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**WES ALLEN**  
SECRETARY OF STATE

July 16, 2024

Tammy M. Meckley  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
5900 Capital Gateway Drive  
Camp Springs, MD 20588  
[tammy.m.meckley@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:tammy.m.meckley@uscis.dhs.gov)

**VIA U.S. MAIL AND ELECTRONIC EMAIL TRANSMISSION**

Dear Ms. Meckley,

This letter is a follow up communication to the USCIS video conference on July 10, 2024, held with my team and representatives from Alabama's U.S. Congressional delegation.

First, I appreciate the opportunity for meaningful discussion on this important issue. I remain hopeful that we will be able to work out a mutually acceptable solution.

USCIS's expressed concerns were received and, for the most part, understood. With them in mind, I would like to officially revise my previous request to USCIS to propose, instead, entering into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that allows for: (1) Alabama to submit to USCIS, in an acceptable format, available identifying information collected for specific individuals who are suspected to be noncitizens who are attempting to register to vote or are registered; (2) so that USCIS can perform a check against its data and systems for those individuals for matches; and (3) provide Alabama with as much information available regarding each individual's citizenship status. In turn, (4) Alabama would use the match information provided by USCIS to facilitate further case-level inquiry by Alabama's local Boards of Registrars into each such individual's eligibility to vote.

In order to make the proposed process most effective, I propose using the most efficient method possible or "batch processing," as I understand your team terms the approach.

To further facilitate the most useful matching process, my team is working to obtain AINs for suspected cases identified through our Alabama Law Enforcement Agency's Driver License Division for driver licenses issued to foreign nationals so that AINs may be provided to USCIS when available. However, I cannot promise that Alabama will be able to supply an AIN to USCIS for all suspected cases whose other identifying information would need to be submitted for matching. I propose developing a mutually agreed upon match criteria for such instances for inclusion in the MOA.

Meckley  
USCIS  
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As a helpful next step, please provide sample MOAs, such as those MOAs developed with Texas and Nevada as discussed during the video conference with my team that governed similar, even if not identical, approaches, so that we may begin work on drafting proposed MOA language for USCIS's consideration.

Please contact my General Counsel, Michael L. Jones, Jr., at (334) 353-7857 or by email at [mike.jones1@sos.alabama.gov](mailto:mike.jones1@sos.alabama.gov) if further discussion is needed.

Sincerely,



Wes Allen  
Secretary of State

Cc: Felicia Carrillo, Chief of Staff, Office of the USCIS Director  
Steve Dove, Chief, Office of the USCIS Executive Secretariat  
Senator Katie Britt, United States Senate  
Senator Tommy Tuberville, United States Senate  
Representative Jerry L. Carl, United States House of Representatives  
Representative Barry Moore, United States House of Representatives  
Representative Mike Rogers, United States House of Representatives  
Representative Robert Aderholt, United States House of Representatives  
Representative Dale Strong, United States House of Representatives  
Representative Gary Palmer, United States House of Representatives  
Representative Terri Sewell, United States House of Representatives



October 10, 2024

Wes Allen  
Secretary of State  
Alabama State Capitol  
600 Dexter Ave, Ste S-105  
Montgomery, AL 36130

Dear Secretary Allen:

Thank you for your July 16, 2024, letter to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) requesting a process to check Alabama's voter registration against USCIS's data and systems. As you mention in your letter, your team met with members of my staff in July. During that meeting, USCIS shared that the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) program is the most secure and efficient way to reliably verify an individual's citizenship or immigration status, including for verification regarding voter registration and/or voter list maintenance.

Federal law prohibits non-U.S. citizens from registering and voting in Federal elections; violators are removable and face up to five years in prison.<sup>1</sup> The evidence is clear that these laws are working as intended—it is extremely uncommon for noncitizens to vote in Federal elections.

As you know, SAVE is a Congressionally-mandated online service implemented broadly in 1986 to help state and local agencies determine certain point-in-time immigration and citizenship information on individuals seeking benefits and licenses. Numerous agencies in the State of Alabama currently participate in the SAVE program to verify immigration status for 143 different benefits.<sup>2</sup>

Since 2009, SAVE has been used by elections authorities in states for voter registration and/or voter list maintenance. Currently, ten states are registered to use SAVE for these purposes.<sup>3</sup> The process has been the same since the program's inception. By inputting an individual's name, unique DHS-issued immigration identifier,<sup>4</sup> and birthdate, registered agencies can determine whether that person obtained U.S. citizenship through the naturalization process or, for certain other individuals born abroad, whether USCIS has information confirming their U.S. citizenship.

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<sup>1</sup> 18 U.S.C. §§ 611, 1015; 8 U.S.C. §§ 1182(a)(6)(C)(ii), 1227(a)(3)(D), 1227(a)(6).

<sup>2</sup> This information is available to the public at <https://www.uscis.gov/save/agency-search-tool>

<sup>3</sup> Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Mississippi, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia

<sup>4</sup> *I.e.*, USCIS/Alien Registration Number; Form I-94 Arrival/Departure Record Number; Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) ID Number; Naturalization/Citizenship Certificate Number; or Card Number/I-797 Receipt Number.

To ensure compliance with federal law and privacy protections, USCIS uses a SAVE Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to maintain protocols and procedures with the registered agencies that access the more than 100 million records SAVE uses to verify a person's status. For voter registration purposes, this MOA includes a requirement that states provide written notice to any applicants and registered voters that their citizenship may be verified against federal immigration records. The state elections authority must provide any individual who is not verified as a U.S. citizen through SAVE the opportunity to show documentation of their U.S. citizenship.<sup>5</sup>

Given the very serious consequences of the results produced by SAVE and its import in ensuring the right to vote for U.S. citizens, USCIS takes this process very seriously and has confidence in the SAVE program.

We currently cannot offer an alternative process to any state. The processes you referenced— Nevada in 2018 and Texas in 2019<sup>6</sup>—were used on a one-time basis. To make that process available to you and any other requesting state would require significant additional resources and does not in many cases produce the same confidence we currently have in SAVE.

We appreciate your feedback and will review whether there are possible changes to our process and technology that might improve the convenience of using our systems. Likewise, we will continue to engage with and develop resources that educate elections authorities in states with an interest in using SAVE for voter registration and/or voter list maintenance.

Thank you again for your letter and interest in this issue. Should you or your staff have any other questions, please feel free to contact my staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ur M. Jaddou", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ur M. Jaddou  
Director

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<sup>5</sup> In addition, the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), requires covered states to complete systematic programs intended to remove the names of ineligible voters from registration lists by no later than 90 days before federal elections. 52 U.S.C. § 20507(c)(2).

<sup>6</sup> Texas provided A-numbers along with names and other personally identifying information.