



DEAN C. LOGAN
Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk



LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK

United States Senate Committee on Rules and Administration

Spotlight Forum – Election Administration

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TESTIMONY

Dean C. Logan
Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk
Los Angeles County, California

Good afternoon, Senator Padilla and Members of the Committee. My name is Dean Logan, and I have the honor and responsibility of serving as the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk for the County of Los Angeles.

Los Angeles County is the largest, most complex, and most diverse electoral jurisdiction in the country with 88 cities, more than 100 school and community college districts, 55 general and special districts, and approximately 140 unincorporated areas. We serve a richly diverse electorate of nearly 5.8 million registered voters that is larger than the voting population in 42 of the 50 states.

Under the provisions of the Federal Voting Rights Act and applicable state law, we provide voting materials in 19 languages. We maintain and operate the nation's only publicly owned voting system designed and developed for accessibility and security, and to support a voting model adaptable to the demographic make-up of our communities.

As the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, I am one of 58 county election officials in California responsible for voter registration, voter file maintenance, administering federal, state and local elections, and certifying election results. Additionally, my office is responsible for real property recording, vital records, and marriage and business licensing services for the County.

In addition to my position with Los Angeles County, I serve on the Board of Directors and as a past President of the California Association of Clerks and Election Officials, on the Board of Directors for The Election Center (National Association of Election Officials), and on

advisory board for numerous academic and research programs that track and study U.S. elections.

I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the discussion today regarding the proposed Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act and the recent Executive Order on American Elections issued by the White House, both of which have the potential to profoundly impact the administration of elections across the country.

Regarding the proposed SAVE Act, the California Association of Clerks and Election Officials recently submitted a letter of concern that focuses on three key impacts – the risk of disenfranchisement, significant unfunded cost increases that would fall to local government, and concerns associated with imposing criminal penalties on officials and community election workers who are simply fulfilling their legal and civic obligations.

Local election officials across the country understand that citizenship is a requirement for voter registration and voting. As sworn officials with the significant responsibility of ensuring free and fair elections, the field of professional election administrators is dedicated to upholding the law while ensuring that every eligible voter, regardless of personal circumstances, profession, or political affiliation, is welcomed into the democratic process.

As currently drafted, the SAVE Act appears to require new registrants, and those making changes to their registration, to appear in-person at an election office to present documentary proof of citizenship prior to voting for the first time or at the time of voting, if same-day registration is permitted. This requirement could pose significant barriers to military and overseas citizens, unhoused citizens, and voters with disabilities and limited mobility.

Additionally, married women, racial or ethnic minorities, elderly individuals, limited English-speaking citizens, and young voters could face unique challenges in obtaining and presenting the necessary documentation, which may further discourage updates to registration and disenfranchise those who are otherwise eligible. These are subsets of the voting population that are already underrepresented in voter participation and turnout.

The additional list maintenance and record keeping responsibilities associated with the documentary proof of citizenship provisions of the Act, layered on top of existing and comprehensive programs that track new registrations, updates to registrations, and cancelations of registration based on felony incarceration, death, and court ordered conservatorship would significantly increase operational costs and require additional staffing and facilities with no identified funding source.

Of further concern, the SAVE Act would enact criminal penalties and a private right of action against election officials – including election workers/poll workers, when or if non-

citizens are added to the voter roll without exception for administrative error. Given the limited time available and lack of funding for implementation, this creates an untenable environment for recruiting, training, and retaining the workforce necessary to carry out these activities in a manner that prevents error or disenfranchisement. It also sets up the potential for excessive litigation, diverting resources away from and increasing disruption to the voting process.

There are similar concerns with the Executive Order issued by the White House on March 25, 2025, entitled “Preserving and Protecting the Integrity of American Elections.”

While interpretation and application of the Executive Order remain under review and subject to interpretation, an initial assessment indicates that efforts to address the directed changes in the Order, if unchanged, will divert time, resources, and attention from other critical departmental responsibilities and public services.

In addition to directives that mirror the provisions of the SAVE act previously discussed, the Order calls for changes or reductions to the delivery of election services, limits options for voter participation, and potentially requires modification or replacement of voting equipment – all without appropriating funding and, in large measure, reducing or eliminating what little federal funding has been available to support local election administration, voting accessibility, and election security.

Change of this magnitude requires multiple years of planning and careful execution. It would be nearly impossible to complete in the timeframe outlined in the Order without significant risk of administrative error, false positive data matching, and under resourcing other critical elements of election administration and security. Moreover, there is a high likelihood of a resulting drop in voter participation, higher registration data error rates, and non-compliance with conflicting federal and state laws – all at additional public expense.

The mechanics of when, where, and how elections are conducted should never be driven by political directive. These critical processes must be guided by deliberate, thoughtful legislation focused on ensuring eligible and registered voters clearly understand their voting options and can exercise those options without unnecessary barriers.

Election officials across the country are already preparing for the 2026 midterms elections. Successful election administration requires extensive planning, adequate resources, and a well-trained, dedicated workforce. Last-minute changes or unilateral mandates significantly increase the risk of voter confusion and operational inconsistencies that can erode voter confidence.

History has shown the most effective advances in election administration in this country have been those that focused on access, security, and integrity. Landmark laws like the Voting Rights Act, the National Voter Registration Act, and the Help America Vote Act were

drafted in a bipartisan manner with election professionals and voter advocates at the table.

If the true intent is to further strengthen our electoral system, electoral reform proposals should follow this proven model of bipartisan and professional collaboration. Anything less risks consequences that could negatively impact voter access, fairness, and public trust.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to participate today and I look forward to any questions you may have.