



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
HARRISBURG

THE GOVERNOR

June 30, 2017

Kris W. Kobach
Vice Chair
Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Vice Chair Kobach:

We have received your request for the personal information, including partial Social Security Numbers, birth dates and driver license numbers, of every registered voter in the state. The commonwealth cannot share this information.

Your request is problematic for several reasons. First, you have suggested that you would make this information public. Wholesale public disclosure of individual voter records would be inappropriate, and it is contrary to Pennsylvania law. Second, you have given no assurances that you will handle such data securely. More broadly, your request implies that your office may undertake a systematic effort to suppress the vote in Pennsylvania.

In addition, I have serious reservations about the true intentions of this effort in light of the false statements this administration has made regarding voting integrity, the historical suppression of voting rights, and the way that such data has been used in the past.

First, during the campaign, then-candidate Trump repeatedly and falsely suggested, without evidence, that there existed wide-spread voter fraud in Pennsylvania and in particular in certain population centers in our commonwealth. These claims were untrue and unsupported by any credible evidence. Even worse, after the election, then-President-elect Trump suggested that millions of votes across the country had been cast illegally. Again, then President-Elect Trump provided no evidence in support of his claims. These attacks on our most important democratic institution – the right to vote - remain unproven and lack even a scintilla of support.

Second, I have grave concerns your request is a mere pretense for pursuing restrictions on the fundamental right of citizens to vote. Here in Pennsylvania, our Courts have already struck down a voter identification program, holding that such program placed unconstitutional and undue burden on this fundamental right. I have no interest in contributing to any effort to suppress the right to vote or create unnecessary or unfair burdens on voters.

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Lastly, my predecessor sought to participate in your failed Inter-State Crosscheck Program, only to have local election officials explain that the program was useless, and even hurtful to improving the integrity of our election systems. The Crosscheck data was riddled with errors and inaccurate. Even so, the program discovered absolutely no double voting within the commonwealth.

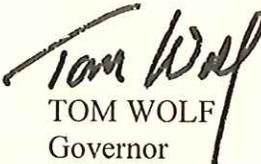
Of course, integrity of the vote is of utmost importance to me and my administration. As such, my administration has partnered with the PEW Charitable Trusts' and the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) to help ensure the integrity of our voter rolls. ERIC provides a more sophisticated and more reliable matching process than Interstate Crosscheck and consequently delivers a high level of confidence in the data that it provided to Pennsylvania. We are satisfied with ERIC and do not need any further assistance.

That said, like any citizen, you are welcome to purchase the publicly available voter file from the Pennsylvania Department of State. It can be purchased at pavoterservices.pa.gov for \$20. Of course, in accordance with Pennsylvania law, such data may not be used for commercial or other purposes, except as required by 25 Pa.C.S. sections 1207(b) & 1404(c)(2). Further, such information may not be published on the Internet, as such publication is prohibited by 4 Pa. Code sections 183.13(g) & 183.14(k).

At the end of the day, I would be more interested in hearing from the White House how they are protecting our elections from outside, illegal and international influence, including misinformation disseminated on the Internet. Further, I would support any effort to invest more federal funding in protecting our voter systems and improving voting technology.

The right to vote is absolute and I have no confidence that you seek to bolster it. Voter suppression is undemocratic and I will not allow Pennsylvania to participate in this process to further the trend of suppression seen across the country.

Sincerely,


TOM WOLF
Governor