

Ed Packard for Secretary of State

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Press Release

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Ed Packard's Statement on the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC)

Today, Ed Packard, Republican Party candidate for Secretary of State, announced his support for Alabama's membership in the ERIC program. However, he cautioned that if there is a groundswell of concern about the ERIC program, as Secretary of State, he would cancel Alabama's membership in ERIC and implement alternative programs that can do much of what the ERIC program currently provides our state.

Mr. Packard said, "The ERIC program is a valuable part of Alabama's efforts to encourage Alabamians to register to vote, if they are not already registered to vote."

The ERIC program identifies people who are 18 years of age or older, and who are not registered to vote, by comparing data from drivers license and non-driver identification records to the statewide voter list. The Secretary of State then sends these Alabamians an invitation to register to vote.

"ERIC is also a very powerful tool in helping the Boards of Registrars with voter file maintenance," he continued. "ERIC helps Registrars identify people who may no longer be eligible to vote in Alabama so these individuals can be removed from the statewide voter list."

Mr. Packard explained that ERIC compares Alabama's statewide voter list with the statewide voter list of other states that are members of ERIC to identify former Alabamians who are now registered in another state.

He said that ERIC also compares Alabama's statewide voter list to the national Social Security master death list to identify Alabama voters who are now deceased, whether they died in Alabama or elsewhere.

ERIC also looks at the U.S. Postal Service's National Change of Address data to determine if Alabamians have moved within the state or to other states.

"All of this data helps our Boards of Registrars in their effort to maintain clean voter rolls. Clean voter rolls are something that I'm sure all Alabamians, in general, and all Republicans, in particular, support."

Lastly, Mr. Packard further noted that when Alabama's voter data is compared to the data from other member states, ERIC looks to see if any registered voter in Alabama also voted in another state in the same election. "This review is a valuable tool for ensuring people are not voting twice in a given election."

While supportive of ERIC and the services it provides to Alabama, Mr. Packard noted Alabamians' confidence in the election system in our state, including the integrity of Alabama's statewide voter list, is paramount.

"If there is a groundswell of Alabamians who are concerned about ERIC and who want Alabama to cancel its membership in ERIC, I, as Secretary of State, will cancel our membership in ERIC. I will not sacrifice Alabamians' confidence in our elections, in general, or voter registration, in particular, by remaining a member of ERIC."

"Many of the services ERIC provides could potentially be handled by us in Alabama. However, the comparisons between our voter data and the data of other states would be more difficult, if not impossible," Mr. Packard advised. "However, if Alabama leaves ERIC, I would explore collecting voter data from other states – especially our neighboring southern sister states – so that we don't lose state-to-state reviews in our voter list clean-up efforts."