

Kaiti Lenhart ★ FLAGLER COUNTY SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

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STAY REGISTERED AND VOTE!

AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL FLAGLER COUNTY VOTERS

July 7, 2017

The past several days have been very busy here in the Elections Office with phone calls and emails from voters in response to the Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity. Voters are concerned about their privacy. We have heard from many voters who want to know why this information is being provided and some who have even requested to cancel their voter registration. One voter removing their registration is too many, and we have heard from several just this afternoon. Unfortunately, the politicizing of elections administration has yet again resulted in voter apathy while undermining trust in democracy.

One strength of our elections process is the fact that it is decentralized. Elections in Florida are independently conducted in each county by competent, transparent, elected Supervisors of Elections who are working for you every day to maintain the integrity of the voter rolls and security of the process.

In May 2017, President Trump signed an executive order to create the Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity. Here is a link to the executive order:

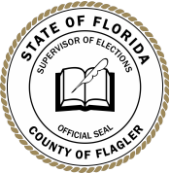
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/05/11/presidential-executive-order-establishment-presidential-advisory>

The Commission has requested each of the 50 states provide voter information. Their request is to the state of Florida, not to Flagler County. The request included, “full first and last names of all registrants, middle names or initials if available, addresses, dates of birth, political party (if recorded in your state), last four digits of social security number if available, voter history (elections voted in) from 2006 onward, active/inactive status, cancelled status, information regarding any felony convictions, information regarding voter registration in another state, information regarding military status, and overseas citizen information.”

In Florida, much of this information is a public record and readily available to any person who makes a request. Yesterday, the Florida Secretary of State responded and agreed to a partial release Florida voter information in response to the Commission. Not all of the data will be provided, as I expected. This has been treated as a public records request and in the state of Florida, your Social Security number and Driver's License / Florida ID numbers are exempt from public disclosure. Florida will only provide that information which is already publicly available. Just to clarify, this request was made of the Florida Secretary of State, not of Flagler County. Read the full response here:

<http://www.flaglerelections.com/Portals/Flagler/pdfs/DOS-Letter-to-Presidential-Advisory-Commission-on-Election-Integrity.pdf>

This public information being provided from Florida to the Commission includes: voter name, addresses, date of birth, political affiliation, registration status and voting history.



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You vote by secret ballot, so the public voter history information is not “how” you voted, but instead, the elections in which you participate. Social security numbers are never public record and they are not shared to anyone who requests public records by the state of Florida or your local Elections Office.

Many voters in Flagler County, myself included, are deeply concerned with the creation of a Federal voter registration database which may contain personal information of Florida voters. Voter information is used in Florida for one purpose: to verify a voter’s eligibility. A Federal voter database, in my opinion, would be a misuse of the necessary information we collect in the process of conducting elections. The security of any voter’s personal information, whether or not it is a public record, is always our highest priority in Flagler County. It has been reported that the Commission plans to run this data against other Federal databases, therefore we should all be prepared for an overwhelming amount of false positives. I am remembering the "voter purge" of 2012, and that was only data being improperly analyzed in one state, not over 200 million voters nationwide.

In an effort to promote transparency in the elections process and introduce the public to our new voting system which was recently installed in April, we are hosting an Open House and Mock Election on July 18th from 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. All Flagler County voters are cordially invited to attend. Enjoy a personal tour of the Elections Office and cast your ballot for your "Favorite Flagler County" parks, events, scenic tours, etc. Election results will be available after the polls close at 6:00 P.M. More information:

<http://www.flaglerelections.com/2017-open-house>

Voter participation is essential for the success of our nation and this is the battle of Elections Supervisors across the state of Florida. The Flagler County Elections Team works every day to ensure and protect your right to vote. It is terribly disheartening to have received even one request from a voter to cancel their voter registration. If you have considered this, I would ask that you remember your vote is your voice in government. Your vote is counted in every election. This past Tuesday we just celebrated together Independence Day, the founding of this great nation, in honor of all who fought and died for our freedom. An active, informed electorate builds a strong community. Stay registered AND vote in every election!

Please do not hesitate to contact the Elections Office if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

/s/
Kaiti Lenhart
Supervisor of Elections