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Statement from Keaton Denlay, Butte County Clerk-Recorder/Registrar of Voters

In the interest of transparency amidst all the rumors and uncertainty, this is an account of what has taken place in Butte County regarding the demands the Department of Justice made of California Elections Officials.

On Friday October 23rd at approximately 3:30pm, an individual identifying himself as a Homeland Security Agent hand delivered paperwork to the Clerk-Recorder's Office. This agent handed me a Department of Justice demand letter addressed to "Mr. Danlay," two declarations, and a two-page list of names.

The list allegedly contained 47 names of individuals that the Department of Justice "reasonably believe" are active voters, were sent a ballot, and are "likely" to be non-citizens.

The letter demands that I segregate ballots submitted by the 47 individuals on the list. According to the letter, if I failed to do so DOJ could charge me with federal crimes. I was given 48 hours to comply.

Upon inspection of the list of names, it appeared to be a print screen of a poorly formatted excel spreadsheet with missing and jumbled information. I personally reviewed the list of names.

The two-page list was just two copies of the same list. Although the DOJ letter allegedly identified 47 names, the list only contained 46 names; one of which was a duplicate. Of the 45 names on the list, 32 of the individuals are not on Butte County's active voter rolls. These 32 individuals were not sent ballots from this office.

Seven of the names did not have sufficient information for me to match to our voter list with confidence. This is because the list contained partial names, partial addresses, no date of birth, and/or no driver's license numbers or last four digits of social security numbers.

This left six names out of the alleged 47 that may, according to DOJ, be ineligible to vote. Per California law, in order to challenge a voter's eligibility, "the challenger shall have the burden of establishing extraordinary proof of the validity of the challenge at the time the challenge is made." (California Elections Code §15106).

Given the overall inaccuracy of the list provided and its lack of specificity, I believe the Department of Justice has not met that burden. There will be no further action taken at this time.

I remain dedicated to ensuring the fair, accurate and accessible elections that Butte County voters know and expect. I will continue to assist with good faith efforts to maintain that status quo in our elections.

Thank you and happy voting,