

## **COMPLAINT PURSUANT TO HELP AMERICA VOTE ACT**

The Public Interest Legal Foundation, Inc. (“Foundation”) files this complaint against Iowa Chief State Election Official, Secretary of State Paul Pate in his official capacity and the County Commissioners of Elections (together, “Iowa”), alleging that a violation of Title III of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 has occurred, is occurring, and will continue to occur absent relief. Specifically, Iowa is not complying with the requirement to eliminate duplicate names from the official list of eligible voters, 52 U.S.C. § 21083(a)(2)(B).

### ***HAVA Requires Elimination of Duplicated Registration Records***

1. The Help America Vote Act (“HAVA”) was passed in 2002 and, among other things, requires states receiving HAVA grant money to implement “a single, uniform, official, centralized, interactive computerized statewide voter registration list defined, maintained, and administered at the State level that contains the name and registration information of every legally registered voter in the State and assigns a unique identifier to each legally registered voter in the State.” 52 U.S.C. § 21083(a)(1)(A).

2. This “computerized list shall serve as the single system for storing and managing the official list of registered voters throughout the State.” 52 U.S.C. § 21083(a)(1)(A)(i). The computerized voter registration list further serves as the “official voter registration list for the conduct of all elections for Federal office in the State.” 52 U.S.C. § 21083(a)(1)(A)(viii).

3. Iowa complied with these requirements through the establishment of a statewide registration file, “I-Voters.” Iowa Admin. Code r. 721-28.1. I-Voters is a “single, uniform, official, centralized, interactive computerized statewide voter registration file.” Iowa Code § 47.7(2)(a); Iowa Admin. Code r. 721-28.1.

4. Pursuant to HAVA, the authorized officials must maintain the state registration list so that “voter registration records in the State are accurate and are updated regularly.” 52 U.S.C. § 21083(a)(4).

5. HAVA specifies that the list maintenance performed should ensure that: “(i) the name of each registered voter appears in the computerized list; (ii) only voters who are not registered or who are not eligible to vote are removed from the computerized list; and (iii) duplicate names are *eliminated* from the computerized list.” 52 U.S.C. § 21083(a)(2)(B) (emphasis added).

6. HAVA imposes its voter list maintenance requirements on the “appropriate State or local election official,” 52 U.S.C. § 21083(a)(2)(A), which in Iowa, is the Secretary of State who is designated the state commissioner of elections. Iowa Code § 47.1(1). The state commissioner of elections is designated as the state registrar of voters. Iowa Code § 47.7(1).

7. The state registrar “shall regulate the preparation, preservation, and maintenance of voter registration records.” Iowa Code § 47.7(1).

8. In addition to HAVA’s duplicate-elimination requirements, Iowa law imposes mandatory processes on County Registrars for identifying and resolving potentially duplicated registration records. Iowa Admin. Code r. 721-28.3.

9. Iowa is subject to HAVA and must comply with its voter list maintenance requirements, including the requirement to eliminate duplicate names from I-Voters.

***Duplicated Records Are Not Eliminated in Iowa***

10. Despite HAVA’s requirements, Iowa is failing to eliminate duplicate voter registration records.

11. A recent Foundation analysis identified 162 apparent duplicated voter registration record sets on Iowa's official voter registration list. In other words, it appears that 162 registrants are registered more than once in Iowa. *See* Exhibit 1—Spreadsheet of Apparent Duplicated Records.

12. The Foundation identified the 162 apparent duplicated records by analyzing the statewide list of registered voters the Foundation received from the Iowa Department of State dated September 14, 2026.

13. The Foundation's Research Director identified the 162 apparent duplicated records by implementing the following five different queries: (1) identification of all records that share the exact same address information, and also have the exact same last name, first name, and year of birth; (2) identification of all records that share the exact same address information and also have the exact same first name and year of birth and have the last name of one record fully incorporated into the last name of the other record; (3) identification of all records that share the exact same address information and also have the exact same first name and year of birth and have the last name of one record be 2 characters or fewer different than the last name of the other record; (4) all records that share the exact same address information and also have the exact same last name and year of birth and have the first name of one record be 2 characters or fewer different than the first name of the other record; and (5) all records that share the exact same address information, date of birth, and last names but have common nickname conflicts in first name fields (e.g., William versus Bill).

14. Iowa is not eliminating duplicates as HAVA requires. 52 U.S.C. § 21083(a)(2)(B)(iii).

15. Iowa is therefore violating Title III of HAVA.

16. Absent relief, the November 3, 2026 General Election in Iowa will be conducted using an inaccurate voter registration list.

17. As a state subject to HAVA, Iowa must establish an administrative complaint procedure to remedy violations of HAVA's Title III. 52 U.S.C. § 21112(a)(1). Iowa has established such an administrative complaint procedure. *See* Iowa Admin. Code r. 721-25.

18. This Complaint is filed against Iowa pursuant to HAVA and Iowa's HAVA complaint procedure.

19. The Foundation does not request a hearing.

#### **Prayer for Relief**

20. The Foundation respectfully requests an order:

A. Declaring that Iowa is violating Title III of HAVA by not eliminating duplicate names from the official list of eligible voters;

B. Ordering Iowa to review the data submitted with this Complaint and take all corrective action consistent with HAVA as is necessary to eliminate duplicate names from the official list of eligible voters;

C. Ordering Iowa to develop and implement a remedial plan to bring Iowa into compliance with HAVA now and in the future, including, but not limited to, a procedure for verifying correct registration data when a registrant with duplicated registration records appears to vote in person;

D. Granting the Foundation all further relief deemed just and proper.