. Due to potential consequences for the election results, the Jerome County clerk petitioned the district court for a judicial review of the election to determine the appropriate course of action. The judge ordered a new election to be held for the race. This is the extent to which my state and I are willing to go to ensure the will of the people is accurately reflected in election outcomes.

2024 Election Look Back

I'm proud to report that the 2024 general election was the most successful in Idaho's history. A record 917,000 Idahoans voted. More than that number alone, voters used every available method to cast their ballot. While most chose to vote in person on Election Day, for the first time ever, more Idahoans voted early in person than by absentee ballot.

And perhaps most remarkably: for the first time in recent memory, not a single race—*not even the most local contest*—required a recount or was legally challenged. That's a testament to the preparation, collaboration, and integrity of our entire elections team statewide.

Idaho's Commitment to Easy, Accurate, and Secure Elections

One highlight I'm especially proud of was the state and county joint commitment to voters. In September 2024, all 44 of Idaho's county clerks joined me on the Capitol steps to sign an [open letter](#) to Idaho voters pledging transparency, security, and trust in the process. Together, we shared our [12 Principles for a Successful Election](#), emphasizing that voting should be Easy, Accurate, and Secure. Communicating these principles, which are uniformly practiced across the state of Idaho, gave Idaho voters piece of mind that regardless of where they cast their vote, their vote would be counted accurately and securely.

Idaho's model proves those values can coexist—we don't have to choose between access and security. We can and *must* have both.

Voter Validation

Our success also extended to safeguarding voter eligibility. Last summer, Governor Brad Little issued an executive order—the Only Citizens Can Vote Act—tasking our office with ensuring that only eligible citizens were on Idaho's voter rolls. I'm proud to say we built a strong partnership with the Idaho Transportation Department, the State Police, and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to make that happen. Starting from a voter list of over 1.1 million voters, we were able to discern that 34 individuals on the voter rolls were indeed non-citizens. While not enough to influence the outcome of an election, we have taken our role seriously in not only removing those individuals and ensuring that they did not vote in the 2024 elections but also working with local, state, and federal law enforcement for investigation and prosecution.

Recommendations

Validating Voters

I am hopeful that today's hearing can be a conversation about how Congress can partner with my peers and me to strengthen voting across the U.S. There is a lot of discussion—through the SAVE Act, President Trump's recent Executive Order, and elsewhere—about validating voter citizenship using DHS's SAVE system. But the reality is that the SAVE system is not a database. It is a patchwork of records from various immigration systems, never designed for election integrity work. DHS made that clear during a recent presentation to the National Association of Secretaries of State.

If Congress truly wants to maintain accurate voter rolls and verify citizenship as much as I do, then I implore you to invest in building the tools to do so. DHS cannot meet these expectations with the system as it stands.

Standardized Photo ID Requirement

My second recommendation is something Congress *can* achieve—something the American people broadly support: a standardized photo ID requirement for voting. Poll after poll shows bipartisan support. A [Gallup poll in 2024](#) showed 84% favor "requiring all voters to provide photo identification at their voting place in order to vote." Interestingly, support was 5 points higher than it was in the [same survey in 2022](#). Similarly, [Pew Research in 2024](#) showed that 81% favor "requiring all voters to show government-issued photo identification to vote." Finally, [Monmouth University in 2021](#) found that 80% favor "requiring voters to show photo identification in order to cast a ballot."

But even more telling is what happens when voters themselves decide. Last week in [Wisconsin](#) and last November in [Nevada](#), voters overwhelmingly passed constitutional amendments requiring photo ID to vote.

In fact, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures, [36 states](#) already ask for or require voter ID. I believe Congress can come together on this. A national photo ID standard that includes free IDs for those who need them would go a long way toward bolstering public confidence in elections nationwide.

Madam Chair Lee, thank you and the subcommittee for the opportunity to testify. I sit before you not just as an official, but as someone deeply proud of the tireless work of our clerks, election staff, poll workers, and volunteers. They are the backbone of American democracy—and they deserve our gratitude, trust, and support.

I look forward to your questions.