

Shelby County Commission Meeting

September 28, 2026

Second election integrity team presentation

Transcript disclaimer

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Dawn Ray

00:00:00 Chairman Parker, Commissioners and County Manager Scroggins.

00:00:05 Good evening.

00:00:06 My name is Dawn Ray.

00:00:07 I live in Lindsey Allison's District 7 of Shelby County, and my path has crossed with many of you.

00:00:17 After college graduation, my daughter accepted employment and moved to Georgia.

00:00:23 Secretary of State John Merrill led me to believe that all participating states in ERIC would automatically alert a state -- and we're no longer in ERIC, but at that time we were -- would automatically alert a state that their former citizen had applied for a driver's license in the new state and allow for removal.

00:00:44 This didn't appear to have occurred in my daughter's case.

00:00:48 She contacted me saying that she was still on the Alabama voter roll.

00:00:53 I contacted Secretary of State Merrill, who referred me to Kim Melton in the probate judge's office.

00:01:00 Ms.

00:01:00 Melton suggested we send her a request letter to remove this voter, my daughter, from the Shelby County voter roll, including both our signatures.

00:01:10 We complied as instructed.

00:01:12 A month or two passed.

00:01:14 and I received another call from my daughter who relayed to me that she was still on the Alabama voter list.

00:01:21 Once again, I called Secretary of State Merrill, who referred me to Ms.

00:01:25 Melton.

00:01:26 The requested action finally resulted in the desired result.

00:01:32 My point is, it shouldn't take three times for a voter to be removed from the voter roll.

00:01:40 If we hadn't been persistently intervening,

00:01:43 my daughter may well have never been removed, contributing to the bloated voter roll we have today, wasting taxpayer dollars.

00:01:55 Beyond that, and because of this experience, I contacted our current Secretary of State Wes Allen to suggest that he run public service announcements reminding voters to make sure that their voting status is accurate.

00:02:09 on the Secretary of State's website leading up to the midterm election.

00:02:14 This suggestion and others were not acknowledged.

00:02:18 The experience cited above propelled me in part to participate in this grassroots voter integrity effort.

00:02:26 You are apparently the only recourse.

00:02:31 We ask that our registrars be given the tools they desperately need to maintain an accurate

00:02:38 and current voter roll per Alabama law and the NVRA.

00:02:44 Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Joy Stritikus

00:02:48 Chairperson Parker, Commissioners and County Manager Scroggins, it's good to see you again.

00:02:53 Thank you.

00:02:53 My name is Joy Stritikus.

00:02:55 Last month we were here with four areas of concern about our voter rolls.

00:03:00 A broken system, not compliant with Alabama law, not compliant with federal law, and a question of the stewardship

00:03:07 of our taxpayer dollars on this broken system.

00:03:12 Our voter rolls are bloated and it's creating unneeded expenditures and wasting our taxpayer dollars.

00:03:19 On that chart in front of you, you can see that the 35,000 registered voters, they're more than that, that are not justified according to our population trend.

00:03:34 The red lines are just the people who voted in each election, which you can see is below the population trend, which is that shifted and the dashed blue line.

00:03:45 The black line going above it is the registered voters, which is getting very close to our population of 18 and plus over voters at the top.

00:03:56 But it's 30% above our trend.

00:04:02 And this creates

00:04:04 extra expense. For our contract with ES&S that has the 82 cents per registered voter per year, for 2026 for our 181,000 voters, that bill would be \$150,000.

00:04:20 If these unjustified voters were removed, that bill would just be \$120,000.

00:04:28 This shows that we would be saving

00:04:31 about \$30,000 of wasted taxpayer money.

00:04:34 There is little incentive for ES&S to identify non-voters and tag them to be processed for removal within their software.

00:04:43 And I guess we shouldn't expect the vendor being paid to use their election system to be concerned about our county's money.

00:04:50 But that oversight and responsibility, I would think we would be concerned about.

00:04:55 And the law requiring that centralized voting system

00:04:59 still doesn't remove the oversight and auditing function of this body.

00:05:05 There are other areas that are wasting our precious taxpayer dollars.

00:05:10 One is the cost of processing and printing election ballots.

00:05:14 For those unjustified voters, that's about \$28,000.

00:05:18 If the voter rolls were accurate, the cost of ballots could be reduced by 40 to \$78,000 per election if we were dealing with real numbers.

00:05:29 Three, all post-election unused ballots must be destroyed after being retained by the statutory 18 months following an election.

00:05:38 This involves the cost of storage, security, and physical destruction.

00:05:43 And the printing for our printing of eligible voter lists in the Shelby County Reporter could be reduced if we remove these unjustified registered voters.

00:05:56 After our last meeting,

00:05:58 County Manager Scroggins commented that he was as concerned about saving a nickel as six figures.

00:06:04 So we were trying to just give you some examples tonight of figures that could be saved.

00:06:09 We request your support to take back control of our Shelby County voter rolls from ES&S and have our local registrars be totally responsible for the maintenance and reporting as required by law.

00:06:27 Thank you.

Mike Rector

00:06:34 Chairman Parker and members of Shelby County Commission, my name is Mike Rector.

00:06:38 I live in Robbie Hayes District 9.

00:06:40 Thank you for the opportunity to speak again on the accuracy of the Shelby County voter rolls.

00:06:46 In September 2023, Alabama started using AVID.

00:06:50 The Secretary of State's website describes it as a system to help maintain a clean and accurate registered voter list.

00:06:57 The four aspects of AVID include cooperative interagency agreement with the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency, LEA, National Change of Address File, NCOA, cooperative agreements with other states, and analysis of the Social Security Death Index, the SSD Act.

00:07:18 However, the AVID process is opaque.

00:07:21 The frequency in which AVID makes changes

00:07:24 to the ES&S voter database is really unknown.

00:07:29 It is not made public when a match is made to one of these four aspects.

00:07:33 The lag time between matches and the voter status change goes beyond realistic time frames.

00:07:39 According to AVID's website, matches confirmed with SSDI lead to an automatic removal of the voter from the state's records.

00:07:49 Processing should take days to weeks, not a year or more before removal.

00:07:54 For example, consider two of many registrants identified publicly as voter 3065 who died in September of 2023 and voter 2893 who died in October of 2025.

00:08:10 Both remain currently active on the voter rolls.

00:08:13 If matches are found via any of the other three data sources, a postcard is sent to address on file.

00:08:20 requesting updated information and changes the voter status to inactive.

00:08:26 The state is required by federal law to wait four years before removing living voters from the files.

00:08:33 The lag time between matches and voter status changing from active to inactive again goes beyond realistic time frames.

00:08:43 Processing dependent upon the unknown matching cycles should take 3 to 18 months

00:08:50 not multiple years that run into additional elections before going inactive.

00:08:56 This leads to bloated data, bloated voter rolls, additional expenses, and vulnerability to misuse as long as the identified registrants remain active.

00:09:09 NCOA data from March 22 to March 26 shows 12,084 individuals moved out of Shelby County.

00:09:19 And of that total, 7169 are active 59% as of March 31st, 2026.

00:09:29 So just to share a few cases with you, according to NCOA, voter 5121 moved to Henderson, NV in August of 2024.

00:09:40 After her move, she voted in Shelby County in November and it wasn't by absentee.

00:09:46 She registered in February.

00:09:48 2025 in Nevada and she is currently active on both Shelby County and Nevada's rolls.

00:09:57 Voter 8532 moved to Bixby, Oklahoma in November of 2022.

00:10:04 He voted in Shelby County also in November 2022.

00:10:08 He registered though in July of 2023 in Oklahoma and he's currently on.

00:10:16 currently active in both Shelby County and Oklahoma.

00:10:20 So AVID's intention is to clean up the voter rolls in a timely manner, but it appears, it's apparent that the lag time and transparency in processing the list of voters who should be taken off the rolls is not meeting the public expectations.

00:10:37 So we request your support to take back control of

00:10:42 Shelby County voter rolls from ES&S and have our local registrar be totally responsible for its maintenance and reporting as required by law.

00:10:53 Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Phaedra Gallaway

00:10:59 Chairman Parker and members of the Shelby County Commission, my name is Phaedra Gallaway.

00:11:03 I live in Commissioner Robbie Hayes' District 9.

00:11:06 Thank you for the opportunity to speak again.

00:11:09 Concerned citizens recently examined Shelby County's voter rolls.

00:11:12 We found clear problems with accuracy, accessibility, and compliance with the National Voter Registration Act, which requires every jurisdiction to maintain accurate and current registration lists.

00:11:25 Shelby County is responsible for meeting that standard.

00:11:28 And here's what we found.

00:11:29 Non-citizens registered to vote, deceased voters still on the rolls, voters who moved years ago but remain registered here,

00:11:37 convicted sex offenders who stayed registered in some cases voted after their convictions.

00:11:43 We also found a large number of voters listed as active who have not voted in multiple federal and state elections.

00:11:50 As the chart shows, the number of active nonvoters rose sharply from 2015 to 2016.

00:11:57 That's the same period when then Secretary of State John Merrill launched his ongoing We'll see you at the poll registration outreach.

00:12:04 Yet many of those voters still have not appeared at the polls.

00:12:08 Some have languished on the rolls for years at real cost to taxpayers.

00:12:14 So if the 9,772 voters you see there, if we had identified those, if they'd been properly marked, enacted and purged in 2025, the county would have saved nearly \$10,000.

00:12:27 That is not abstract.

00:12:29 It is money that my family and I earned.

00:12:33 My four adult children live and work here in Shelby County.

00:12:36 There is a cost to print ballots for inactive voters, a cost to destroy unused ballots, and annual fees paid to ESMS for every registered voter, inactive or active.

00:12:49 And from the vendor's perspective, keeping as many names in the system as possible creates a clear financial incentive.

00:12:57 These are not theoretical problems, they raise practical questions.

00:13:01 Where are the gaps in our procedures?

00:13:04 Are we fully complying with state and federal law?

00:13:07 What legal and financial risk does noncompliance create for the county?

00:13:11 And what has the erosion of public trust already cost us?

00:13:16 Local control of our elections has increasingly given way to an out-of-state subcontracting system.

00:13:23 That shift makes transparency and accountability harder, not easier.

00:13:28 We are citizens who want accurate, transparent, and auditable voter rolls.

00:13:33 Elections the people of Shelby County can trust.

00:13:37 So I'll leave you with this one thought that had stayed with me.

00:13:40 In a recent conversation with Mike Rowe, with historian Bill Whittle, he described photographs of people in Soviet gulags.

00:13:50 Some were crying, but y'all, most wore expressions of pure shock.

00:13:57 They had been good citizens, good communists even, but they could not understand how had we ended up here.

00:14:04 By God's grace, let that not be us or our children.

00:14:08 We respectfully request your support to give our registrars the information tools that they desperately need to take back control and to maintain accurate and current voter rolls in compliance with state and federal laws.

00:14:22 Thank you for your time.

Kelly Jo Brand

00:14:25 My name is Kelly Jo Brand, I am in Lindsay Allison's district.

00:14:29 And again, thank you for the opportunity.

00:14:32 As we're talking about here, our system is broken.

00:14:36 After reviewing 260 records in the sex offender registry, the following are examples of individuals who, because of their convictions, because their convictions were of moral turpitude, should have been removed from our voter rolls or not even been able to register to begin with.

00:14:54 The documents you have has the case numbers.

00:14:56 I'm not going to go through the case numbers, but I'm just going to bullet point the cases.

00:15:00 Federal conviction in 2009 of a youth minister transporting a 15-year-old from Alabama to Oklahoma.

00:15:06 He served a five-year sentence, released in 2013 with eight years of probation.

00:15:11 He registered in 2020.

00:15:13 He should not have been able to.

00:15:15 And he remains, he voted in 2024 and remains in active status today.

00:15:20 Conviction in Florida of unlawful sexual activity with a minor who was 17 years old, moved to Alabama, voted in 2018 and 2020, moved back to Florida, but remained on our rolls until 25, with annual fees being paid and all the fees associated with having someone on our rolls.

00:15:39 The Florida State Equivalency Code should have been entered into the Alabama Sex Offender Registry.

00:15:45 If not, the registrar has no way of knowing this is a moral turpitude case and he should not have been able to be registered.

00:15:51 So that's one instance right there.

00:15:53 The registrar needs the training and the understanding of who they can actually allow to be registered.

00:16:00 Conviction of a sexual abuse first degree.

00:16:05 He unlawfully registered to vote and voted in 2008 and 2020.

00:16:09 He continues to be an active status, wasting more money.

00:16:15 Conviction of [word masked in source] first degree, another sexual abuse in first degree.

00:16:19 Both have been on our voter rolls for 32 and 35 years.

00:16:23 Respectfully, neither one of them voted.

00:16:27 Neither one of them have voted in those years.

00:16:29 Think of the savings if they had not been on those rolls all of those years.

00:16:34 Conviction of sexual abuse, first degree.

00:16:38 And child pornography each have been on the active voter rolls for 24 years.

00:16:44 Conviction for second degree sexual abuse three times in 2016, they voted 11 times since then.

00:16:52 Conviction of second degree sodomy of a 14 year old female in 2003, they voted two times since then.

00:16:59 Doesn't seem like a lot when you just look at individual cases, but that's just a sampling of 260, okay?

00:17:06 So conclusion, the cases show

00:17:11 a huge waste of taxpayer funds paying for felons on voter rolls, legitimate votes being nullified by ineligible voters.

00:17:20 That's our votes being counteracted by voters that shouldn't be on the rolls.

00:17:25 And they raise an important question.

00:17:27 Does Alabama give our registrars the tools they need to identify these individuals and remove them from the rolls?

00:17:33 Our findings say no.

00:17:35 So as

00:17:37 As has been asked before, we request support to take back control of our Shelby County voter rolls from ES&S and have our local registrars be totally responsible for its maintenance reporting as required by law.

00:17:51 Thank you.

Christine Carr

00:17:54 Hello, my name is Christine Carr.

00:17:56 I'm a resident of Pelham and I'm also here to discuss election integrity issues.

00:18:00 Honored to work with such excellent patriots and another pleasure that I've had in this process

00:18:05 is being able to work with you and other officials in the county.

00:18:08 It has been a true joy to do that.

00:18:11 I do consider myself fortunate to live in Shelby County.

00:18:15 We all care about having the cleanest elections possible.

00:18:17 However, despite our best efforts, cracks can form in the system.

00:18:21 This potentially places our local officials, even county commissioners, at risk for legal liability with the federal government.

00:18:28 We talked about the NVRA, but there is another law called HAVA, the Help America Vote Act.

00:18:34 requires a centralized state computer system to hold all voter roll information, but it does not prohibit our local counties from performing its own independent maintenance.

00:18:43 Our centralized state voter roll database is contract to ES&S in Omaha, Nebraska, as you well know.

00:18:49 As a result, our Shelby County voter roll can be accessed by other third-party government agencies and thereby usurps our registrar's control.

00:18:57 You have her testimony as to the adverse effects of that current system.

00:19:00 Because our state system can be accessed by a third party database, ensuring the integrity of local rules will better inform our state system and keep us compliant with the DOJ.

00:19:10 Harmeet Dhillon is clear about her intent to enforce the federal government's legal and constitutional obligations dealing with local governments that do not comply.

00:19:19 We do not want our Shelby County Registrar to be subject to federal lawsuit or anyone else in Shelby County to be under that scrutiny.

00:19:26 President Trump's EO, Executive Order number 14399, faced several court challenges this summer, yet the essential merits still stand.

00:19:35 We recognize that Alabama Secretary of State and our Board of Registrars here have made progress towards cleaning up the voter rolls by using this executive order.

00:19:44 The National Voter Registration Act requires accurate and current voter roll registrations and rolls are maintained.

00:19:51 And I would say cooperation between the Department of Homeland Security and the Social Security Office Administration onboarded the SAVE database, not the SAVE Act, the SAVE database, which stands for the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlement program.

00:20:07 It's helped our state and local boards conduct bulk searches.

00:20:11 Today, I did verify with the Secretary of State Office and Shelby County Board of Registrars that this program is being utilized to help, in some part, clean our rolls from the presence of illegal aliens and even deceased voters.

00:20:23 The work is not complete, however.

00:20:25 The SAVE database does not entirely clean our rolls nor address other weak spots in our voting process as you have already been updated.

00:20:33 We hope to work with you very soon to ensure the best processes are possible.

00:20:37 We want Shelby County to be fully compliant with our federal election laws.

00:20:39 We want to help Shelby County save money in our elections, and we want to increase even further the confidence that our citizens have in our voting process.

00:20:47 We request that you help give our registrars the support so that we can take back our voter rolls and do the best we can in Shelby County and divest from ES&S impact over our local rolls.

00:21:02 Lastly, we do request a work session so that we do not have to do this in piecemeal.

00:21:06 We can just get together and hash it out and we can talk about really effective measures to see this through.

00:21:14 This will give us the opportunity to present slides and comprehensive evaluation of data and ideas.

00:21:19 Thank you so much.