



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: October 26, 2026

Contact: Erin Clausen
(805) 788-2130
eclausen@co.slo.ca.us

Statement from SLO County Clerk-Recorder and Registrar of Voters Elaina Cano Regarding U.S. Department of Justice Demand

On October 23, 2026, a representative of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) hand-delivered a letter to the San Luis Obispo County Elections Office that demanded confidential voter registration information and action on my part that would affect certain Vote-by-Mail ballots based on allegations of voter ineligibility.

As the elected Clerk-Recorder and Registrar of Voters for San Luis Obispo County, I take my responsibility to administer secure and accurate elections extremely seriously.

Let me be unequivocal: My office follows the law, protects our voters' confidential information, and counts every legally cast ballot.

Federal and state laws establish clear requirements for determining voter eligibility, maintaining voter registration records, safeguarding confidential voter information, and processing ballots. Our office follows those requirements consistently and without exception.

California law also provides specific procedures for challenging a voter's eligibility and challenging a Vote-by-Mail ballot. Elections Code Sections 15105 and 15106 establish requirements governing challenges to Vote-by-Mail voters, including when and how those challenges may be made and the evidence necessary to support them. These procedures exist to protect the integrity of elections while ensuring that eligible voters are not improperly denied their right to vote.

The demands presented in the DOJ's letter are not a substitute for those legally prescribed procedures. A list of individuals alleged to be ineligible to vote does not, on its own, authorize our office to set aside their ballots or disregard established election law.

Likewise, California law strictly governs the disclosure of confidential voter registration information. We will not release protected voter information without appropriate legal authority, nor will we alter established election procedures in response to demands that are inconsistent with our legal obligations.

We take allegations of improper voter registration seriously and will always cooperate with lawful investigations conducted through appropriate channels. But cooperation does not mean setting aside the laws we are sworn to uphold.

Our County Counsel's Office has acknowledged receipt of the DOJ correspondence and is reviewing the matter to determine an appropriate formal response.

With Election Day approaching on November 3, I want to assure San Luis Obispo County voters that our focus remains where it belongs: conducting a secure, fair, accurate, and transparent election.

Our voters deserve to know that their personal information is protected, their eligibility is determined according to law, and their legally cast ballots will be counted. Those commitments are not negotiable.

Elaina Cano

County Clerk-Recorder and Registrar of Voters
San Luis Obispo County

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