United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 29, 2026

The Honorable Pamela J. Bondi
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Bondi:

We write to urge the Department of Justice (the Department or DOJ) to stop its intensifying pressure campaign to coerce states into handing over their voter rolls, which include voters' personally identifiable information (PII), in apparent violation of federal law. We strongly oppose the Department's lawsuits against states, which are unauthorized attempts to centralize this data, that in addition to posing serious risks to voter privacy, data security, and national security, also invite unwarranted voter roll purges and undermine state and local election officials' list maintenance efforts.

The unauthorized nature of these lawsuits was exposed by your January 24 letter to Minnesota Governor Tim Walz seeking voter rolls as a condition to ending the dangerous recent deployment of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents to the state that has cost two innocent Americans their lives.[1] This letter marked an unacceptable escalation of DOJ's campaign to centralize state voter rolls and sensitive personal information under its control. It is also the clearest admission that the Department knows it lacks authority to obtain state voter rolls and is instead resorting to strong arm tactics and intimidation by force. The whole country now sees this pursuit of state voter rolls for what it is, nothing more than an "apparent ransom."[2]

The Department should immediately schedule a briefing for relevant Senate offices and Committees and provide thorough written responses to previous questions from Congress about these activities. In light of the Department's continued pursuit of state voter rolls, the millions of voters' information it already has, and two federal court rulings rejecting its litigation,[3] we raise further questions below.

---

[1] Tara Suter, *Bondi outlines terms for Walz to 'restore the rule of law' in Minnesota after fatal shooting: Reports*, The Hill (Jan. 25, 2026), https://thehill.com/homenews/state-watch/5705179-bondi-walz-letter-immigration-fraud-voter-rolls/.

[2] Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State Steve Simon, Press Release (Jan. 25, 2026), https://sos.mn.gov/about-the-office/news-room/statement-from-secretary-simon/.

[3] On January 23, 2026, a federal judge in Georgia dismissed the Department's lawsuit seeking voter information from the state, ruling the government has sued in the wrong city, *see*, Jeff Amy and Charlotte Kramon, *Judge rules US Justice Department Filed a Lawsuit over Georgia Voter Data in the Wrong City* (Jan. 23, 2026), https://apnews.com/article/georgia-voter-information-lawsuit-9429dd306e9aa70cd4c823927cfae101.

Since early November 2025, the Department has sued an additional 16 states and the District of Columbia for failure to produce their full voter registration lists upon request, bringing the total number of states targeted by lawsuits to 24.[4] DOJ lacks legal authority to compel states to turn over possession of their voter registration lists. Meanwhile, President Trump has made the Administration's policy very clear, asserting, falsely:

> "Remember, the States are merely an 'agent' for the Federal Government in counting and tabulating the votes. They must do what the Federal Government, as represented by the President of the United States, tells them, FOR THE GOOD OF OUR COUNTRY, to do." [emphasis in original][5]

This statement, by a President who openly directs the Department's activities, is a chilling assertion of illegal power that is completely at odds with federalism and our constitutional structure, which provides explicit roles for states and Congress but none for the Executive Branch.[6]

On January 14 and 15, 2026, two federal judges in Oregon and California, respectively, clearly rejected two of DOJ's voter roll lawsuits.[7] In dismissing DOJ's case against California for its voter rolls, the court stated, "[w]hile the DOJ has told this Court that its purpose for demanding the sensitive voter information of Californians is 'voter roll maintenance enforcement and compliance,' representations made by the DOJ elsewhere paint a starkly different picture that this Court cannot ignore."[8] The judge went on to discuss various statements by DOJ officials that led him to conclude that "the DOJ's campaign to collect sensitive voter data . . . paints an alarming picture regarding the centralization of Americans' information within the Executive Branch — without approval from Congress or Americans themselves."[9] The Department should take heed of those rulings and cease this litigation campaign that poses serious risks to voters' data privacy, risks unwarranted voter purges, and will waste millions of federal and state taxpayer funds if it continues unchecked. The California court, in particular, correctly recognized that the Civil Rights Act of 1960's Title III disclosure requirements on which

---

[4] As of January 28, 2026, DOJ has sued: Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Hawai'i, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Washington, *see*, Kaylie Martinez-Ochoa, et al., *Tracker of Justice Department Request for Voter Information,* Brennan Center for Justice (updated Jan. 23, 2026), https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/tracker-justice-department-requests-voter-information.

[5] Donald J. Trump [@realDonaldTrump], Aug. 18, 2025, TruthSocial.com., https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/115049485680941254.

[6] *See* U.S. CONST. art. I, § 4, cl. 1.

[7] Miles Park, *The DOJ's Effort to Get Voter Data from California is Blocked*, NPR (Jan. 15, 2026), https://www.npr.org/2026/01/15/nx-s1-5678969/doj-voter-data-california-dismissal.

[8] *United States v. Shirley Weber*, No. 2:25-CV-09149, Order Granting Def.'s Mot. To Dismiss at 16 (C.D. Cal. Jan. 15, 2026).

[9] *Id.* at 19.

the Department relies in these lawsuits were passed to end state policies that prevented Black Americans from voting.[10] Thus, the Department may not use them as a blank check to amass any election data it wants – especially when the effect of that data collection could prevent eligible Americans from voting.

While most states are resisting this illegal voter roll grab, we are gravely concerned by the amount of sensitive data the Department has already amassed on millions of American voters. The Department has failed to provide Congress, or the public, any information on how it is maintaining this vast amount of data, the guardrails in place to protect state voter information, how the data is to be used, or who in the federal government has access to this sensitive data. The quantity of data in DOJ's possession has dramatically increased now that Texas has recently joined at least 7 other states who have handed over their complete lists of registered voters during this pressure campaign from President Trump and DOJ.[11] It bears noting that Texas already (and separately) processed its voter registration list, consisting of more than 18 million voters, through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Systemic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) program. That review resulted in the referral of 33 people — 0.000001% of registered voters — to the Texas Attorney General as to whether they "may have" voted illegally in the 2024 election.[12] Given recent changes to the SAVE program by DHS, we are concerned that individuals may be mistakenly identified as non-citizens by your activities and their voting rights undermined.

Without public transparency, it appears that DOJ is coordinating its voter roll acquisition campaign with DHS's SAVE program along with outside election denier groups such as Cleta Mitchell's Election Integrity Network. On November 18, ten states' chief election officers wrote to you and Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem seeking clarification on whether your agencies had "actively misled election officials regarding

---

[10] *See id.* at 3.

[11] As of January 28, 2026, at least Arkansas, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Texas and Wyoming have provided DOJ with complete voter lists, *see*, Giulia Carbonaro, *Map Show States that have Handed over Voter Information to Trump Admin,* Newsweek (Jan. 11, 2026), https://www.newsweek.com/map-states-handed-over-voter-information-trump-admin-11341530; Natalia Contreras and Gabby Birenbaum, *Texas hands over complete lists of registered voters to Trump administration,* THE TEXAS TRIBUNE (Jan. 9, 2026), https://www.texastribune.org/2026/01/09/texas-voter-roll-trump-administration-justice-department-democrats-dnc/.

[12] Texas Secretary of State, *Texas Completes Citizenship Verifications in the SAVE Database* (Oct. 20, 2025), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/about/newsreleases/2025/102025.shtml. Additionally, more states such as Alabama and Montana, have found significantly small numbers of voters that need additional verification after running their state voter registration records through the SAVE program. *See*, Colin Wood, *Alabama Secretary of State says he found 25 noncitizen voters,* Statescoop (Jan.13, 2026), https://statescoop.com/alabama-secretary-state-save-noncitizen-voters/; Hailey Smalley, *Initial Review of State Voter Rolls IDs 23 potential noncitizens,* Daily Inter Lake (Jan. 14, 2026), https://dailyinterlake.com/news/2026/jan/14/initial-review-of-state-voter-rolls-ids-23-potential-noncitizens/. Out of 49.5 million voter registrations from across the country that have been run through the SAVE program, only 0.02% have been flagged as potential noncitizens. *See*, Alexandra Berzon and Nick Corasaniti, *Initial Review Finds No Widespread Illegal Voting by Immigrants, Puncturing a Trump Claim,* N.Y. TIMES (Jan. 14, 2026), https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/14/us/politics/noncitizen-voters-save-tool.html.

the uses of voter data," so far with no response.[13] Last month, 70 county clerks in Missouri sent a letter to state House and Senate leadership describing the SAVE program as flawed given that it has erroneously flagged individuals known by the county clerks to be U.S. citizens, including voters the clerks personally registered at naturalization ceremonies.[14] Just last week, DOJ admitted in court pleadings that rogue DOGE employees at the Social Security Administration (SSA) entered into a secret agreement to share SSA data unlawfully with an outside group for election-related purposes.[15] The Department owes Congress and the public an explanation of what it plans to do with state voter roll data in its possession and what safeguards are in place to prevent further unauthorized misuse.

As Senators representing states being sued by DOJ for their voters' personal information, we request the Department provide complete answers to the questions posed in the November 6, 2025, letter from Senators Padilla and Durbin, along with the following additional questions:

(1) Has the Department, at any other point in history, ever sought to accumulate the voter registration lists for every state in unison, for any purpose?

(2) How many states' voter registration lists does the Department currently have in its possession? Which states?
   a. In what format were the state voter registration lists received by the Department? By what means were they transferred to the Department?
   b. What information is included in the voter files received by the Department beyond voter name and address? Do the voter files include date of birth, full or partial Social Security Number, and/or full or partial driver's license number? Do the voter files include information about past participation in elections or voters' affiliation with political parties?
   c. Do the voter files received by the Department include records with addresses withheld from the public, like records relating to peace officers, public officials, or victims of domestic violence?
   d. For states that have not shared voter rolls, is DOJ reaching out to local officials to request the information? If yes, who are you reaching out to, and has anyone shared such information?

(3) What Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs), Computer Matching Agreements (CMAs) – or other arrangements not committed

[13] Ltr. from Chief Election Officials to Attorney General Bondi and Secretary Noem (Nov. 18, 2025), 2025-11-18-chief-election-officials-letter-to-dhs-and-doj.pdf.
[14] Alexandra Berzon and Nick Corasaniti, *Initial Review Finds No Widespread Illegal Voting by Immigrants, Puncturing a Trump Claim,* N.Y. TIMES (Jan. 14, 2026), https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/14/us/politics/noncitizen-voters-save-tool.html.
[15] Kyle Cheney, *Trump Administration concedes team may have misused Social Security data*, Politico (Jan. 20, 2026), https://www.politico.com/news/2026/01/20/trump-musk-doge-social-security-00737245.

to memoranda form – currently exist between the Department and the states regarding the state voter registration lists?

a. Does the Department have any MOUs, MOAs, CMAs — or other arrangements not committed to memoranda form — with other federal agencies for the use of the lists?
b. If so, which ones and for which purposes?

(4) Has the Department shared the state voter registration lists, or information contained therein, with any contractors, outside groups or other state/federal agencies or components beyond the Civil Rights Division? If so, which ones, for which purposes? Please provide any relevant MOUs, MOAs, matching agreements, or similar agreements outlining the terms or processes for sharing such data with outside groups or other state/federal agencies or components within DOJ.

(5) Where are the state voter registration lists stored? If electronically stored, what format or form? What type of network access is there?

a. What safeguards are in place to ensure that voters' social security number, address, date of birth, party affiliation and any other PII found in state voter registration lists in the Department's possession remain private and uncompromised?
b. When will the data be destroyed? If not destroyed, how long will the data be retained? For what additional purposes?
c. Has the DOJ Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) been consulted on cybersecurity best practices for storing this data?
d. In compliance with the Federal Information Security Modernization Act and 44 U.S.C.A. § 3554(b) in particular, has the Department "develop[ed], document[ed], and implement[ed] an agency-wide information security program" based on the required risk assessment and consistent with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) standards and guidelines issued pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 11331?
e. Has the DOJ Office of Privacy and Civil Liberties been consulted on your activities to ensure that Americans' rights are not undermined?
f. What actions is DOJ taking to ensure that others who have access to voter data have effective, mandated cybersecurity and privacy measures in place?

(6) Who at the Department has access to the state voter registration lists? Please provide a list of components and offices with access, including but not limited to those within the Civil Rights Division.

(7) Is DOJ running the voter registration lists through the DHS SAVE program? If so, is DHS retaining the information in any databases? Is DOJ running the data

through any other databases or systems at DOJ or any other federal agencies? If so, which ones?

a. Is DOJ flagging potential voters for review or removal from state voter registration lists?

(8) Given that federal courts have now confirmed DOJ's failure to comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974, has DOJ commenced an investigation into the criminal liability of employees associated with the effort to acquire the voter rolls?

The Department has a responsibility to respond to congressional correspondence and oversight requests in a timely manner. Due to the unprecedented nature of these actions by DOJ and the very real threat to the voting rights of millions of Americans voters, we seek written responses to these questions and those posed in the November 6, 2025, letter no later than February 12, 2026. In addition, we request a briefing on the Department's activities regarding state voter rolls provided for Senate Rules and Judiciary Committees and Senators' offices in states that are the subject of DOJ litigation on or before February 26, 2026.

Sincerely,

Alex Padilla
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee
on Rules and Administration

Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Senate
Committee on the Judiciary

Gary C. Peters
United States Senator

Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator

Raphael Warnock
United States Senator

Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

Brian Schatz
United States Senator

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator

Ruben Gallego
United States Senator

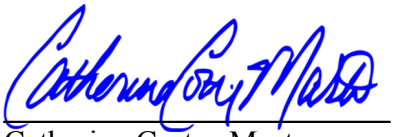
Angela D. Alsobrooks
United States Senator

Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator

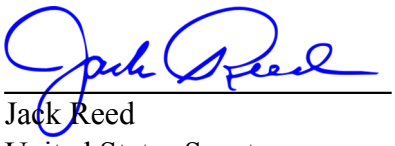
Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

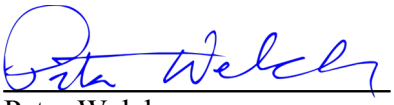
Mark Kelly
United States Senator



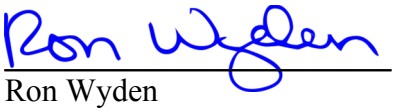
Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



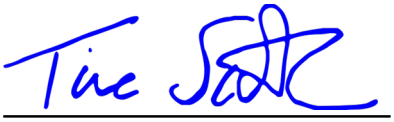
Jack Reed
United States Senator



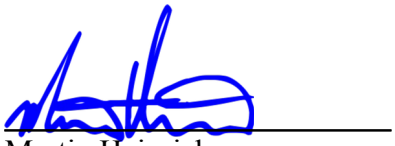
Peter Welch
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator

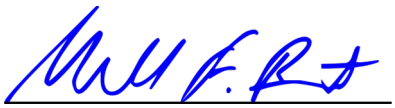


Tina Smith
United States Senator

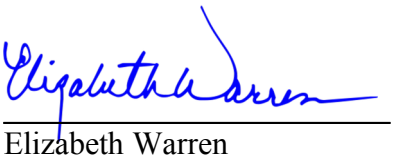


Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

Bernard Sanders
United States Senator