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Date: Wed, Oct 23, 2024, 3:48 PM

Subject: Follow Up Regarding Freeze Period

To:

Cc: Kelley, Bailey <[Bailey.Kelley@sos.iowa.gov](mailto:Bailey.Kelley@sos.iowa.gov)>, Nelson, Joshua <[Joshua.Nelson@sos.iowa.gov](mailto:Joshua.Nelson@sos.iowa.gov)>, Gookin, Eric <[Eric.Gookin@sos.iowa.gov](mailto:Eric.Gookin@sos.iowa.gov)>, Ross, Michael <[Michael.Ross@sos.iowa.gov](mailto:Michael.Ross@sos.iowa.gov)>, Johnson, Christy <[Christy.Johnson@sos.iowa.gov](mailto:Christy.Johnson@sos.iowa.gov)>, Lynch, Dylan <[Dylan.Lynch@sos.iowa.gov](mailto:Dylan.Lynch@sos.iowa.gov)>, Cole, Dale <[Dale.Cole@sos.iowa.gov](mailto:Dale.Cole@sos.iowa.gov)>, Huston, Sean <[Sean.Huston@sos.iowa.gov](mailto:Sean.Huston@sos.iowa.gov)>, Hicok, Wes <[Wes.Hicok@sos.iowa.gov](mailto:Wes.Hicok@sos.iowa.gov)>

Commissioners and County Attorneys:

The following information is not related to yesterday's non-citizen guidance.

This is specific to information received on September 20, 2024, when we sent an email to all counties with the subject line: "UOCAVA Reminders". In the last paragraph of the email, we reminded everyone of the pre-General Election 70-day freeze period on processing voter registration challenge cancellations under Iowa Code § 48A.14. We included that reminder in the email because someone alerted us that there were voter registration challenges being brought across the state and we wanted to remind everyone of the freeze period.

We were recently alerted by a vendor of ours, VoteShield, that a number of counties appear to have continued processing challenge-related cancellations during this 70-day freeze period. VoteShield is a non-profit that helps us monitor voter registration data for anomalies.

Additionally, in some cases, the cancellation reason code was incorrect. When voters are cancelled as a result of the challenge procedure, the reason code used should always be "CH - Challenge Hearing".

§ 48A.14 only prohibits the actual processing in I-Voters of the challenge. It does not prohibit the rest of the challenge procedure (i.e. you can do everything except actually cancelling the registration.)

There are a couple of exceptions to this 70-day freeze period. First, if a challenge is received within 20 days of a new registration or a change to a voter's extant registration, it can be processed at the time the auditor determines there is sufficient evidence to warrant cancellation. Second, if the challenge is brought because a registrant is now deceased, it can be processed immediately, if the evidence presented is consistent with that described by 48A.30.

If the information that we have is correct, and your county did process cancellations as part of a voter registration challenge, we *strongly* suggest your offices meet to discuss whether reversing those challenges until after election day is prudent.

Sincerely,

**EMMA R. OVERSCHMIDT**

**Elections Administrator**

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