

By: Senator(s) Sojourner

To: Elections

SENATE BILL NO. 2506

1 AN ACT TO PROVIDE THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE SHALL
 2 PROMULGATE RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE VERIFICATION BY THE
 3 REGISTRAR OF A PERSON'S ELIGIBILITY TO BE AN ELECTOR; TO PROVIDE
 4 THAT THOSE RULES AND REGULATIONS SHALL ALSO PRESCRIBE THE
 5 PROCEDURE FOR VERIFYING A PERSON'S CITIZENSHIP IN THE UNITED
 6 STATES; TO AMEND SECTIONS 23-15-33 AND 23-15-165, MISSISSIPPI CODE
 7 OF 1972, TO CONFORM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

9 **SECTION 1.** (1) The Secretary of State shall promulgate
 10 rules and regulations for a registrar's verification of a person's
 11 eligibility to be an elector under Section 23-15-11.

12 (2) These rules and regulations shall prescribe the
 13 procedure for verifying an applicant's United States citizenship
 14 either:

15 (a) Through the Statewide Elections Management System;

16 or

17 (b) By inspection of at least one (1) document, the
 18 list of which shall include, but not be limited to, a birth
 19 certificate, social security card and military identification
 20 card.



21 **SECTION 2.** Section 23-15-33, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
22 amended as follows:

23 23-15-33. (1) The registrar shall verify that an applicant
24 for registration to vote is eligible to be an elector according to
25 the rules and regulations promulgated by the Secretary of State.
26 No person shall be registered as provided in subsections (2) and
27 (3) of this section unless the registrar verifies his eligibility.

28 (* * *2) Every person entitled to be registered as an
29 elector in compliance with the laws of this state and who has
30 signed his or her name on and properly completed the application
31 for registration to vote shall be registered by the county
32 registrar in the voting precinct of the residence of such person
33 through the Statewide Elections Management System.

34 (* * *3) Every person entitled to be registered as an
35 elector in compliance with the laws of this state and who
36 registers to vote pursuant to the National Voter Registration Act
37 of 1993 shall be registered by the county registrar in the voting
38 precinct of the residence of such person through the Statewide
39 Elections Management System.

40 **SECTION 3.** Section 23-15-165, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
41 amended as follows:

42 23-15-165. (1) The Office of the Secretary of State, in
43 cooperation with the county registrars and election commissioners,
44 shall procure, implement and maintain an electronic information
45 processing system and programs capable of maintaining a



46 centralized database of all registered voters in the state. The
47 system shall encompass software and hardware, at both the state
48 and county level, software development training, conversion and
49 support and maintenance for the system. This system shall be
50 known as the "Statewide Elections Management System" and shall
51 constitute the official record of registered voters in every
52 county of the state.

53 (2) The Office of the Secretary of State shall develop and
54 implement the Statewide Elections Management System so that the
55 registrar and election commissioners of each county shall:

56 (a) Verify that an applicant that is registering to
57 vote in that county is not registered to vote in another county;

58 (b) Be notified automatically that a registered voter
59 in its county has registered to vote in another county;

60 (c) Receive regular reports of death, changes of
61 address and convictions for disenfranchising crimes that apply to
62 voters registered in the county; * * *

63 (d) Retain all present functionality related to, but
64 not limited to, the use of voter roll data and to implement such
65 other functionality as the law requires to enhance the maintenance
66 of accurate county voter records and related jury selection and
67 redistricting programs * * *; and

68 (e) Verify that an applicant who is registering to vote
69 in such county is a United States citizen.



70 (3) As a part of the procurement and implementation of the
71 system, the Office of the Secretary of State shall, with the
72 assistance of the advisory committee, procure services necessary
73 to convert current voter registration records in the counties into
74 a standard, industry accepted file format that can be used on the
75 Statewide Elections Management System. Thereafter, all official
76 voter information shall be maintained on the Statewide Elections
77 Management System. The standard industry accepted format of data
78 was reviewed and approved by a majority of the advisory committee
79 created in subsection (5) of this section after consultation with
80 the Circuit Clerks Association and the format may not be changed
81 without consulting the Circuit Clerks Association.

82 (4) The Secretary of State may, with the assistance of the
83 advisory committee, adopt rules and regulations necessary to
84 administer the Statewide Elections Management System. The rules
85 and regulations shall at least:

86 (a) Provide for the establishment and maintenance of a
87 centralized database for all voter registration information in the
88 state;

89 (b) Provide procedures for integrating data into the
90 centralized database;

91 (c) Provide security to ensure that only the registrar,
92 or his or her designee or other appropriate official, as the law
93 may require, can add information to, delete information from and
94 modify information in the system;



95 (d) Provide the registrar or his or her designee or
96 other appropriate official, as the law may require, access to the
97 system at all times, including the ability to download copies of
98 the industry standard file, for all purposes related to their
99 official duties, including, but not limited to, exclusive access
100 for the purpose of printing all local pollbooks;

101 (e) Provide security and protection of all information
102 in the system and monitor the system to ensure that unauthorized
103 access is not allowed;

104 (f) Provide a procedure that will allow the registrar,
105 or his or her designee or other appropriate official, as the law
106 may require, to identify the precinct to which a voter should be
107 assigned; and

108 (g) Provide a procedure for phasing in or converting
109 existing manual and computerized voter registration systems in
110 counties to the Statewide Elections Management System.

111 (5) The Secretary of State established an advisory committee
112 to assist in developing system specifications, procurement,
113 implementation and maintenance of the Statewide Elections
114 Management System. The committee included two (2) representatives
115 from the Circuit Clerks Association, appointed by the association;
116 two (2) representatives from the Election Commissioners
117 Association of Mississippi, appointed by the association; one (1)
118 member of the Mississippi Association of Supervisors, or its
119 staff, appointed by the association; the Director of the Stennis



120 Institute of Government at Mississippi State University, or his or
121 her designee; the Executive Director of the Department of
122 Information Technology Services, or his or her designee; two (2)
123 persons knowledgeable about elections and information technology
124 appointed by the Secretary of State; and the Secretary of State,
125 who shall serve as the chair of the advisory committee.

126 (6) (a) Social security numbers, telephone numbers and date
127 of birth and age information in statewide, district, county and
128 municipal voter registration files shall be exempt from and shall
129 not be subject to inspection, examination, copying or reproduction
130 under the Mississippi Public Records Act of 1983.

131 (b) Copies of statewide, district, county or municipal
132 voter registration files, excluding social security numbers,
133 telephone numbers and date of birth and age information, shall be
134 provided to any person in accordance with the Mississippi Public
135 Records Act of 1983 at a cost not to exceed the actual cost of
136 production.

137 **SECTION 4.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
138 and after July 1, 2023.

