



May 11, 2020

Wyoming Secretary of State Edward A. Buchanan
Secretary of State's Office
Herschler Building East
122 W 25th St
Suite 100
Cheyenne, WY 82002-0020

Re: Protecting Elections During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Dear Secretary of State Buchanan:

The Equality State Policy Center and our 30 member organizations throughout Wyoming wish to thank you and your staff for your ongoing work in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and your office's dedication to protecting the integrity of our elections during these challenging times.

Your office has been proactive in researching and analyzing a broad range of options for Wyoming and how we might best conduct the upcoming 2020 primaries and general elections.

In the spirit of these efforts to advance our collective interests as citizens and voters, we respectfully submit our support for the following measures.

- 1. Allow for voter registration by mail to help protect public health, as well as the health of County officials and employees.**
 - The Wyoming Secretary of State is empowered by WY Stat § 22-2-121 (f) “to issue directives to county election officers necessary to ensure the proper conduct of elections, including voter registration and elector participation when there is a declared natural disaster or other impending or declared emergency which interferes with an election.”
 - In the midst of the current pandemic, in the interest of protecting the integrity of our elections while also doing everything we can to protect public health, a directive to county election officers waiving the requirement that voter registration forms be notarized in person benefits all Wyoming voters.
 - Such a directive ensures the integrity of the process, and it would allow citizens to mail in their registration forms and supporting documents rather than going to the County Clerk's Office in person.
 - These applications would be verified by the County Clerk in the same manner they are today.
- 2. Allow all registered voters to vote via absentee ballot in 2020.**
 - This measure would help ensure that anyone who wishes to vote will not be disenfranchised due to concerns about contracting the potentially deadly COVID-19 virus.

- This would allow people who have the virus, or who suspect they might be carrying it, to vote from home without putting poll workers, election judges, fellow community members, and other voters at risk.
- 3. Ensure sufficient in-person voting locations.**
- The need for an adequate number of safe in-person voting locations will be especially critical to accommodate appropriate social-distancing and sanitization protocols.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these recommendations, for your dedication to protecting elections in Wyoming, and for your service on behalf of the citizens of this great state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Chris Merrill", written over a light yellow rectangular background.

Chris Merrill
Executive Director
Equality State Policy Center

cc:

Deputy Secretary of State Karen Wheeler
Election Division Director Kai Schon