

Quarterly Report October 2017



Inside:

Secretary Merrill Attends the NASS Summer Conference



Secretary Merrill wants to hear from you! Send him an email at John.Merrill@sos.alabama.gov.

Mailing Address:
Office of the Secretary of State
Alabama State Capitol
P.O. Box 5616
Montgomery, AL 36103-5616



Electronic Business Filings released in Alabama for the first time!

*



Secretary Merrill visits more Alabamians across the state.

*



See this quarter's list of accomplishments achieved by the AL SOS Office.

*



NASS Summer Conference 2017



The National Association of Secretaries of State's (NASS) annual summer conference commenced in Indianapolis, Indiana on July 7th and ran through July 10th. This year, Secretary Merrill was pleased to attend a variety of informative assemblies, such as the Elections Security Task Force Meeting on Identifying Threats, Stakeholder Outreach, Risk Education, & Emergency Plans, Military & Overseas Voting, and the International Relations Committee Meeting. "I'm always delighted to join the other Secretaries of State in discussions on methods to better protect and serve the people of our great nation," Secretary Merrill

stated. Due to the success of the 2016 Student Statewide Mock Election, Secretary Merrill was invited to give a presentation on the process and ideas that were used to implement the project. He also gave a presentation on International Elections & Observation Missions to discuss his journey to Volgograd and Moscow, Russia in September 2016, where he was invited by U.S. Ambassador Daniel Baer to observe foreign elections. By the end of the conference, he was sworn in as the Southeastern Vice President of NASS and will serve in this capacity until the next event in summer 2018 (*see centered photo below).



Online Business Filings



Alabama Secretary of State John H. Merrill is excited to announce a new online filing tool for businesses to submit filing documentation online to the Secretary of State's Office and the County Probate Judge's Office. This project has been completed in collaboration with **Baldwin County Probate Judge Tim Russell**.

"Baldwin County is pleased to be the first in another area. We pride ourselves on being an example to the other 66 counties in the state as to how to efficiently and effectively serve the needs of all our residents," said Judge Russell.

As additional counties express interest, they will be added at that time.

"If we have an opportunity to provide expedited services to keep Alabamians at work and reduce red tape, we want to take advantage of those opportunities," said Secretary Merrill.

When Secretary Merrill was campaigning, he learned that state filings were **delayed more than 30 weeks** from the time of receipt. Since taking office, the efforts made by Secretary Merrill and his team have removed years of excessive red tape, which was constricting the procedure. The most significant change has been a new requirement that all checks must be deposited on the date received in the Office of Secretary of State. These changes to the process allowed staff to reduce the delayed processing time down to **same-day** processing on all business filing documents that are filed with the office.

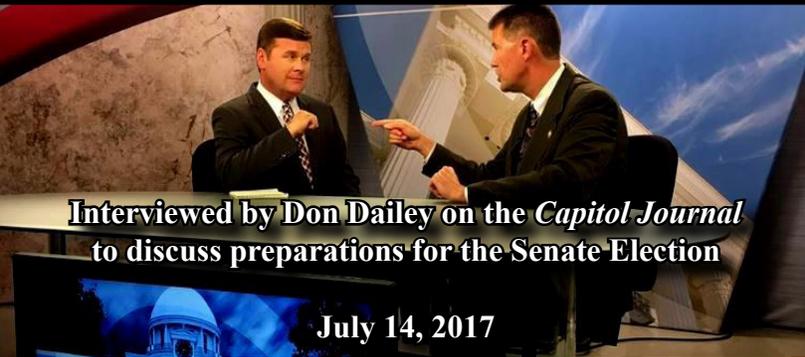
Despite bringing the processing time for documents filed with the Secretary of State's Office to same-day processing for **over 80 consecutive weeks** with 25% fewer staff and **\$1.7 million dollars in savings**, Secretary Merrill was not satisfied that we were doing enough to expedite these bureaucratic processes.

"We needed to continue to modernize the process if we wanted to truly use all of the resources available to us. The next step was taking the process online to empower Alabamians to spend more time focusing on the development of their business, which in turn will bring more economic growth to our great state," said Secretary Merrill. "We want the people of Alabama to know that Alabama no longer moves at the speed of government, but now it moves at the speed of business."

This process is currently available for **domestic limited liability company filings**. Following a brief trial period, additional services will be added: **Domestic Business/Nonprofit Corporations, LPs, LLPs, LLLPs, and Professional Associations**.

All of the electronic services offered by the Secretary of State's Office can be found on the website at sos.alabama.gov under the Business Services app icon.

Secretary Merrill Visits Alabamians Across the State



Interviewed by Don Dailey on the *Capitol Journal* to discuss preparations for the Senate Election

July 14, 2017



Spoke at the Alabama Circuit Clerk's Association Annual Conference

July 27, 2017



Spoke at The Golden Eagle Fundraiser in Celebration of Scouting in Enterprise

August 23, 2017



Spoke to 29 Students from 16 Countries Attending the Maxwell Air Force Base International Officer School

August 24, 2017



Attended Oxford High School's Click-It or Ticket Promotional Campaign

August 29, 2017

As a means to increase transparency and extend the services of the Secretary of State's Office to all Alabamians, Secretary Merrill's annual goal is to travel to each of Alabama's 67 counties at least once a year to speak to various groups of all ages, which includes but is not limited to fourth grade classes, graduation ceremonies, dinners, award presentations, and more.

The following list contains a select few of Secretary Merrill's visits from around the state for the July through September 2017 quarter.

- Attended the voter registration and ID drive held at Whitlock's General Store in the Trimble Community of Cullman County. July 1, 2017
- Attended the delegation event with Maebashi, Japan at The City Club in Birmingham. July 4, 2017
- Attended the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) summer conference in Indianapolis, Indiana. July 7-10, 2017
- Interviewed by Don Dailey on the Capitol Journal to discuss preparations for the Senate Election. July 14, 2017
- Spoke to the Greater Birmingham Young Businessmen group in Jefferson County. July 24, 2017
- Spoke at the Alabama Circuit Clerk's Association Annual Conference. July 27, 2017
- Served as the keynote speaker for the Coosa County Board of Education Teacher Institute at Coosa County High School in Hanover. August 3, 2017
- Attended the Tuscaloosa County Farmers Federation Annual Meeting in Taylorville at the Bobby Miller Center. August 17, 2017
- Spoke at The Golden Eagle Fundraiser in celebration of scouting in Enterprise. Secretary Merrill also received the Golden Eagle Award at this event. August 23, 2017
- Spoke to 29 students from 16 countries attending the Maxwell Air Force Base International Officer School. August 24, 2017
- Attended Oxford High School's Click-It or Ticket promotional campaign. August 29, 2017
- Spoke at the Aga Khan Foundation's Walk/Run Fundraiser Event at Veterans' Park in Hoover. September 10, 2017
- Spoke to the Colbert County Chapter of the Alabama Democratic Conference in Tuscumbia. September 18, 2017
- Served as the Master of Ceremonies at the Art into Words fundraising event in Gulf Shores. September 21, 2017

*



Spoke at the Aga Khan Foundation's Walk/Run Fundraiser Event at Veterans' Park in Hoover.

September 10, 2017

Quarterly Accomplishments

- As of **September 22, 2017**, there are **3,298,463** registered voters in the State of Alabama. **803,579** Alabamians have registered to vote since Secretary Merrill took office in **January 2015**.
- The SOS Office is continuously **reducing agency expenses** through the **review of all invoices**.
- An **online process** has been provided to obtain a **certificate of withdrawal for foreign entities**.
- The office initiated a **weekly review** regarding the performance of **all the Board of Registrars offices** throughout Alabama.
- With Baldwin County's assistance, **domestic LLCs** can be **formed online** through the SOS website.
- The office worked with all of **Alabama's 67 counties** to address the **new anti-cross-over legislation**.
- The **Business Services Division** has completed **same-day filings** for nearly **66 consecutive weeks**.

*



Office Contact Info.

Want to receive a copy of
our **2018 Annual Report?**
Send your first and last
name and mailing address to
Brittany.Hamilton@sos.
alabama.gov, and we'll send
you one for free!
*

Don't Miss **Volume 3 Issue 4,**
Coming January 2018!

Alabama State Capitol **600 Dexter Avenue** **Montgomery, AL 36130**

Executive
State Capitol
Suite S-105
334-242-7200

Elections
State Capitol
Second Floor
334-242-7210

Finance
State Capitol
Second Floor
334-242-7220

Alabama State House **11 South Union Street** **Montgomery, AL 36130**

Business Entities
State House
Suite 119
334-242-5324

UCC
State House
Room 220
334-242-5970

Information Systems
State House
Room 125
334-242-7222

Government Support / Authentications & Trademarks
State House
Rooms 224 & 226
334-242-7224 / 334-242-5325