LET’S MAKE HISTORY!
REGISTER TO VOTE, GET A VOTER I.D., AND
BECOME A PART OF SOMETHING HUGE!
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Secretary Merrill has traveled to all 67 of Alabama’s counties at least once a year for nine consecutive years with nearly 400 visits in 2021.

#All67
January 1, 2022

Dear Fellow Alabamians:

Happy New Year 2022, and thank you for reading our newest Annual Report. Although 2021 was still met with some challenges brought on by the continuation of the coronavirus pandemic, our office pushed forward to ensure that we provide the most excellent public service to our great state.

In this year’s issue, we cover a wide variety of exciting accomplishments that took place in 2021, which include the formation of the first ever Voter Fraud Reform Task Force, the launch of our latest photo voter I.D. efforts, and more.

As we approach my final year as your Secretary of State, you have my word that I will continue to achieve only the best for our citizens.

Always know that I am just a quick phone call away if you ever need assistance.

Sincerely,

John H. Merrill
Secretary of State
2021 NASS Award Ceremonies

On September 17, 2021, Secretary Merrill awarded four National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) Medallion Awards to select staff members of the Secretary of State’s Office in honor of their outstanding service to the people of Alabama. The awards were presented to General Legal Counsel Hugh Evans, III, Executive Assistant Karen Guthrie, Elections Director and Deputy Chief of Staff Clay Helms, and former Communications Director Grace Newcombe. Each recipient was presented with an engraved plaque, and their names were added to a larger plaque that is publicly displayed at the Alabama State House.

“I was honored to present the NASS Medallion to Hugh, Karen, Clay, and Grace,” Secretary Merrill stated. “Our office has some of the very best team members in state government, and they work hard for Alabama each and every day.”

So far, Secretary Merrill has awarded 39 recipients with the NASS Medallion Award since taking office in 2015. He can present six more of these awards before his term ends in January 2023.

Secretary Merrill also presented his first John Lewis Youth Leadership Award, which is NASS’ newest honor. Coreco Ja’Quan Pearson, known as “C.J.,” received the John Lewis Award on October 15, 2021 for his amazing accomplishments. Although he is only 19 years old, C.J. has harnessed years of impressive experience in political and social justice that began at the young age of eight. A native of Augusta, Georgia and student at The University of Alabama, he is the youngest person in history to serve as an elector for Georgia’s 2020 Electoral College meeting at the mere age of 18. At the age of 17, he raised more than $160,000 for black-owned businesses that were damaged and destroyed during the George Floyd protests and riots in 2020. He was also recently elected to serve as a Student Senator for The University of Alabama’s Student Government Association, and he is the founder and leader of The Free Thinker Project organization, which seeks to bolster civic awareness throughout the country, among many other noteworthy achievements. Secretary Merrill will present his second and last John Lewis Youth Leadership Award to another exceptional youth in 2022.
The 2021 Legislative Session commenced on February 2, 2021 and came to a close on May 17, 2021. As in previous years, the Secretary of State’s Office was instrumental in the introduction of a number of bills that would benefit Alabamians. Nine of the 20 bills passed and have been enacted, but the remaining 11 bills died and may be reintroduced in the future. The following list gives a brief description of each bill and its status.

**House Bill 538:** Representative Alan Baker / Senator Garlan Gudger  
**Status:** ENACTED – Assigned Act # 2021-364  
This bill requires absentee ballot applications returned by mail to be received no later than seven days before the election. Applications returned by hand may still be received up until five days before the election. In addition, this bill allows for the opening of absentee ballots for tabulation to begin at 7:00 a.m. on Election Day.

**House Bill 314:** Representative Rod Scott / Senator Tom Butler  
**Status:** ENACTED – Assigned Act # 2021-534  
This bill allows the Secretary of State and Boards of Registrars to utilize the change-of-address information supplied by the United States Postal Service to update the voter rolls. This change will save the state almost one million dollars every four years through decreased printing and publication costs. This bill also increases the county reimbursement rate for publication costs from ¼ to ½, providing financial assistance to the counties.

**House Bill 285:** Representative Wes Allen / Representative Matt Simpson / Senator Dan Roberts  
**Status:** ENACTED – Assigned Act # 2021-535  
This bill prohibits the removal of any ballot or voting machine from the designated polling place, prohibiting the fraudulent practice of curbside voting and protecting the chain of ballot custody.

**House Bill 167:** Representative Chris Blackshear / Senator Clay Scofield  
**Status:** ENACTED – Assigned Act # 2021-448  
This bill prohibits a voter from voting more than once, either in Alabama or in Alabama and in another state.

**House Bill 116:** Representative David Standridge / Senator Billy Beasley  
**Status:** ENACTED – Assigned Act # 2021-446  
This bill allows the Secretary of State to conduct a one-time post-election audit in three counties following the November 8, 2022 General Election. The goal of the audit is to determine the accuracy of the originally reported election outcome and increase voter confidence.

**House Bill 123:** Representative David Faulkner / Senator Linda Coleman-Madison  
**Status:** ENACTED – Assigned Act # 2021-335  
This bill allows a registered voter who is a federal or state prosecutor, federal, state, probate, or municipal judge, law enforcement officer, legislator, or the spouse of the aforementioned to have his or her personally identifiable information omitted from voter lists, except for those lists provided to federal or state agencies. Upon successful application, everything (mailing or residential address, date of birth, race, gender, voting districts, etc.) but the name of the registered voter will be omitted from generally available lists of registered voters.

**Senate Bill 31:** Senator Dan Roberts / Representative Charlotte Meadows  
**Status:** ENACTED – Assigned Act # 2021-164  
This bill reduces the period for runoff elections to four weeks in all special and municipal elections in order to be consistent with all county, state, and federal elections.

**House Bill 165:** Representative Reed Ingram / Senator Garlan Gudger  
**Status:** ENACTED – Assigned Act # 2021-222  
This bill allows the Secretary of State to waive the $25.00 certificate of existence fee during declared states of emergency to assist struggling businesses applying for federal or state aid.

**House Bill 154:** Representative Andy Whitt / Senator Rodger Smitherman  
**Status:** ENACTED – Assigned Act # 2021-314  
This bill requires all principal campaign committees to file reports and statements electronically with the Secretary of State’s Office, increasing transparency and consistency. This “one-stop shop” allows users to track reports in one centralized database.
Senate Bill 238: Senator Jim McClendon / Representative Steve Hurst  
**Status:** Died in Second House  
This bill would allow a voter who is blind or visually impaired to be electronically transmitted a ballot so that he or she may vote independently.

House Bill 155: Representative Randy Wood  
**Status:** Died in House of Origin  
This bill removes the two witness requirement for people voting pursuant to the federal Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA), allowing military members and their dependents to vote with fewer restrictions. Currently, Alabama is the only state in the country that requires two witnesses on UOCAVA ballots. Three states (Alaska, Virginia, and Wisconsin) require one signature.

House Bill 328: Representative Chris Sells  
**Status:** Died in House of Origin  
This bill requires a person seeking office to file his or her principal campaign committee within five days of becoming a candidate. Failure to comply would result in not appearing on the ballot. Currently, there is no penalty for not filing within five days of becoming a candidate.

House Bill 575: Representative Mike Holmes  
**Status:** Died in House of Origin  
This bill would prohibit poll watchers and candidates from providing voting assistance at the polls.

House Bill 357: Representative Corley Ellis  
**Status:** Died in House of Origin  
This bill would require county probate judges and municipal clerks to publicly test voting machines prior to an election to ensure the precision and accuracy of the machines.

House Bill 117: Representative Mike Ball  
**Status:** Died in House of Origin  
This bill changes the filing deadline for daily campaign finance reports, during the week before the election, from 12:01 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. to increase transparency in the filings process. Currently, almost 12 hours are left out of reports.

House Bill 315: Representative Bob Fincher / Senator Steve Livingston  
**Status:** Died in Second House  
This bill allows for the accumulation of registrar working days in the case of an absent registrar. Please note this bill would not change the amount of money allocated to a county.

Senate Bill 44: Senator Billy Beasley / Representative Chip Brown  
**Status:** Died in House of Origin  
This bill allows the Secretary of State to provide digital copies of all bills, resolutions, and memorials electronically by order of either house of the legislature. Coinciding with Act 2019-414, which no longer requires the printing of acts and resolutions, this bill removes the requirement to bind state documents.

House Bill 378: Representative Kelvin Lawrence / Senator Malika Sanders-Fortier  
**Status:** Died in Second House  
This bill increases the amount of working days for registrars in Wilcox County from 120 days to 168 days, allowing them to complete the necessary work to process voter registration applications and prepare for elections.

House Bill 139: Representative Brett Easterbrook / Senator Bobby Singleton  
**Status:** Died in Second House  
This bill allows the Legislature to alter court costs in Choctaw County, allowing for the redistribution of funds used by the Sheriff’s Office in order to self-fund. This bill would rely on the passage of a local amendment by the electors of Choctaw County.

House Bill 589: Representative Kerry Rich  
**Status:** Died in House of Origin  
This bill prohibits the pre-filling of any voter registration application or absentee ballot application. Violators of this law would be guilty of a Class C felony.
Although the Alabama Secretary of State does not oversee the state’s municipal elections, the office occasionally receives requests from city and county officials to provide election assistance and guidance. Since 2016, several cities reached out to the office and requested a team of staff members to monitor their local elections to ensure that each election was administered fairly and followed the procedures set forth in Alabama’s state law. The list of inquiring cities and their corresponding years are named below.

**2016**
- Fairhope
- Dothan
- Birmingham
- Lake View
- Enterprise
- Selma
- Northport
- Midland City

**2017**
- Mobile

**2019**
- Montgomery

**2020**

*General Election*
- Selma
- Marion
- Uniontown
- Evergreen
- Monroeville
- Abbeville
- Midland City
- Lake View
- Centreville

*General Runoff Election*
- Selma
- Tuskegee
- Demopolis
- Russellville

**2021**
- Mobile
- Birmingham

In 2021, the Alabama Secretary of State’s Office teamed up with Country Music Artist Riley Green (*see back cover) and Legendary Singer and Songwriter Jimmy Buffett (*see left image) to help launch the newest set of posters and television advertisements for the office’s photo voter identification and voter registration promotional efforts. The two Alabama natives join the increasing list of other renowned Alabamians who have helped to spread awareness about the state’s free voter I.D. provisions and encourage those who are eligible to register to vote.

Also, the Secretary of State’s Office is pleased to announce that the 45th President of the United States, Donald J. Trump, has agreed to assist with the office’s 2022 efforts. In late November of 2021, Secretary Merrill and two office staff members met with former President Trump at Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach, Florida to film the recording of the 2022 ad, which will be released in Spring 2022. He is also featured on a poster (*see front inside cover) that will be distributed across the state in 2022, as well. The office is currently working on additional features that will be released in 2022.

In previous years, the office produced materials featuring Alabama Head Football Coach Nick Saban and former Auburn Head Football Coach Gus Malzahn in 2015, Heavyweight Boxing Champion Deontay Wilder and former NBA Star Charles Barkley in 2016, Miss Alabama 2017 Jessica Procter and former NASA Astronaut Dr. Mae Jemison in 2017, American Idol Season Five winner Taylor Hicks and radio talk show stars Rick and Bubba in 2018, Country Music Artist Jamey Johnson and Alabama’s first Governor William Wyatt Bibb (actor portrayal) in 2019, and the women of the Alabama Legislature and Alabama veterans Commander Lee Allen Hallman, Dr. Regina Benjamin, and Captain Gary Michael Rose in 2020. Please see the following page for the images of every poster that has been released by the office so far.

If you do not have a valid photo identification card to vote, please complete and submit the Free Alabama Photo Voter Identification Card application on page nine. Please note that this card may be used for voting purposes only. If you already possess one or more of the valid forms of identification listed on page 10, then you are not eligible to apply for a photo voter I.D. card.

If you would like to receive a free poster, please visit your local Board of Registrars Office or email Brittany Hamilton, Editorial & Events Director, at Brittany.Hamilton@sos.alabama.gov.
To register to vote or secure a free Alabama photo voter ID card, please contact your local board of registrars, visit ALABAMAVOTES.GOV, call 1-800-274-8683, or download the VOTE FOR ALABAMA APP.

Paid for by the Office of the Secretary of State John H. Merrill, Montgomery, AL.

Our most powerful voice is our vote.

LET'S MAKE HISTORY!
REGISTER TO VOTE, GET A VOTER I.D., AND BECOME A PART OF SOMETHING HUGE!
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE
APPLICATION FOR
FREE ALABAMA PHOTO VOTER IDENTIFICATION CARD

Cards will be issued to Alabama registered voters only
Any falsification or fraud in the making of this application shall constitute a class C felony

This application must be presented in person at one of the following locations:
1) Your local Board of Registrars;            3) Mobile Locations to be provided.
2) The Alabama Secretary of State’s Office
   State Capitol Building - Suite S-105
   600 Dexter Avenue
   Montgomery, Alabama 36103-5616; or

Full Legal Name (print)

Address as reflected in voter registration record:
(street address)
City, State and ZIP Code

Date of Birth (00/00/0000)

Eye Color _______ Gender _______ Height _______ Weight _______ Application Date _______

In order to process your application you must provide the following information:
(All of the following information can be contained in one document.)

1) a photo identification document or a non-photo identification document is acceptable if it contains your full legal name and date of birth;
2) documentation showing your date of birth;
3) documentation showing that you are an Alabama registered voter (can be electronically verified by the processing office);
4) documentation showing your name and address as reflected in your voter registration record (can be electronically verified by the processing office).

I, _________________________________, a registered voter (or voter registration applicant if form is filed with Board of Registrars at same time voter registration application is filed) in the State of Alabama, do hereby swear or affirm that the information contained above is true and correct.

Signature of Alabama registered voter (full legal name) ______________________________________________________

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

DOCUMENTATION SHOWING FULL LEGAL NAME AND DATE OF BIRTH PRESENTED WITH APPLICATION:

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

IF APPLICATION WAS DENIED STATE REASON:

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
If you are a registered voter and you are eligible for a free Alabama photo voter identification card, you can apply for the identification card at your local Board of Registrars office, a mobile services location in your county, or at the office of the Secretary of State.

If you are not already a registered voter and you are eligible for a free Alabama photo voter identification card, you can apply for the card at the same time you turn in your voter registration form. Your voter registration form and this application must be submitted in person to the Board of Registrars. If the Board of Registrars determines that you are qualified to vote in Alabama, that office can then process the card application, so long as all other requirements are met.

You can only receive a free Alabama photo voter identification card if you are registered to vote in Alabama and do not have any of the following:

(a) a valid Alabama driver’s license which was properly issued by the appropriate state or county department or agency;

(b) a valid Alabama nondriver identification card which was properly issued by the appropriate state or county department or agency;

(c) a valid Alabama photo voter identification card;

(d) a valid identification card issued by a branch, department, agency, or entity of the State of Alabama, any other state, or the United States authorized by law to issue personal identification, provided that such identification card contains a photograph of the elector;

(e) a valid U.S. passport;

(f) a valid employee identification card containing the photograph of the elector and issued by any branch, department, agency, or entity of the U.S. government, the State of Alabama, or any county, municipality, board, authority, or other entity of this state;

(g) a valid student or employee identification card issued by a public or private college, university, or postgraduate technical or professional school located within the State of Alabama, provided that such identification card contains a photograph of the elector;

(h) a valid U.S. military identification card, provided that such identification card contains a photograph of the elector; or

(i) a valid tribal identification card containing a photograph of the elector.

If you already possess one of these documents, do not complete this application.

In order to receive this card you must provide a document that contains your full legal name and date of birth. All of the information may be contained in the same document. Verification of voter registration can be electronically verified by issuing office.

Your application must be signed and sworn to under penalty of perjury pursuant to the laws of the State of Alabama. Any falsification or fraud in the making of this application shall constitute a Class C felony.
On September 30, 2021, the Alabama Secretary of State’s Office hosted the first Voter Fraud Reform Task Force meeting, which was created to address appropriate penalties for those who are found guilty of committing voter fraud in the state. The task force is comprised of 15 members with diverse backgrounds and political persuasions, which include Secretary of State John H. Merrill, Senator Sam Givhan (R), Senator Bobby Singleton (D), Representative Matt Simpson (R), Representative Merika Coleman (D), Bullock County Probate Judge James Tatum, Houston County Circuit Clerk Carla Woodall, Montgomery County Sheriff Derek Cunningham, District Attorney for the Fourth Judicial Circuit Michael Jackson, Reid Harris of the Attorney General’s Office, retired Circuit Judge John England, Matt Clark of the Alabama Policy Institute, Southern Poverty Law Center founder Morris Dees, Lori Herring of Eagle Forum, and Tish Faulk of the American Civil Liberties Union. Each member was carefully selected by Secretary Merrill. After its initial launch on September 30th, the task force met again on October 14th, November 4th, November 18th, and December 20th. The final meetings are scheduled for January 2022.

From April 7, 2015 to December 15, 2021, the Secretary of State’s Office processed 1,624 voter fraud complaints, which resulted in six convictions, two overturned elections, and the removal of one public official. 129 cases were referred for possible prosecution to the Attorney General and local District Attorney, 38 were referred for investigation to the County Sheriff or the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency, 57 were referred to the Alabama Ethics Commission, and 1,397 were closed by withdrawal, lack of information, the dispatchment of the SOS response team or Federal Elections Commission, or general closure. There are currently no pending cases.

The task force will meet again in January 2022. Meeting announcements are posted on the Secretary of State’s website home page. All meetings were and will continue to be open to the general public for viewing purposes only. Live streams are unavailable to non-members.

For questions or concerns regarding the task force, please contact Elections Director and Deputy Chief of Staff Clay Helms at Clay.Helms@sos.alabama.gov.
Executive Division

• Treating the Office Budget Like Your Household Budget
  ~ Upon taking office on January 19, 2015, the office (all divisions included) consisted of 48 employees. As of December 31, 2021, the office consists of 38 employees, excluding the Secretary of State. Since January 19, 2015, 52 employees have either resigned, transferred, retired, or have been released.
  ~ The Personnel Division was phased out. Today, office personnel duties are assigned to 1 existing staff member. Personnel costs were reduced approximately $60,000 by not having to fill a staff position with this singular responsibility.
  ~ For the period of January 19, 2015 to December 31, 2021, expenses were reduced by $3,113,119.95.
  ~ In April 2015, four divisions of the Secretary of State’s Office relocated to the Alabama State House, which saved taxpayers nearly $270,000 during the divisions’ period in the State House. Now one division (Government Support/Authentications) remains in the State House.
  ~ Beginning with the FY2016 State Budget (October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016) and at the request of Secretary Merrill, the office no longer receives a State General Fund Appropriation for Administrative Services. The amount the office gave back to the state is approximately $1.3 - $1.8 million dollars.
  ~ Secretary Merrill’s first letter in office was written to the Chief Examiner of the Alabama Department of Examiners of Public Accounts to request a formal audit in regards to the financial administration of the office. Secretary Merrill has worked to turn around nearly a decade of audit and financial issues in the office.
  ~ Although not required, Secretary Merrill issued a 9-page response to the Chief Examiner’s audit (for the period of October 1, 2009 through January 19, 2015) that outlined his plan of corrective actions to remedy the seven financial deficiencies. The plan was aggressive and included a plan of corrective actions to cure several concerns that persisted since another audit (for the period of January 16, 2007 through September 30, 2009) was issued.
  ~ On January 15, 2021, the SOS Office received the first clear financial audit in 14 years.

• Increasing Transparency
  ~ In 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021, Secretary Merrill visited all 67 counties at least once to discuss voter registration and photo voter I.D. delivery.
  ~ The option to request public records/information is available online.
  ~ A 24-hour turnaround time to respond to all public records/information requests was implemented.
  ~ Informational press releases are sent out to the media on a regular basis.
  ~ Quarterly Reports are issued and placed online at the conclusion of each 3-month period to inform the public of the highlights of each prior quarter.
  ~ An Annual Report is published and placed online at the conclusion of each year to inform the public of the highlights of the prior year.
  ~ To comply with the Alabama Open Meetings Act, meeting minutes have been placed online for boards, committees, or commissions where the Secretary of State is responsible to serve as an administrator.
  ~ Concise descriptions of the funds administered by the Secretary of State are placed online.
  ~ A concise description of the fees provided by law or rule have been placed online.
  ~ A description of the boards, committees, and commissions the Secretary of State serves on are located online.
  ~ The Probate Judges Advisory Council was created to work with Alabama’s Probate Judges and meet the needs of Alabama’s counties in their interaction with the Secretary of State’s Office.
  ~ In order to increase transperancy, all Secretary of State staff salaries were posted online.
  ~ Each year, the SOS Office participates in the United Way’s State Combined Campaign. In 2021, the office achieved a 108.3% participation rate and raised $1,741.00, which is 196.72% of the set goal.
  ~ Since February 13, 2019, all proclamations signed by the Governor and the Secretary of State are available online for the public to view.
  ~ A notary handbook was created in August 2019 as a means to instruct Alabama notaries regarding their responsibilities and laws pertaining to their position.

• Establishing Expectations
  ~ Secretary Merrill requires Annual Ethics training for all staff once a year.
  ~ Personnel policies were established to ensure certain personnel aspects are properly administrated, and the first personnel handbook for Secretary of State employees was composed to ensure that comprehensive employee compliance, expectation, and accountability standards are met.
~All employees are evaluated annually on the accomplishment of their duties. In previous years, some employees were not issued evaluations.
~Secretary Merrill requested that all staff position descriptions include the statement “delivers service to the citizens of Alabama with a servant’s and helper’s heart” in order to measure each employee’s service to the citizens. Alabama’s taxpayers and citizens deserve the best, and Secretary Merrill expects his staff to perform as the best.
~Division Heads meet once a month with the Chief of Staff to establish and strengthen team building skills and informational sharing, which were major organizational deficiencies upon Secretary Merrill entering office.
~Division Heads are required to teach the application of cross-training to staff to build comprehensive staff abilities, which will benefit their ability to help citizens.

**Legislation**
~Nine bills sponsored by the Secretary of State’s Office were passed in the 2015 Legislative Session, eleven bills were passed in 2016, two bills were passed in 2017, one bill was passed in 2018, thirteen bills were passed in 2019, two bills were passed in 2020, and nine bills were passed in 2021. 47 pieces of legislation have been passed since 2015 to improve the accountability and transparency of elections and to improve the efficiency of business filings.

**Finance Division**
**Treating Your Money with Respect**
~Purchases made by the office are required to receive approval prior to purchase. In previous years, a loose purchasing process allowed many purchases that were duplicative, contrary to state purchasing procedures, and/or wasteful.
~Payments made to any Division of the Secretary of State’s Office are required to be deposited in one day. Prior to this, payments were held as long as several weeks or seven months before deposit, increasing the chances for NSF charges to be assessed to the issuer. This one requirement to deposit payments in one day has resulted in all the Divisions of the Secretary of State to quickly complete citizen transactions.
~On several occasions when vendors conducted business with the state through the Secretary of State’s Office and did not fully fulfill their role, the Secretary requested and received monetary adjustments, which benefited the state.
~For the first time, establishing procedures related to the proper administration of bad checks has been issued by the Secretary of State’s Office.
~The lack of proper attention given to one Secretary of State fund that was not coded revenue (for deposit therein) for over half a decade has been corrected.
~A provision has been inserted into all new contracts that requires a vendor to reduce their invoiced expenses for failure to perform in an adequate fashion.

**Elections Division**
**Serving Those Who Serve Us**
~Military voters can now receive and transmit their ballot securely and electronically from anywhere in the world. Previously, military members needed access to a printer and mail service to participate in the election process.

**Promoting Alabama’s Voice in the National Presidential Conversation**
~Secretary Merrill enthusiastically advocated for Alabama to join the SEC Presidential Primary in June 2015, thus moving Alabama’s primary election date to March 1, 2016.
~From August 2015 to February 2016, 10 presidential candidates visited Alabama multiple times.
~Due to the promotion of the SEC Presidential Primary, 1.25 million voters cast ballots during the March 1, 2016 election, which resulted in a 40.68% turnout.

**Voter Registration**
~Since Secretary Merrill took office in January 2015, 1,967,001 people have registered to vote in Alabama, which sets the total to 3,618,172 as of December 31, 2021.
~Online Electronic Voter Registration and a voter registration mobile device app were unveiled for the first time in Alabama’s history.
~The Secretary of State Voter Registration and Photo Voter I.D. Mobile Unit works throughout the year by attending numerous statewide community events in all 67 counties at least once per year. The unit can be sent to any community and/or household at any time, seven days a week, in all 67 counties.
law in the state through the production and distribution of posters and commercials that were shown statewide. Donald J. Trump, the 45th President of the United States, has agreed to assist with the office’s 2022 efforts.

~Since July 2016, an informational video concerning voter registration is available on the SOS YouTube channel.

• Working to Ensure Voter Roll Integrity
~Under the authority of state legislation requested by Secretary Merrill, Alabama joined both the ERIC (Electronic Registration Information Center) and the Interstate Voter Registration Crosscheck program in October 2015 to ensure Alabama joined a union of states that work together to crosscheck voter rolls to reduce duplication of names in Alabama and across state lines. In 2016, 1,252,444 Alabamians who weren’t registered to vote but had a driver’s license or non-driver I.D. received a mailer informing them they could register. 78,372 were sent in 2017, and 76,044 were sent in 2018.

• Increasing Transparency
~Beginning with the March 1, 2016 statewide primary election, each county’s elections results have been placed online in real-time on the SOS website, resulting in 100% participation for all of Alabama’s counties.
~The Alabama Election Fairness Project (an agreement signed between the Attorney General, the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency, & Secretary of State) was established to ensure fairer elections in Alabama.
~Fair Campaign Finance Reports are under constant review.
~The Fair Ballot Commission information is linked to the website so that Alabamians can find information on proposed state constitutional amendments, which oftentimes are hard to understand.
~For the first time in Alabama’s history, citizens can purchase voter list information online.
~The Alabama Elections Handbook is available online to eliminate publishing costs and increase viewer use beyond state and county election officials to be accessible to the general public.
~An informational calendar for all state and local elections is available on the website, including local tax referendums.
~Online information regarding the State Boards and Commissions is updated annually.
~A search feature in the Acts of Alabama online database was implemented to make it easier to find information in the text of a legislative act and determine the author and joint sponsor.
~A government filings link was added to the SOS website.

• Campaign Compliance
~Since June 2017, the office has managed the administration penalties process under the Alabama Fair Campaign Practices Act.
~63 of Alabama’s 67 counties utilized the electronic poll books in the November 2020 General Election. All 67 counties will utilize the poll books in 2022.
~Since November 2016, the SOS Office has made election results available live to the public on the official SOS website through the Election Night Reporting system. The ENR results are available for every Primary, Primary Runoff, and General Election.

• Election Integrity
~In 2021, the Concerned Women for America Legislative Action Committee released a “State Election Integrity Scorecard,” where Alabama was the only state in the country to receive an “A.”
~In 2021, Secretary Merrill co-chaired the Republican State Leadership Committee’s National Commission on Election Integrity to restore the American public’s confidence in the integrity of free and fair elections.
~In 2021, the Heritage Foundation ranked Alabama among the best states in the union for election integrity.
~In 2021, Alabama was also recognized by the University of Southern California for its excellent election integrity.

• Assisting Alabama’s Counties
~The Secretary of State’s administration of the Help America Vote Act Grant Program was reorganized to more adequately serve Alabama’s counties (whose local government is closer to the people) to:
- quickly respond to county requests for use of the grant funds,
- quickly issue approved grant funds to counties, and
- provide capital asset inventory and surplus guidelines to the counties related to grant funds purchases that are required under federal regulations.
~The office continued to assist Alabama’s 67 counties to pay for Handicap Accessible Voting Machines software and maintenance until December 2016.
~Letters were sent to 1,298 new county officials concerning the requirement to file their reports with the FCPA system.
~The SOS Office released instructional videos on the usage of the FCPA online filing system in June 2017.
~The Candidate Filing Guide was updated and is available for viewing online. A printed version of the filing guide was later released.
~The SOS Office sent out guidance to Probate Judges in preparation for educating students for the student poll worker internship program.
~The SOS Office distributed more than $3.2 million dollars to Alabama’s counties to help them make the polling locations safe for
the 2020 General Election due to Covid-19.

- In July 2021, many Alabama counties transitioned from the AutoMark electronic ballot marking machines for disabled voters to the ExpressVote machines. This plan allows 59 counties with outdated machines to upgrade to ExpressVote. Counties that do not have the new machines may use remaining HAVA funds and the residual costs to be subsidized by the SOS Office.

**Registrar Training**

- The Secretary of State Office’s Elections Division organizes Board of Registrars training sessions, which involves nearly 200 participants. The office also maintains and provides a Board of Registrars Handbook.
- A 3-year training program for members of all the County Board of Registrars was initiated.
- Since June 27, 2017, the SOS Office, in conjunction with Auburn University, has provided Registrar training with continuing education credits.
- The Board of Registrars Handbook to aid Registrars in the accomplishment of their duties was updated.
- Starting December 1, 2020, the SOS Office began its tour of all 67 counties in an effort to evaluate the performances of all 201 Registrars in the State of Alabama.
- The Board of Registrars in Alabama’s 67 counties participate in task force meetings frequently.

**Stopping the Spread of Misinformation**

- In December 2019, Secretary Merrill met with representatives from Facebook and Twitter to ensure Alabama was prepared for the 2020 election cycle in the fight to stop the spread of misinformation. In 2017, the State of Alabama witnessed several attempts to mislead voters through the spread of misinformation on various social media platforms. Since then, Secretary Merrill has worked with leaders from both Facebook and Twitter to ensure that similar instances do not occur again in the State of Alabama.
- On August 12, 2021, the SOS Office released a publication that combats election misinformation, which is available on the SOS website.

**Business Services Division**

**Helping Alabama’s Businesses**

- On June 18, 2021, all business corporations filings have been filed on the same day they are received by the office (and no later than the next business day) for five consecutive years.
- Secretary Merrill’s instruction to deposit funds in one day caused all new domestic entities filing for the first time to be issued within one day of their Business Entity Number, which is available on the website. This process is a tremendous help to a new business, where banks, lenders, and others can verify the existence of a new domestic entity.
- Upon being informed that the state law provision on the payment of an “expedite” fee related to certain business filings was being processed in three business days, the expedition of the filings to be accomplished in less than 24 hours was immediately ordered, as the state law requires.
- Secretary Merrill instructs the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) sub-division (of the Business Services Division) to accomplish its recordation and filing activities in the time period required by state law (to be fulfilled in two days). After a period of adjustment, the UCC sub-division is consistently accomplishing its public duties the same day but no later than the next business day.
- Secretary Merrill instructs the Business Entities sub-division (of the Business Services Division) to accomplish the recordation and filing activities required by state law for the Secretary of State to fulfill (such as foreign filings, agent changes, name reservations, corrections to name reservations, certificates of existence, and mergers & conversions) in the time period required by state law (to be fulfilled in seven days). After a period of adjustment, the Business Entities sub-division is consistently accomplishing these public duties the same day but no later than the next business day.
- Secretary Merrill instructs the Business Entities sub-division to accomplish the recordation and filing activities required by state law, which are issued first to the County Probate Courts (such as all domestic filings) and thereafter sent to the Secretary of State in the time period required by state law (to be fulfilled in seven days upon the Secretary of State’s receipt). This activity was aggressively remedied due to the fact that there have been time periods where the tasks were not accomplished until seven months after the Secretary of State received the domestic filings from the counties. Since June 24, 2016, domestic filings are filed the same day but no later than the next business day.
- Due to domestic entity filings being accomplished at the county level, the office worked with Alabama’s counties to establish an “online filings system” for domestic entity filings. Baldwin, Colbert, DeKalb, Elmore, Geneva, Houston, Jackson, Madison, Montgomery, Morgan, and Tuscaloosa Counties utilized the online filings system. Since January 1, 2021, certain domestic entity filings are now filed directly with the Secretary of State’s Office under the guidelines of Act 2020-73.
- The online Business Services forms were updated on the new SOS website. Some forms had not been updated in a decade.
- A new process was established to handle fraudulent business filings submitted to the SOS Office.

**Government Support Division**

- The process for ordering House of Representatives Journals and State Senate Journals for each Alabama Legislative Session was restructured. The journals are hard-back bound. Approximately 80-140 sets of House Journals and 80-140 sets of Senate Journals have been ordered each year. By coordinating the activity, only 61 sets of House Journals and 36 sets of Senate Journals are needed, which reduces the costs paid by the state.
~The process for ordering the Acts of Alabama is better coordinated. By state law, the hard-back bound acts are required to be sent to more than 1,000 recipients statewide. By simply paying attention to the mailing and distribution list through its constant updating, the acts are sent to the proper recipients, avoiding wasteful mailings that lack the proper address.
~The process for providing the Acts of Alabama pamphlet has been eliminated, and the Acts of Alabama are already available on the SOS website. A 2009 state law repealed this process, but the activity was never ceased.
~The SOS Office expanded the digital filing system to include reports issued from other state agencies, such as the Alabama Indian Affairs Commission and the Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters.
~In 2019, the SOS Office redesigned the public officer commission certificates for the first time in 40 years.

**Information Systems Division**

- Providing Services and Saving Money
  ~The division assisted with the establishment of the Online Electronic Voter Registration system with existing staff, rather than farming out the online development costs to a third party.
  ~The Homeowners’ Associations Electronic Database was established for citizens to search and retrieve documents related to homeowners’ associations that were established after January 1, 2016, as required by state law. Existing staff accomplished the work.
  ~The division provides annual notices to state boards, commissions, and committees reminding them to update their membership data.

**Authentications, Trademarks, and Lands Division**

~To highlight and honor Alabama’s families, the first International Adoption Day Celebration was held on January 29, 2015, the second ceremony was held on February 5, 2016, the third was held on January 27, 2017, the fourth was held on January 29, 2018, and the fifth ceremony was held on January 25, 2019. The ceremonies highlight Alabama’s families and help citizens understand the process and role required of the Secretary of State’s Office for international adoptions. Due to the rise of Covid-19, the SOS Office did not host a ceremony in 2020 and 2021.
~The SOS Office worked with Maxwell Air Force Base to assist them in the authentication of their international military pilots’ training completion documents.
~Trademark renewal notices are mailed by postcard rather than as a standard letter to reduce costs.
~Since March 25, 2019, the office provides for the registration and renewal of trademarks, service marks, and trade names online.

**Alabama Athlete Agents Commission**

- Modernizing and Saving Money
  ~The commission modernized the process for accepting payments to the State of Alabama from athlete agents seeking licensing from a paper receipt method to an electronic validation system with existing hardware at no additional cost to the state.
  ~The commission is working to digitize their agenda process.
**FAQs for the SOS**

**Voter Registration and I.D.s:**

- **How can I register to vote?**
  If you are 18 years or older, a citizen of Alabama, and have not been convicted of a disqualifying felony, then you can register to vote by completing a voter registration form on [AlabamaVotes.gov](http://AlabamaVotes.gov). You may print and mail the application, request for the SOS Office or your local Board of Registrars to mail you a blank application, or you can register online. If you do not have access to the Internet, please contact our Elections Division at 334-242-7210, and we will be happy to mail you a voter registration form.

- **I’ve moved to another county and need to change my voter registration information. What form should I use?**
  To update your voter registration information, please complete another voter registration form. There is a section on the form to input your previous and current address. Once the form is processed by the Board of Registrars, you will receive a card in the mail containing your new polling information.

- **What should I do if I don’t have a photo identification card to vote?**
  The Secretary of State’s Office and Board of Registrars create free photo voter identification cards for those who do not possess another form of valid identification. Alabama law requires that all voters must present a photo I.D. in order to verify their identity prior to voting. Since there are many citizens that would like to vote but do not possess an I.D., free photo voter I.D. cards are created so that no one is hindered or restricted from voting. If you would like to apply for a free photo voter I.D., please complete the form on page 9 and return it to your local Board of Registrars Office or the Secretary of State’s Office.

- **Can I get a photo voter I.D. card if I have a driver’s license?**
  No. The purpose of the photo voter I.D. card is to provide a form of identification for those who do not possess any other valid forms of identification to vote. Please see the back cover for a list of valid identification.

- **Can I use my photo voter I.D. card for other identification purposes?**
  No. Photo voter identification cards are issued for voting purposes only.

- **Can I renew my driver’s license with the Secretary of State’s Office?**
  No. The Alabama Secretary of State does not handle driver’s licenses. Please visit [https://www.alea.gov/dps/driver-license/driver-license-offices](https://www.alea.gov/dps/driver-license/driver-license-offices) for a full list of local driver’s license offices and their contact information.

**2020 General Election:**

- **Were there any cases of voter fraud in Alabama’s 2020 General Election?**
  No. The Secretary of State’s Office takes voter fraud claims very seriously and investigates each claim. There was no evidence of tampering in the 2020 General Election.

- **Can Alabama perform an audit on the 2020 General Election results?**
  The Secretary of State’s Office cannot perform an audit on an election without the approval of the Alabama House of Representatives and the Alabama State Senate. During the 2021 Legislative Session, Senate Bill 45 was passed, which will authorize an audit of the election results in three Alabama counties immediately following the 2022 election.

- **Does Mike Lindell really have proof of voter fraud in Alabama’s 2020 General Election?**
  Secretary Merrill met with Mike Lindell, CEO of My Pillow, on August 21, 2021, September 17, 2021, and October 20, 2021 because Mr. Lindell claimed that he had evidence to prove that voter fraud was present in Alabama’s 2020 General Election. Since the office takes each and every claim of voter fraud very seriously, Secretary Merrill and his Elections and Legal staff met with Mr. Lindell to determine if the supposed evidence was factual. After a close examination of the data that was presented, Secretary Merrill and his staff agreed that the claims were unreasonable and unsubstantiated. As of this printing, no other meetings have been scheduled.
What brand of voting machine does Alabama use?
Alabama’s voting machines are from ES&S.

Do Alabama’s voting machines have Internet connectivity?
No. Alabama’s voting machines are custom-built, do not have modems, and cannot connect to the Internet. The machines are made to only count the ballots, which minimizes the risk of fraud and tampering. The results are then transferred to a USB flash drive.

When will Alabama return to using paper ballots?
Alabama has never stopped using paper ballots. They are retained for two years after the election.

Office Services:

Who do I contact if I need help with my LLC or other form of business?
Please contact the Secretary of State’s Business Services Division at 334-242-5324 for all of your business questions, concerns, and filings.

How can I obtain an apostille or certification for my documents so that I can use them overseas?
Apostilles and certifications are handled through the Secretary of State’s Authentications Division, which can be reached at 334-242-5325. One of our staffers will ensure that you have everything you need.

Can the SOS Office translate my documents from one language to another?
No. The Secretary of State’s Office does not supply translation services.

How do I become an Alabama notary?
Notary applications are processed by the Probate Judge’s Office in the county where the prospective notary resides. A complete list of the state’s Probate Judges and their contact information can be found at https://www.sos.alabama.gov/city-county-lookup/probate-judges.

Where do I file a complaint against a notary?
Please contact the county where the notary was commissioned to file a complaint.

I witnessed or suspected voter fraud at my polling location. What should I do?
Please file a voter fraud report immediately at StopVoterFraudNow.com. Our Legal Division will contact you for additional information and will perform a full investigation on the claim.

Can I purchase a list of voters?
Yes. Voter lists can be purchased from the Secretary of State’s Elections Division or via the Secretary of State’s website at AlabamaVotes.gov under the “Purchase Voter List” section for $0.01 per name.

I would like to request a Resolution certificate to honor the memory of my deceased loved one or to congratulate someone for an achievement. How can I request one?
Resolution requests can be made through Brittany Hamilton, Editorial and Events Director, at Brittany.Hamilton@sos.alabama.gov. Please be sure to include the name of the honored person or entity, a detailed obituary or biographical information, and a valid mailing address.

How can I get a Proclamation certificate from the Governor of Alabama?
You can request a Proclamation from the Governor’s Office at https://governor.alabama.gov/contact under the “Constituent Requests” section.

How can I schedule a time to speak directly with Secretary Merrill either in person or over the phone?
Please contact Secretary Merrill’s Executive Assistant, Karen Guthrie, at 334-353-2171 or Karen.Guthrie@sos.alabama.gov to schedule an appointment.

Where is the Secretary of State’s Office located?
The office has several divisions that are divided among three buildings. Please see our contact information on page 19 for a complete list of addresses and phone numbers.

What are the office hours for the Secretary of State’s Office?
The Secretary of State’s Office is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m. The office is closed on state and federal holidays, as well as weekends.
Office Contact Information

Alabama State Capitol
600 Dexter Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36130

Executive Division
Suite S-105
334-242-7200

Elections Division
Suite E-208
334-242-7210

Finance Division
Suite E-205
334-353-2022

Alabama State House
11 South Union Street
Montgomery, AL 36130

Government Support / Authentications & Trademarks
Suite 224 and 226
334-242-5325
334-242-7224

RSA Plaza
770 Washington Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36104

Business Entities Subdivision
Suite 580
334-242-5324

UCC Subdivision
Suite 580
334-353-0203

Information Systems Division
Suite 580
334-242-7222
How to Register to Vote Online:
- Visit www.alabamavotes.gov
- Select “Voter Registration”
- Click “Online Registration”
- Then select “Begin Voter Registration Application”

*Note: You will need a valid driver’s license issued by the State of Alabama to register online.

How to Obtain a Free Photo Voter I.D. Card:
- Visit www.alabamavotes.gov
- Select “Photo Voter I.D.”
- Download and complete the Photo Voter I.D. application

*Note: If you have the following, you are not eligible for a photo voter I.D.:
- Valid driver’s license
- Valid non-driver I.D.
- Valid Alabama Photo Voter I.D.
- Valid state-issued I.D. (any state)
- Valid federal-issued I.D.
- Valid U.S. passport
- Valid Employee I.D. from Federal Government, State of Alabama, County Government, Municipality, Board, Authority, or other entity of this state
- Valid student or employee I.D. from a college or university in the State of Alabama (including postgraduate technical or professional schools)
- Valid Military I.D.
- Valid Tribal I.D.

Our most powerful voice is our vote.
REGISTER TODAY!