



**State Representative
Munira Abdullahi**

September 10, 2024

The Honorable Frank LaRose
Office of the Secretary of State
22 N. Fourth Street, 16th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Sent via Electronic Mail

Re: New Citizen Voter Registration

Dear Secretary LaRose:

I am writing to you regarding your recent cancellations of voting records for individuals whom your office has identified as non-citizens. As you know, according to the most recent published data from the United States Citizen and Immigration Services, in Ohio alone, 16,010 naturalization applications were approved during the 2023 fiscal year.¹ That number encompasses the 3,662 naturalization applications approved from the Cincinnati office, 4,648 from the Cleveland office, and 7,700 from the Columbus office, which is a significant number of American Citizens who have become legally eligible to vote in and contribute to the free and fair elections that are so important to the survival of our nation's democracy.

As a lawmaker who regularly interacts with New Americans, I am interested in learning more about how you came to your conclusions and the process by which your office is engaging in evaluating the veracity of the voter files while protecting the most fundamental right our citizens, including our New Americans, have in a democracy: the right to vote. It is my understanding that your decision to remove allegedly identified "non-citizens" derives from Ohio Rev. Code § 3503.151 and Ohio Rev. Code § 3503.152, along with the DATA Act and the constitutional amendment re: citizen voting. I would like to understand what data and processes you used when examining whether an individual has sufficiently shown their citizenship status, and later, when deciding to take action. Therefore, I have included the following questions:

¹ <https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship-resource-center/naturalization-statistics>

- 1) What review did your administration do to determine that the SAVE information was up to date for newly naturalized citizens?
- 2) Do you rely solely on the SAVE database or does your office independently contact US Citizenship and Immigration Services to ensure you have the most up to date information on newly naturalized citizens, since naturalization ceremonies are held at least twice a month?
- 3) How is it reflected in the data when a voter interacts with the BMV, per Ohio Rev. Code § 3503.152, and for the second time indicates they are ineligible to vote?
- 4) If an individual, as in the question above, responds honestly that they are ineligible to vote, is that individual's name/case sent to the Attorney General for prosecution simply because they honestly filled out a voter registration form they were handed by a state agency (BMV)? If so, what is the basis for your action?
- 5) How much time before an election do you send a first notice to an individual requesting documentation demonstrating they are a citizen and eligible to vote? A second notice? How much time do you allow for submission of the documentation before you cancel their registration?
- 6) When a citizen is making an online address update with the BMV, where is citizenship documentation submitted?
- 7) What is the process for someone who believes they were removed in error to show "proof of citizenship" to the Board of Elections?
- 8) On what date(s) did your office receive data from the BMV under each directive and on what date(s) was information cross referenced with the SAVE petition?
- 9) Where can the public view the names of individuals submitted by you to the Attorney General for prosecution?

Given the critical nature of ensuring eligible voters are not disenfranchised, I request that you provide an answer to these questions no later than the end of business on September 17, 2024.

Respectfully,



Representative Munira Abdullahi
Ohio House District 9