

## **IOWA SECRETARY OF STATE PAUL PATE (R)**

In 2026, Iowa Republican Secretary of State Paul Pate plans to seek reelection to a fifth term. After two terms in the state senate, Pate initially served one term as Secretary of State from 1995-1999. After time in the private sector, Pate served as mayor of Cedar Rapids from 2002-2006 before winning a narrow victory for Secretary of State in 2014, a position he has held since. A longtime advocate for voter ID requirements, Pate has rejected claims about widespread election fraud, asserting his belief that Joe Biden was the rightful winner of the 2020 election. “Because of the tireless work we’ve done in running elections in Iowa, we’ve got a gold standard for safe, secure, and fair elections,” Pate said in 2025.

Key findings:

**Pate has announced plans to seek a fifth term as Iowa Secretary of State in 2026.** A two-term state senator, Pate first served as Secretary of State in Iowa from 1995-1999. (Pate sought the GOP gubernatorial nomination in 1998 instead of seeking reelection, finishing a distant third.) Pate, who has operated a family asphalt business, served as mayor of Cedar Rapids from 2002-2006, and as the Iowa State Chairman for Rudy Giuliani’s 2008 presidential campaign. In 2014, Pate again sought election as Secretary of State, defeating Democrat Brad Anderson with 48.5% of the vote. In 2018, Pate was named President-Elect of the National Association of Secretaries of State. “It’s an honor to continue to serve the people of Iowa as your Secretary of State,” Pate said after winning reelection in 2022 with 60% of the vote. In 2025, Pate announced his intention to seek a fifth term in 2026. “Throughout my life as a public servant, I’ve been guided by three core principles: service, participation and integrity,” Pate said. “During my time as Iowa Secretary of State, we’ve broken numerous records for voter registration and participation, we’ve been recognized as a top state for election administration and integrity and even earned awards for cyber security measures, accessibility for the disabled community, and poll worker recruitment and voter outreach.”

**Pate has been a longtime advocate for strong voter ID laws and often discussed an overarching goal of making it “easy to vote” and “hard to cheat.”** “We ran a...clean election...but you don’t rest on your laurels,” Pate said in 2017. “You have to keep protecting what’s important.” “The integrity of the vote and the safety of the voters are my top priorities,” Pate said in 2020. Pate has frequently described his role in office as enforcing laws passed by the Iowa Legislature. “The Legislature writes the laws,” Pate said in 2022. “I’m the administrator.” “My office and me particularly, don’t wear the jersey of a team,” Pate added. “Sometimes that doesn’t make us popular but at the end of the day, we want you to have confidence and the results are accurate.” After Republican lawmakers passed a sweeping elections bill in 2021 to reduce Iowa’s early voting period and close polls earlier on Election Day, Pate said that he thought “the majority of what they did was reflective of what the constituents were asking for...I don’t see anything that they passed that was going to be a significant detriment to any of the election process.” Pate has been what the Ames Tribune described as a “strong...support(er)” of “implementing a voter ID law in Iowa.” In 2018, Pate said that voter ID wasn’t “about rampant fraud going on, it’s actually about protecting what you value.” A 2018 article in the Des Moines Register noted that Pate was “best known for shepherding through a 2017 voter ID law that...shortened the state’s early voting period, eliminated straight-ticket voting and...require Iowans to present a state-issued ID at the polls...” In 2024, Pate’s office said dozens of individuals had either voted or registered to vote in Iowa in past elections despite being ineligible based on lack of citizenship. In December 2024, Pate sued the federal government for information he claimed it had declined to provide before the November election that would have allowed officials to check the citizenship status of registered Iowa voters. In 2025, Pate proposed a measure to revoke voter registrations if election officials couldn’t confirm the individual’s American citizenship.

**Pate has rejected claims of widespread election fraud amplified by Donald Trump and believes Joe Biden fairly won the 2020 presidential election.** In 2017, Pate questioned the tactics employed by Donald Trump’s federal election integrity commission, rejecting a request by Kris Kobach to provide detailed information about Iowa voters. “Perhaps my associate in Kansas got ahead of himself,” Pate said at the time. In 2022, the Des Moines Register reported that “Pate has maintained Iowa's 2020 election was secure...” “Our work is not done with respect to dealing with misinformation, disinformation, and educating the public so they have the confidence in our system,” Pate said in 2022. Pate has stated that he believes Joe Biden won the 2020 presidential election, and committed to certifying the results of the 2024 presidential election in Iowa. “If people lose confidence in our election system and our results, we have lost,” Pate said in 2022. Pate has asserted his “top priority” is “protecting the integrity of our election system...” Pate has answered “no” when asked if he has seen widespread voter fraud. In April 2025, Pate expressed concern over the Trump administration’s pause on federal election cybersecurity programs. “If those (systems) were to go away, it would be pretty serious,” Pate said. “And we’ve had conversations with them on that regard.”

## **BACKGROUND**

### CAMPAIGN FINANCE

Type of Report	Date Filed	Total Receipts	Total Expenditures	Cash on Hand
2024	1/12/25	\$13,489.81	\$3,674.59	\$29,532.25**

\*\*Report also disclosed “outstanding loans” of \$293,500  
[Iowa Campaign Finance Databases]

### BACKGROUND & PHILOSOPHY

**Pate served four years as a state senator; served as SOS from 95-99 and later served four years as mayor of Cedar Rapids.** “Public service has already filled much of his career resume. Pate served four years as a state senator and held the Secretary of State office from 1995-99. He later served four years as the mayor of Cedar Rapids and led the Iowa League of Cities during part of that time.” [Daily Nonpareil, 9/2/14]

**1994: Pate won race for SOS after campaign promise to streamline office functions.** “Secretary of State Paul Pate stopped short of calling for abolition of his office Thursday, asking instead for a wide-ranging review of the state bureaucracy. Pate won election in 1994 after making a campaign promise to streamline his office and possibly merge its functions into other state agencies. As he released results of a study of his office, he said it is too early to call for its elimination. Pate asked State Auditor Richard Johnson to review the secretary of state's office and other state agencies. ‘Almost everyone agrees that there's room for sweeping reform in state government,’ Pate said.” [Telegraph Herald, 12/20/96]

**1997: Pate ran for governor.** “Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate said Friday that former U.S. Rep. Jim Ross Lightfoot, the most prominent Republican considering the governor's race, is a ‘status quo’ candidate who offers few fresh ideas. ‘I think Jim's done a good job as a congressman, and I respect him a great deal, but I think it's time for a change,’ Pate said. Pate has said he's seeking the Republican nomination for governor but conceded Friday that many in the Republican hierarchy want to hand the party's nomination to Lightfoot, who narrowly lost a U.S. Senate election last year. ‘Iowans have a choice; they're at a crossroads,’ he said. ‘What kind of governor do they want to lead us into the next millennium? Do they want someone who possibly leaves a status quo, kind of a Dwight Eisenhower approach?’ Pate said he represents a new generation of GOP contenders because ‘we're not just there, but we're actually leaders.’” [Omaha World Herald, 6/14/97]

- **1998: Pate finished distant third in Republican gubernatorial primary with 8.2%.** [US Fed News, 7/28/06]

**1998: Pate: “I don’t like the state owning and operating a lottery...I’m not comfortable with the state being a promoter and owner and operator of gambling.”** “Secretary of State Paul Pate said Tuesday that Iowa should investigate ways to get out of the lottery business. ‘I don't like the state owning and operating a lottery,’ said Pate, a candidate for the Republican nomination for governor. ‘I'm not comfortable with the state being a promoter and owner and operator of gambling.’ Pate, a former state senator from Marion, said he is not settled on the best way to get the state out of the business of running a lottery, but he said it is time to reopen the issue. ‘I'd like to have some options,’ Pate said. ‘What can we do? What have other states done? Can we privatize or get rid of it? What are your

choices?' Pate became the latest candidate for governor to weigh in on the gambling issue." [Omaha World Herald, 4/15/98]

**1982: Pate started paving business with wife.** "Pate did not move his family from Marion to Des Moines after being elected secretary of state. He frequently makes as many as two or three 2 1/2-hour one-way trips from the capital to Marion each week to attend his three children's ball games and school events. These trips, as well as months of traversing the campaign trail, have taken a toll on Pate's vehicles. A new Ford Expedition sport utility truck purchased less than a year ago already has 50,000 miles on the odometer, and the family van passed the 100,000-mile mark long ago. Pate, an Ottumwa native, 'scraped together \$ 2,000' and started a paving business in 1982 with his wife, Jane." [Omaha World Herald, 5/28/98]

**2007: Pate served as Iowa State Chairman for Rudy Giuliani's presidential campaign.** "The following information was released by the Rudy Giuliani Presidential Campaign: The Rudy Giuliani Presidential Committee reaffirmed its commitment to winning the Iowa Caucuses by announcing today that former Iowa Secretary of State and former Cedar Rapids Mayor Paul Pate will serve as the campaign's Iowa State Chairman. Pate will spearhead the campaign's efforts across the state by communicating with other political leaders, building upon the campaign's fundraising network, and increasing support at the grassroots level." [States News Service, 6/7/07]

**2002-2006: Pate served as mayor of Cedar Rapids.** "Pate, a small-business owner in Cedar Rapids, where he served as mayor from 2002 to 2006, faces Democrat Brad Anderson in the race." [The Gazette, 9/12/14]

**2014: Pate won SOS election with 48.5% of the vote.** "Paul Pate, Iowa's former and future secretary of state, on Wednesday said his satisfying election victory on Tuesday taught him anew that a political campaign is not 'a vacation or a life goal.' Pate — the former Cedar Rapids mayor and the only Statehouse executive branch winner on Tuesday who lives in Eastern Iowa — said he never imagined he would run for office again when he decided in 2005 not to seek re-election as Cedar Rapids mayor after four years in office. 'I was very happy spending my time running my (asphalt) business and spoiling my grandchildren,' Pate, 56, said. He said the 'musical chairs' that prompted current Iowa Secretary of State Matt Schultz to make a run to fill retiring U.S. Rep. Tom Latham's seat pushed him to seek the job he held from 1995 through 1998. 'It left a pretty big vacuum,' Pate said of Schultz's coming departure. He said the Democratic candidate for secretary of state, Brad Anderson of Des Moines, had too 'partisan' a resume, having worked for former Democratic Gov. Chet Culver and having helped run President Barack Obama's 2012 campaign in Iowa. 'That got me stepping up,' Pate said. 'And people said they wanted me and needed me, and here we are today.' Pate won 525,237 votes or 48.5 percent of the statewide vote on Tuesday to Anderson's 503,962 votes or 46.6 percent." [The Gazette, 11/6/14]

**2018: Pate named President-Elect of National Association of Secretaries of State.** "The Iowa Secretary of State issued the following news release: Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate was named President-Elect of the National Association of Secretaries of State on Monday. The bipartisan organization unanimously backed Pate for the prestigious position during their annual summer conference, held this year in Philadelphia. Pate's election puts him in line to become President of the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) in 2019. 'I am honored to be chosen by my colleagues from around the country for this important leadership role,' Secretary Pate said. 'The ideals of this organization are ones that I share and strive for every day. We want to conduct clean and fair elections, and to offer service at the speed of business, not the speed of government. I will continue do my best to promote that mission as NASS' President-Elect.'" [US State News, 7/16/18]

**2018: Pate ran for third term as SOS.** “Paul Pate is running for a third term as secretary of state, using his past accomplishments as the basis for his reelection campaign. Pate served as an Iowa senator for the 24th and 26th districts, a term as secretary of state under Governor Branstad and mayor of Cedar Rapids. In 2014 — 20 years after first being elected to the position — Pate returned as Iowa secretary of state under Gov. Terry Branstad with many ideas on how to enhance the lives of Iowans.” [Iowa State Daily, 10/10/18]

**2018: Pate won reelection with nearly 53% of the vote.** “On Tuesday, Paul Pate was re-elected to his position as Iowa's secretary of state. Pate beat opponent Democrat Deidre DeJear 52.86 percent to 44.74 percent, with all counties reporting results. The Secretary of State's Office oversees Iowa elections and acts as a record-keeper for businesses. Although Pate was behind for the first half of the race, he wasn't nervous. ‘It's the early vote’ Pate said while polling behind DeJear. ‘...I've been through a few elections and the first votes in typically aren't the ones that come out in the end.’” [Daily Iowan, 11/6/18]

**2019: Pate apologized to members of Iowa Firearms Coalition after his office failed to meet requirement that would have advanced pro-gun amendment to Iowa's Constitution.** “Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate recorded a video apologizing to members of the Iowa Firearms Coalition for his office's failure to meet a requirement that would have advanced a pro-gun amendment to Iowa's Constitution. The error set the gun rights amendment back years. ‘Dear members of the Iowa Firearms Coalition: I want to take this opportunity to express my sincere regrets and apologies for the bureaucratic oversight in my office that resulted in a setback in making the right to keep and bear arms part of the Iowa Constitution,’ Pate said in the video and in a written apology. Over the weekend, Pate acknowledged his office did not complete a constitutionally mandated requirement to notify the public of a resolution passed by the Iowa Legislature last year that would have added language about the right ‘to keep and bear arms’ to the Iowa Constitution.” [Des Moines Register, 1/19/19]

- **Pate: “If my father was still living...he would tell me stand tall, acknowledge the mistake and then get out there and fix it...”** “Pate, a Republican and lifetime member of the NRA, recalled growing up hunting with his father and then his own son and grandson, which he said taught him about gun safety and hunting safety. ‘If my father was still living today, he would tell me stand tall, acknowledge the mistake and then get out there and fix it. And that's what I'm doing today with you,’ Pate said. He promised to work with the Iowa Firearms Coalition and state legislators to pass the amendment again. Amendments to the Iowa Constitution must be passed by a majority of both chambers of the Iowa Legislature in separate, two-year General Assembly calendars. Republicans, who control both chambers, had been on track to place the measure before voters in 2020, a presidential election year. Now the proposal will be delayed by at least two years, and may be derailed altogether if Democrats retake a chamber in the next election.” [Des Moines Register, 1/19/19]

**2019: Pate unanimously elected President of NASS.** “The Iowa Secretary of State issued the following news release: Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate was unanimously elected President of the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) during the organization's summer conference in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Additionally, Pate won the prestigious NASS IDEAS Award for his election cybersecurity initiative, ‘Partnerships Pay Dividends: A Roadmap to Election Cybersecurity’. Secretary Pate will serve as the NASS President through July 2020. Pate told his bipartisan colleagues that he will make election security his top priority, both as President of NASS and as Iowa's Secretary of State.” [US State News, 7/8/19]

**Pate operated family asphalt business.** “Pate, who also operates a family asphalt business, served as Cedar Rapids mayor from 2002 to 2006 before being elected Secretary of State again in 2014. He was re-elected in 2018.” [Sioux City Journal, 7/9/19]

**2022: Pate won election with 60% of the vote.** “He went on to discuss the importance of secure elections and promised to continue his mission of ensuring ‘every Iowa business thrives (and) every eligible vote counts.’ Pate previously served as Iowa’s secretary of state from 1995-1999. He lost a primary bid for the Republican nomination for governor in 1998 and served as mayor of Cedar Rapids from 2002-2006. He ran again for secretary of state in 2014 before running for the office again in 2014. He won reelection in 2018 and 2022. The most recent election saw Pate defeat Democrat Joel Miller with 60% of the vote, compared to Miller’s 39.9%. His current term will end on January 1, 2027.” [Des Moines Register, 6/14/25]

**2023: Pate: “It’s an honor to continue to serve the people of Iowa as your Secretary of State.”** “Iowa Secretary of State Paul D. Pate issued the following news release: Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate took his official oath of office for his fourth term on January 13 in the Rotunda of the Iowa Capitol Building. Upon taking his oath of office, Secretary Pate has become the second longest serving Secretary of State in Iowa history. Secretary Pate has dedicated his life to public service. Now in his fourth term as Secretary of State and Iowa’s Commissioner of Elections, he is guided by three core principles: service, participation, and integrity. ‘It’s an honor to continue to serve the people of Iowa as your Secretary of State,’ Secretary Pate said during his swearing in ceremony on Friday. ‘I’ve brought together a talented team that will provide excellent services to constituents across all 99 counties. Whether you’re registering to vote or setting up a business for the first time, you can count on us to carry out our mission of service, participation, and integrity.’” [Targeted News Service, 1/13/23]

**2025: Pate announced intention to seek fifth term in 2026.** “Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate will seek a fifth term in office. Pate, a Republican, announced June 14 that he would run for reelection in 2026. ‘I am thrilled to announce that I will once again be running to serve as your secretary of state, because we’re not done yet,’ said Pate in a video announcing his candidacy. In his announcement, Pate detailed key accomplishments the state has achieved under his leadership. ‘Throughout my life as a public servant, I’ve been guided by three core principles: service, participation and integrity,’ Pate said. ‘During my time as Iowa Secretary of State, we’ve broken numerous records for voter registration and participation, we’ve been recognized as a top state for election administration and integrity and even earned awards for cyber security measures, accessibility for the disabled community, and poll worker recruitment and voter outreach.’” [Des Moines Register, 6/14/25]

**Pate backed bills to give SOS’ office more tools to verify citizenship status.** “Pate has supported several changes to Iowa's election laws during his terms in office. Most recently, he backed a bills that give his office more tools to verify a voter's citizenship status and standardizes recount procedures. The legislation comes in response to the chaotic weeks leading up to the 2024 election, when Pate instructed county auditors to challenge the ballots of 2,176 registered voters who he suspected were not citizens based on a faulty list from the Iowa Department of Transportation. Ultimately, his office found 277 noncitizens on Iowa's voter rolls, including 35 noncitizens who successfully voted in the 2024 election and five more who tried to vote but had their ballots rejected. The last-minute moves faced criticism and legal challenges. Throughout his career, Pate has also served as a state senator and president of the Iowa League of Cities. He was unanimously elected president of the National Association of Secretaries of State in 2019, according to his campaign website, pateforiowa.com.” [Des Moines Register, 6/14/25]

## ON THE ISSUES

### Philosophy

**2014: Pate: “My plank is about public service...”** “Paul Pate has been a success in the private sector and now he wants to give something back in the public arena. ‘My plank is about public service,’ said Pate, a candidate for Iowa’s secretary of state position. ‘I’m a big proponent that the Secretary of State is a key advocate for small businesses.’” [Daily Nonpareil, 9/2/14]

**2014: Pate wanted to make it “easy to vote...hard to cheat...”** “Paul Pate, Republican candidate for Iowa secretary of state, has released his plan to encourage voter participation, strengthen election integrity with verifiable voter identification and embrace technology to make voter registration easier. Pate, a former state senator who served as secretary of state from 1995 to 1999, pointed out that during that time Iowa had a record number of voters and he oversaw outreach programs to encourage voter registration and election participation. In a nutshell, the plan is to make it ‘easy to vote...hard to cheat,’ Pate said.” [The Gazette, 9/12/14]

**2015: Pate: “We should do everything possible to make sure the people defending our right to choose our elected representatives are also given the opportunity to cast their ballots...”** “The Iowa Secretary of State issued the following news release: Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate announced his plans to remove two obstacles in the election process that currently prevent some ballots cast by military voters from being counted. The most common reason that military ballots are not counted is that they are not received by the time of the county canvass. Secretary Pate proposes giving our overseas military voters an extra 30 days to request, receive, and return special absentee ballots. Current law enables overseas military and other personnel to request a special write-in ballot 90 days prior to an election. Pate’s proposed law change would extend this to 120 days prior to an election. ‘We should do everything possible to make sure the people defending our right to choose our elected representatives are also given the opportunity to cast their ballots,’ Pate said during a meeting with county elections officials in Ottumwa. ‘Extending the time to 120 days will make it easier for them to do that.’” [Targeted News Service, 12/4/15]

**2017: Pate: “We ran a...clean election...but you don’t rest on your laurels...You have to keep protecting what’s important...”** “Any suggestion of fraud plants seeds of doubt in the minds of some voters who then decide their vote won’t count. So Pate is trying to prevent any loss of confidence in Iowa’s voting system by proposing that voter identification – including existing Iowa driver’s licenses, passports and military IDs – be required and signatures be verified at polling sites. Eligible voters, out-of-state students and others who lack approved identification would be issued free ID cards including an ID number that would be required for all absentee ballot requests. ‘We ran a darned clean election here, but you don’t rest on your laurels,’ he said. ‘You have to keep protecting what’s important to you. It’s no different than if I was commanding a military operation. You don’t want to lose a single soldier. We don’t want to lose a single vote.’” [Sioux City Journal, 1/7/17]

**2017: Pate took issue with ACLU accusing him of voter suppression.** “Pate, a Republican elected in 2014, took offense to what he considered ACLU’s implication that he and his office ‘would even indirectly engage in vote suppression.’ ‘Instead of these scare tactics, organizations such as the ACLU would better serve voters by helping them understand that their personal information will not be compromised by registering and voting,’ Pate wrote. It’s ‘obviously ridiculous’ for Pate to suggest ‘that shining a light on those activities as a part of our watchdog function to protect voters is itself suppression,’ Stringer said.” [Sioux City Journal, 7/24/17]

**2018: Pate: “We don’t want fraud. Even the slightest suggestion of it is more than we want.”** ““We don't want fraud. Even the slightest suggestion of it is more than we want,” he said.” [Ottumwa Courier, 2/23/18]

**2020: Pate: “The integrity of the vote and the safety of the voters are my top priorities.”** ““I can't emphasize this enough: The integrity of the vote and the safety of the voters are my top priorities,” Pate said. ‘The sanctity of the vote must be protected. And we are committing vast resources to ensure that happens. So you can go out there and make your voice is heard and make sure that you're a voter.’” [Gazette, 10/30/20]

**2022: Pate: “The Legislature writes the laws...I’m the administrator.”** ““With no voter fraud seen in Iowa elections, Local 5 asked whether Senate File 413 was necessary or simply passed to strengthen existing voter laws. ‘The Legislature writes the laws of the land. I'm the administrator, like I said, the referee. I'm sure some of the umpires and every official doesn't like every rule that comes out but I'll say this,’ Pate said. ‘A lot of what the Legislature did was exactly what the voters were asking for.’” [ABC 8 WQAD, 6/3/22]

**2022: Pate: “My office and me particularly, don’t wear the jersey of a team...Sometimes that doesn’t make us popular but at the end of the day, we want you to have confidence and the results are accurate.”** “Pate said the numbers and protocols his office has in place show voters shouldn't worry. In an op-ed he wrote in the Des Moines Register two weeks ago, he pointed to research done by the Elections Performance Index, which shows Iowa third in the country for elections performance in 2020. As an added layer of safety, Pate said poll workers on both sides of the aisle are trained well and the machines are top-notch. ‘I've been very clear and specific. The voting equipment gets certified by us here at the state of Iowa has been checked and re-checked and gets reviewed before each election and they don't have internet hookups so it's safe,’ he said. ‘The balloting itself goes into the tabulators and when an evening is over with, they will be reviewed and tabulators will give us preliminary results.’ From the preliminary results all the way until the final ones come out, Pate hopes Iowans have confidence their votes are protected. ‘My office, and me particularly, don't wear the jersey of a team. We're there to do what's right for Iowans. Sometimes that doesn't make us popular but at the end of the day, we want you to have confidence and the results are accurate.’” [ABC 8 WQAD, 6/3/22]

**2022: Pate on sweeping Iowa elections legislation passed in Iowa: “The majority of what they did was reflective of what the constituents were asking for.”** ““Republican lawmakers in 2021 passed a sweeping elections bill to reduce the state's early voting period and close polls earlier on Election Day. Leaders of the measure described it as an election integrity measure, meant to make voting more uniform across the state. Democrats argued it would make it more difficult to vote. Although the secretary of state never formally lobbied for or against the bill, Pate said his office offered technical advice on the legislation. ‘I think the majority of what they did was reflective of what the constituents were asking for,’ Pate said. ‘I don't see anything that they passed that was going to be a significant detriment to any of the election process.’” [Des Moines Register, 9/12/22]

**2022: Pate: “Under my watch, Iowa has set record highs for voter registration and participation multiple times.”** “Pate: Under my watch, Iowa has set record highs for voter registration and participation multiple times. Iowa is a national leader in both. We implemented Iowa's online voter registration system in 2016, making it faster and easier to register than ever. We also created the Safe at Home address confidentiality program, so survivors of domestic violence, sexual abuse, trafficking, stalking and assault can vote without fear of their address becoming public. More than 1,200 Iowans

participate in the program. My office works with stakeholder groups and expends significant resources to educate Iowans about law changes and deadlines. We will continue to make it easy to vote but hard to cheat.” [Des Moines Register, 10/4/22]

**2022: The Gazette: Pate “trying to tamp down voting misinformation and disinformation, while members of his own party are pushing conspiracy theories...”** “Pate, a Republican, and the Iowa Secretary of State's Office have been trying to tamp down voting misinformation and disinformation, while members of his own party are pushing conspiracy theories including those running for office in Linn and Johnson counties.” [The Gazette, 10/31/22]

**December 2024: Pate to push state legislators to adopt election law changes to help standardize recount procedures and better maintain voter rolls.** “Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate will be pushing state legislators to adopt election law changes next year to help standardize recount procedures and better maintain the state’s voter rolls, he said. ‘2024 was a great election cycle,’ he said in an interview. ‘I mean, it went very smoothly. And it doesn't mean we don't want to improve on things, and we do need to improve on some things. ... So what we're doing this time isn't over the top, really.’ Pate said he plans to propose legislation clarifying that state law allows his office to contract with state and federal agencies and other third parties to verify the citizenship of Iowa voters. He said that was a roadblock as he sought to access the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements, or SAVE, database ahead of November’s elections. Pate has complained that the federal government has refused to share citizenship information that would allow him to effectively check the state’s voter rolls.” [Des Moines Register, 12/12/24]

**2025: Pate: “Because of the tireless work we’ve done in running elections in Iowa, we’ve got a gold standard for safe, secure, and fair elections.”** “Pate, who is 67, also is a former state senator and Cedar Rapids mayor. ‘I'm very proud of the fact that because of the tireless work we've done in running elections in Iowa, we've got a gold standard for safe, secure and fair elections,’ Pate said in an interview. ‘But it's because we've done a layered approach to election security and election integrity, and it's evolved as time has gone on by just kind of mitigating the new risks. ‘And that's why I'm running again, because we haven't finished the work. We're well on track, but we still have more to do. And Iowans take elections and voting pretty seriously, and I'm proud to serve them and represent them.’” [Daily Nonpareil, 6/18/25]

## Ballot Counting

**2021: With Pate’s support, Governor Kim Reynolds signed bill into law that shortened early voting window from 29 to 20 days.** “On March 8, Gov. Kim Reynolds signed a new bill into law – Senate File 413. The most notable changes from the new legislation are that it will reduce the early voting window from 29 to 20 days and polls will close at 8 p.m., one hour earlier. Iowa House passed the bill, 57-37 Feb. 24, with every Republican in support and every Democrat opposed. Six representatives were absent. The House vote came a day after the State Senate passed the measure, 30-18, with two absent. While some claim SF413 is an act of ‘voter suppression’ orchestrated by the GOP, Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate said the new law is in response to perceived issues. ‘Unfortunately some of those issues were because we had some renegade auditors,’ Pate said. Pate said three county auditors – Joel Miller of Linn, Travis Weipert of Johnson, and Pat Gil of Woodbury – blatantly ignored the law and the directive of his office by distributing pre-filled absentee ballot forms, which circumvents election security measures and invites identity theft. ‘They knew,’ he said. ‘We had already covered this topic with auditors in early meetings and I had specifically communicated with these auditors telling them not to do it.’ Pate said the pre-filled absentee ballots were printed with the voter's confidential

Voter ID Numbers. 'It's like your bank pin number. You don't send it out,' he said 'It was unsolicited. They didn't even know it was coming.'" [Osceola Sentinel-Tribune, 3/11/21]

- **Absentee ballots had to arrive by the time the polls closed to be counted.** "Under the new law, absentee ballots will also have to arrive by the time the polls close in order to be counted, rather than counting as long as they were placed in the mail the day before Election Day. County auditors who disobey or fail to follow state guidance could face criminal charges." [Osceola Sentinel-Tribune, 3/11/21]

## Election Denialism

**2017: Pate questioned tactics employed by Trump's federal election integrity commission.** "Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate questioned the tactics employed by a federal election integrity commission but said the effort to look at election issues in the country is welcome. President Donald Trump established the commission in May, with Vice President Mike Pence installed as chairman and Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach the vice chairman. 'Big picture, we're optimistic because they appointed several Republican and Democratic secretaries of state to the commission,' Pate, a Republican, said during a meeting with the Council Bluffs Nonpareil. After the commission was formed, Kobach asked states last month to provide publicly available data including registered voters' names, birth dates, voting history and partial Social Security numbers. Iowa joined a number of states in declining to provide the information. Pate said his office does not provide Social Security numbers and driver license numbers and has a number of stipulations for use when documents are released. Pate's office doesn't keep track of who people vote for. 'We don't know how you vote, so we can't tell anyone how you vote,' Pate said. 'It's a secret ballot.' Pate started his second stint as secretary of state after being elected in November 2014. He previously served in the role for one term from 1995 until 1999. Pate said the letter from Kobach to states requesting the information was 'not thought through.' 'Perhaps my associate in Kansas got ahead of himself,' Pate said." [Omaha World-Herald, 7/27/17]

**2022: Des Moines Register: "Pate has maintained Iowa's 2020 election was secure, but he said his next term would be focused on dispelling myths about election fraud."** "Pate has maintained Iowa's 2020 election was secure, but he said his next term would be focused on dispelling myths about election fraud. A Des Moines Register/Mediacom Iowa Poll from Nov. 2021 found that nearly one-third of Iowans doubted the results of the 2022 midterm elections would be counted correctly across the country." [Des Moines Register, 9/12/22]

**2022: Pate: "Our work is not done with respect to dealing with misinformation, disinformation, and educating the public so they have the confidence in our system."** "Our work is not done with respect to dealing with misinformation, disinformation and educating the public so they have the confidence in our system,' Pate said. Pate said he reminds voters that Iowa uses paper ballots and requires voters to show identification at the polls. 'The more you drill down when you ask people in Iowa about election integrity, they'll come back and tell you that they believe our elections are in fact, good elections,' Pate said. 'And maybe we're skeptical about some others, but I feel good about what we've done here.'" [Des Moines Register, 9/12/22]

**2022: Pate believed Biden won 2020 election.** "Pate told the Register he believes President Joe Biden won the 2020 election. 'The last thing I want to see happen is not believing that the person who won is the winner, because (if) that happens, our democracy has crashed,' Pate said." [Des Moines Register, 9/12/22]

**2022: Pate committed to certifying results of 2024 presidential election in Iowa.** “When asked, Pate said he ‘most certainly’ commits to certifying the results of the 2024 presidential election in Iowa. ‘And that’s the way it should be: States run elections and as they certify their state, that should be the official results,’ Pate said. ‘I would remind people as the Secretary of State you don’t get to wear a team jersey; you’re the referee. So you follow the laws and the rules that you have on the books. And when you look at the last presidential election, if we follow the laws on the books like we did here in Iowa then we have a legitimate winner and we need to recognize that.’” [Sioux City Journal, 9/16/22]

**ABC 8: “Pate has denied allegations of voter fraud in Iowa elections, saying he believes in the validity of the 2020 presidential election.”** “Pate has denied allegations of voter fraud in Iowa elections, saying he believes in the validity of the 2020 presidential election. In regards to Senate file 413, Pate told Local 5 in a one-one interview ahead of the June primaries that he facilitates legislation like Senate file 413 as an administrator. ‘The Legislature writes the laws of the land. I’m the administrator, like I said, the referee. I’m sure some of the umpires and every office doesn’t like every rule that comes out but I’ll say this,’ Pate said. ‘A lot of what the Legislature did was exactly what the voters were asking for.’” [ABC 8 WQAD, 10/28/22]

**2022: Pate: “If people lose confidence in our election system and our results, we have lost.”** “Pate’s office has been producing statements, videos and other information, including a dedicated ‘myth vs. fact’ website, that pushes back on lies and distorted facts about elections in Iowa. ‘We work very hard to give people the facts,’ Pate said. ‘(Iowa) has been ranked among the top three states in the country for election administration. But, at the end of the day, we have given them both the integrity and the components they need to be confident that (Iowa’s election security) is on the up and up.’ He added: ‘If people lose confidence in our election system and our results, we have lost. We have lost our republic. And, if we lose our republic, you just gave the Russians you just gave the Chinese a victory without firing a single bullet.’” [Sioux City Journal, 10/30/22]

## Election Security

**1998: Pate: “I am prepared to take the necessary steps to ensure the integrity of our election process.”** “‘I am prepared to take the necessary steps to ensure the integrity of our election process,’ he said. Pate said he plans to run television and radio commercials urging those who choose to vote absentee to seal and mail their ballots, rather than turn them over to someone else for delivery. The issue is timely because absentee ballots for the November general election are available Sept. 24. ‘It’s a way of voting that’s clearly very popular,’ Pate said. ‘We’ve got to see that the vote is protected.’” [AP, 8/24/98]

**2015: Pate: “Your signature is even better than your photograph, believe it or not.”** “Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate made the case Friday for shifting away from verifying voters’ eligibility through state-issued photo identification cards and moving to a system that checks voters’ signatures. Pate received applause from the audience at a Black Hawk County Republican Women’s luncheon when he said he is still pursuing legislation to require a photo ID to vote, but explained why the signature check may be more important. ‘Your signature is even better than your photograph, believe it or not. It’s much better, because it’s verifiable,’ Pate said during his Waterloo stop. Pate said the shift is also a practicality, as the Democrat-led Iowa Senate is unlikely to move forward with legislation that would require a photo ID to vote. ‘It takes the wind out of the sails of the Democrat Party, who nationally keep saying, ‘We can’t do these (voter ID) things, because it disenfranchises. It takes tons of people off (voting rolls),’ because we’re questioning them and their integrity. We’re offending them,’ Pate said. ‘Not anymore. We’re taking it out of the equation.’” [Waterloo Courier, 2/7/15]

**2017: Pate proposed \$1 million upgrade to Iowa's election system to guard against fraud.** "Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate on Thursday proposed a \$1 million upgrade to the state's election system to guard against fraud by using electronic poll books statewide and requiring voter or signature verification at polling places and for absentee ballots. Pate said he has shared a draft of his proposed election integrity legislation with majority GOP leaders with favorable responses, but he noted that the upgrade probably would not be in place until the 2020 election unless lawmakers put the changes on a fast track to be in place by 2018." [Sioux City Journal, 1/5/17]

**2017: Pate: "Protecting the integrity of our election system is my top priority..."** "As I have stated many times, protecting the integrity of our election system is my top priority and this legislation will help to do that,' Pate told a Statehouse news conference. 'I want to make it easy to vote, but hard to cheat.' Pate proposes that voter identification – including existing Iowa driver's licenses, passports and military IDs – be required and signatures be verified at polling sites. Eligible voters, out-of-state students and others who lack approved identification would be issued free ID cards with ID numbers by election officials, he noted. A registration ID number would be required for all voters requesting absentee ballots. 'If you don't have an ID, we will send you a new voter registration card to use at the polls,' Pate said. 'This bill streamlines the system to make checking in easier and quicker. It will reduce waiting times at the polls, ensure every eligible Iowan is able to cast a ballot, and ensures their ballot will count.'" [Sioux City Journal, 1/5/17]

**2017: Pate: "No one is going to be punching any buttons from Moscow, or anywhere else in the world, to influence or change a vote."** "In a Journal interview, Pate said, 'All this stuff that has been going on over the last year has truly been about politics, about how groups and maybe countries have tried to influence the politics, of the message. I caution Iowans, Americans in general, not to fall into that trap. Do not allow the Russians or whoever to disillusion you or disenfranchise you from being an active voter.' He added, 'No one is going to be punching any buttons from Moscow, or anywhere else in the world, to influence or change a vote.'" [Sioux City Journal, 7/27/17]

**2018: Pate announced formation of Iowa Election Cybersecurity Working Group.** "Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate issued the following news release: Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate announced the formation of the Iowa Election Cybersecurity Working Group Friday in Cedar Rapids. Pate was joined by U.S. Department of Homeland Security Advisor Matt Masterson for the event. The group will include the U.S. and Iowa Departments of Homeland Security, the U.S. Elections Assistance Commission, the Iowa National Guard, county auditors and information technology specialists, Iowa's Office of the Chief Information Officer, and other entities. They will provide recommendations to the Secretary of State's Office for protecting Iowa's elections systems. 'Cybersecurity is a game changer for elections, comparable to Florida's issues in 2000,' Secretary Pate said. 'We are working hard to identify strengths and weaknesses to help us improve elections security statewide. The Cybersecurity Working Group is comprised of stakeholders who are dedicated to protecting the integrity of the vote. We take this issue very, very seriously.'" [Targeted News Service, 5/4/18]

**2019: Pate: "We're staying right where we're at with our paper process. You can't hack paper ballots from Russia or anywhere else."** "Even with all the improvements in smartphones and other technology, Pate can't predict when — or if — voting by phone will be an option. 'For now, we're staying right where we're at with our paper process,' Pate said Tuesday. 'You can't hack paper ballots from Russia or anywhere else.' The Russians can't hack the ballots, but Pate said election security continues to be his top issue." [Sioux City Journal, 7/9/19]

**2019: Pate: “The Russians didn’t hack a single vote, but they hacked our minds...If they sow doubt about the integrity of elections, they will disenfranchise voters.”** “In addition to the hacking attempts, Pate is concerned about the influence foreign interests could have on elections. ‘The Russians didn't hack a single vote, but they hacked our minds,’ he said. ‘If they sow doubt about the integrity of our elections, they will disenfranchise voters.’ At the same time his office is stepping up efforts to safeguard elections, Pate foresees streamlining the voting process to make it easier for Iowans to participate. ‘I can see that in a short time period you will see vote centers so you won't have as many voting precincts,’ Pate said.” [Sioux City Journal, 7/9/19]

**2019: Pate likened ongoing hacking attempts of Iowa’s election network to a “war.”** “Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate on Wednesday likened the ongoing struggle against forces trying to hack the state's election network to a ‘war.’ ‘It's a war for public opinion, and it's a war, if you will, for minds rather than a physical one,’ Pate said in pointing to efforts by Russians, North Koreans, Chinese and others trying to disrupt the U.S. election process and weaken the American public's trust. ‘Their manipulation of the social media, their manipulation of certain types of probes that they're doing is to try to create doubt, to make Americans question their elections process,’ Pate told reporters. ‘So, yes, I consider that a war. I consider it something we need to push back and not tolerate.’ Pate raised concerns about challenges to Iowa's election process during a breakfast meeting with members of the Westside Conservative Club. He also shared his worries that any snafu in the upcoming 2020 Democratic ‘virtual’ caucuses could have a ‘devastating’ impact and jeopardize Iowa's starting position in the presidential selection process every four years. Pate serves a dual role as state commissioner of elections but does not have a role in the caucus process that is run by the state's Republican and Democratic parties. But he said both parties have he consulted his office.” [Sioux City Journal, 8/28/19]

**2020: Pate announced extension of Iowa’s cybersecurity partnerships to include private industry leaders.** “Iowa Secretary of State Paul D. Pate issued the following news release: Secretary of State Paul Pate has extended Iowa's election cybersecurity partnerships to include private industry leaders such as Cisco, FireEye and Microsoft. These companies bolster Iowa's election infrastructure to ensure the integrity of the system remains strong. These private sector collaborations supplement the Secretary of State's partnerships with local, state and federal agencies such as the Iowa National Guard, the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI, giving Iowa's elections robust cybersecurity protections at every level. ‘We have doubled down on our cybersecurity efforts this year with leaders in the cybersecurity industry,’ Secretary Pate said. ‘Protecting the integrity and security of state's elections requires a massive team effort, and we're working with public and private entities to build the strongest team possible. I am confident, and the public should be reassured, that we are taking all of the necessary steps to protect their vote in all 99 counties.’” [Targeted News Service, 10/16/20]

**2022: Pate asked about whether he had seen widespread voter fraud: “No.”** “Since the 2020 presidential election, the conversation about election fraud has been pushed to the forefront. Many involved in the Jan. 6, 2021, U.S. Capitol riot in Washington believe false claims of election fraud from former President Donald Trump. Those rioters included numerous Iowans, including father and son Daryl and Daniel Johnson, who are now serving jail time for their involvement. Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate sat down for a one-on-one interview with Local 5 to dispel some of this misinformation and disinformation. When asked whether Iowa has seen any widespread voter fraud since 2020, Pate responded simply: ‘No. We have not.’ Pate attributes some of the confusion to applying national stories they might have seen to Iowa. ‘Some of it is they want to talk about voting equipment, and because they pick on one system that might have had some national attention and they want to drag it and apply it to Iowa, when it's not,’ Pate said. That includes paying close attention to mail-in ballots as well. Pate's office said in the 2020 elections, the state mailed out 1,050,593 ballots 95% of those were returned. Of

the 994,300 ballots counted, Pate's team says only 2,592 were rejected. That's a 0.3% rejection rate.” [ABC 8 WQAD, 6/3/22]

**2022: Pate: “Iowans vote on paper ballots and you cannot hack a paper ballot.”** “Iowa Secretary of State Paul D. Pate issued the following news release: Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate and his bipartisan Auditors Advisory Group are uniting to dispel election misinformation and disinformation ahead of the 2022 general election. There has been a recent increase in the spread of false claims regarding elections in our state, despite there being no evidence of intrusions into Iowa's election systems. Secretary Pate and the county auditors also stand united in their support of the bipartisan teams of poll workers that will work at voting sites this November. ‘Iowans vote on paper ballots, and you cannot hack a paper ballot. We have numerous security measures and checks and balances in place to ensure the integrity of the vote. That includes Voter ID, public testing of voting equipment prior to the election, post-election audits and wide array of cybersecurity protections,’ Secretary Pate and the Auditors Advisory Group said in a joint statement. ‘You also have your friends and neighbors staffing the polling sites-in a bipartisan fashion. They are standing up and providing a great service for our state and nation and deserve respect. We encourage all eligible Iowans to register to vote and participate in elections, and we want voters to know that we are dedicated to protecting their vote,’ Secretary Pate and the Auditors Advisory Group added.” [Targeted News Service, 9/16/22]

**April 2025: Pate expressed concern over Trump administration’s pause on federal election cybersecurity programs.** “Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate expressed concern about the Trump administration's pause on federal election cybersecurity programs during a Friday appearance on Iowa Press. In an interview for the Iowa PBS show Friday, Pate told reporters that he would ‘not want to see’ the cybersecurity systems go away. ‘If those (systems) were to go away, it would be pretty serious, and we've had conversations with them on that regard,’ Pate said. ‘Feedback I'm getting is that we will see continuing some type of security support. They're reformatting it, and of course, I'm waiting anxiously to find out what that looks like. But we do count on a lot of those cyber protections.’” [Muscatine Journal, 4/13/25]

### Election Workers

**June 2018: Pate praised smooth primary elections.** “Pate says all things considered, it was a good night. ‘We have 99 counties and thousands of poll workers, so human error can slip in here and there, but when you look at the big picture it went very smooth, actually,’ he said.” [NBC 13 WHO, 6/6/18]

### Mail Voting

**1998: Pate announced plans to tighten absentee voting rules.** “Secretary of State Paul Pate, Iowa's top election official, announced plans Monday for a campaign to tighten the rules for absentee voting. Pate said the state has very tight election laws and procedures for ballot security, but the use of absentee ballots is a growing area where abuse is possible. ‘This is the weak link,’ Pate said at a Statehouse news conference. The use of absentee ballots is an increasingly popular method of voting, and in some elections up to 15 percent of the total ballots cast are absentee. Both political parties have built aggressive absentee voting operations to organize those who won't actually go to the polls on election day. The problem comes when groups organize to distribute and collect absentee ballots, Pate said. That can allow for a period of time where ballots aren't sealed but are passing through the hands of a third person, he said. His call for reform comes amid continuing controversy over a Democratic race for Polk County Supervisor, where there were charges of ballot irregularities in the June primary. Leaders of both political parties have expressed support for change, Pate said.” [AP, 8/24/98]

**2020: Pate exercised emergency powers during Covid to mail absentee ballot request forms to every active voter in the state ahead of June primary.** “In 2020, Iowans broke an all-time turnout record for a general election with more than 1,697,000 voters, surpassing the previous the previous state record of 1,589,951 set in 2012. That record was achieved, in part, by Pate's decision to exercise his emergency powers to mail absentee ballot request forms to every active registered voter in the state ahead of the June 2 primary. ‘We were amidst of the COVID coming out. We knew it was a really devastating pandemic. We just didn't know how, or what it's going to look like, and going into an election...we knew we had concern about the safety of the voter,’ said Pate. ‘When you're bringing in thousands of people to vote in close proximity, it was an invitation for a problem we didn't want to put our citizens to.’ Pate said the effort was successful. ‘It protected people in a time that we needed it to. It also clearly demonstrated high voter participation ... for both political parties,’ he said. However, as November's general election approached, Pate said the Iowa State Legislature removed his emergency power authority, which he then asked members of the State House and Senate to support for the safety of Iowa's voters. ‘They agreed it was the thing to do during the pandemic,’ Pate said. ‘And if we had another pandemic, I would be right up there doing the same thing.’” [Osceola Sentinel-Tribune, 3/11/21]

## Voter ID

**2014: Pate: “It’s imperative that we qualify all voters.”** “Paul Pate, a 2014 Republican candidate for Iowa secretary of state, said Tuesday he plans to keep the focus on combating voter fraud and working for a bipartisan solution for beefing up voter ID efforts at the polls. ‘It's imperative that we qualify all voters,’ said Pate, a Cedar Rapids businessman and former mayor who previously served for six years as a state senator and four as Iowa secretary of state from 1995 to 1999.” [Sioux City Journal, 1/21/14]

**2014: Pate: “I believe we need a verifiable voter identification tool to be used when voters go to the polls to cast a ballot.”** ‘Like a majority of Iowans, I believe we need a verifiable voter identification tool to be used when voters go to the polls to cast a ballot,’ Pate said. His plan calls for using Iowa driver’s licenses that contain a photo ID and bar codes that includes information on residency, citizenship and voter eligibility. Pate said 93 percent of Iowans registered to vote have a driver’s license. He will seek funding to provide the other 7 percent with non-driver ID cards. Pate also wants to offer online voter registration. ‘I will work with the Iowa Legislature and support passage of online voter registration that will be secure, prevent fraud and provide long-term cost savings as well as modernize our voting system,’ Pate said.” [The Gazette, 9/12/14]

**2014: Pate’s seven-point plan to improve Iowa elections involved voter ID.** “Republican candidate for Iowa secretary of state Paul Pate has a seven-point plan for improving the state's elections - including ID requirements for voters. Pate, of Cedar Rapids, who previously served as secretary from 1995 to 1999, said the steps would make it ‘easy to vote and hard to cheat.’ Regarding voter ID, Pate said he favors ‘a verifiable voter identification tool’ at the ballot box, although he didn't explicitly call for requiring voters to show a photo-ID at the polling place. Several states have enacted such laws, which Democrats argue can disqualify elderly and lower-income voters. Beyond identification tools, Pate said he favored additional funding to provide state-issued nondriver ID cards to registered voters who don't have a driver's license. Pate also called for barring third-party groups from transporting absentee ballots. Currently, many organizations run get-out-the-vote efforts in which staffers pick up absentee ballots and deliver them to polling places on voters' behalf. Voter turnout drives that encourage early absentee voting and sometimes rely on volunteers to collect and deliver completed ballots are a cornerstone of Democratic campaign efforts. ‘Absentee ballots are one of the highest risks for voter fraud,’ Pate wrote in his plan, which was announced in a memo to reporters. ‘I believe no one should be touching your

absentee ballot except you, an authorized election official or a postal worker.” [Des Moines Register, 9/18/14]

**2014: Ames Tribune: “Pate strongly supports implementing a voter ID law in Iowa...”** “Pate strongly supports implementing a voter ID law in Iowa, which would require all voters to show photo identification in order to cast a ballot. ‘It’s about voter integrity,’ Pate said. ‘There’s so many things you can do to encourage participation, but we need to have a solid foundation so we don’t have to worry about fraud or any other distractions.’” [Ames Tribune, 10/23/14]

**2018: Pate on voter ID: “It isn’t about rampant fraud going on, it’s actually about protecting what you value.”** “Most recently, Pate pushed for voter ID laws in Iowa while also starting initiatives to register more eligible voters. While voter ID has been a contested issue in the state, Pate said it isn’t as controversial as some make it out to be. ‘It isn’t about rampant fraud going on, it’s actually about protecting what you value,’ Pate said in a debate with his opponent, Deidre Dejean, on Iowa Public Television (IPTV). ‘When you left your home, you locked your door at your house. You didn’t lock your home because there are a rash of burglaries in your neighborhood, but because you value the things inside your home, and voting is one of those things that we value.’” [Iowa State Daily, 10/10/18]

**2018: Pate implemented soft rollout of voter ID law for midterm elections.** “Pate implemented a soft rollout of the law for the November midterm elections. At the polls this year, voters will be asked to show IDs before they vote, but they aren’t legally required to do so until 2019 and can sign an oath stating they are who they say they are. ‘I felt that it was my role as commissioner of elections to get in front of [voter-ID legislation] and make sure that we’re listening to what Iowans said,’ Pate said. ‘Polling showed about 70 percent of Iowans wanted a voter ID. My interpretation was because they felt they wanted to ensure the integrity of what their vote is.’” [Daily Iowan, 10/14/18]

**2017: Pate championed voter ID law, which required voters to bring identification to polls beginning in 2019.** “During the 2017 legislative session, Pate championed a controversial voter-ID law that was signed into law in 2017. The new law requires voters to bring identification to the polls beginning in 2019. The Secretary of State’s Office provides free state IDs for registered voters in case Iowans don’t have valid ones.” [Daily Iowan, 11/6/18]

**2018: Des Moines Register: “He is best known for shepherding through a 2017 voter ID law...The law shortened the state’s early voting period, eliminated straight-ticket voting, and will require Iowans to present a state-issued ID at the polls...”** “But he is best known for shepherding through a 2017 voter ID law that became a focal point in the race. The law shortened the state’s early voting period, eliminated straight-ticket voting and will require Iowans to present a state-issued ID at the polls beginning next year. Voters this year were asked for an ID, although they were allowed to sign an oath affirming their identity as an alternative. The law is facing a court challenge and Democrats have said it will disenfranchise poor and minority voters. There is no evidence of widespread voter fraud in Iowa. Pate referenced the legal battle in his speech, saying his job isn’t done. ‘I’m going to have to be in court, unfortunately, for you guys on voter ID. So I’m going to need your support,’ Pate said on Election Night. ‘We’re not done.’ Pate has said high turnout in special elections and the June primary shows the law is not disenfranchising anyone. Instead, he says it is ‘about protecting what you value.’” [Des Moines Register, 11/8/18]

**2024: Pate’s office said dozens of people either voted or registered to vote in Iowa in past elections despite being ineligible based on lack of citizenship.** “Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate’s office says dozens of people either voted or registered to vote in Iowa in past elections despite being ineligible

because they said they were not citizens. Pate, a Republican, said 87 people reported to the Iowa Department of Transportation that they were not citizens after they had already voted. Another 67 people reported to the DOT that they were not citizens after they had already registered to vote but had not cast a ballot. Those people self-reported to the Iowa DOT that they were not citizens when they applied for a driver's license or conducted other business with the DOT. The DOT recently sent its list of self-identified noncitizens to the secretary of state's office, which checked the names against Iowa's voter lists, said Ashley Hunt Esquivel, a spokesperson for Pate. Pate's office has referred those 154 names to the Iowa Attorney General's Office and the Iowa Department of Public Safety 'for potential prosecution.' 'It is a felony for noncitizens to either vote or register to vote, and we will work with the authorities to ensure that those who break the law are prosecuted to the fullest extent,' Pate said in his statement." [Des Moines Register, 10/24/24]

**2024: Pate defended decision to instruct poll workers to challenge more than 2,000 potential voters at the polls over citizenship concerns.** "Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate is defending his recent decision to instruct poll workers to challenge more than 2,000 potential voters at the polls because they may be noncitizens, even though he acknowledged some have become naturalized citizens and are eligible to vote. Last week, Pate, a Republican, sent a letter to Iowa's 99 county auditors that 2,022 people previously reported to the Iowa Department of Transportation that they were not citizens and then subsequently registered to vote or cast a ballot. Pate instructed auditors to use the challenge process laid out under Iowa law to require those potential voters to prove their citizenship or to cast a provisional ballot. County auditors have since identified several people on the list as naturalized citizens who are eligible to vote." [Des Moines Register, 10/31/24]

**2024: Federal judge denied request from two Iowa voting rights groups to put temporary restraining order to halt Pate from challenging more than 2,000 voters' eligibility.** "A federal judge denied a request from two Iowa groups that advocate for voting rights to put a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction in place to halt the state's top election official from challenging the ballots of more than 2,000 Iowans. Iowa chapters of the American Civil Liberties Union and the League of United Latin American Citizens filed the lawsuit late Wednesday in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Iowa. A ruling Sunday, which followed a hearing Friday, rejected their request to step in before Election Day. Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate has compiled a list of 2,176 voters whose citizenship status was not clear to his office, which used outdated records because of what Pate describes as roadblocks by federal officials. Pate has directed poll workers to challenge the ballots of those on the list if they show up to vote. They could cast a provisional ballot, unless they provide proof of their citizenship at the polls. Those casting a provisional ballot would have until Nov. 12 to provide documentation proving their citizenship." [Daily Nonpareil, 11/3/24]

**December 2024: Pate sued federal government over citizenship information.** "Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate and Attorney General Brenna Bird are suing the federal government for information they say it declined to give them before the Nov. 5 election that would have allowed officials to check the citizenship status of registered Iowa voters. Bird and Pate, both Republicans, filed a lawsuit Tuesday in federal court in Des Moines that accuses U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services of unlawfully refusing to answer Iowa's requests about the citizenship status of 2,176 Iowa voters whom Pate flagged as potential noncitizens. They're demanding the agency turn over the information, and they're asking a judge to order USCIS to answer future inquiries from Iowa about voters' citizenship status." [Iowa City Press-Citizen, 12/5/24]

**2025: Pate planned to propose measure to revoke voter registrations if election officials couldn't confirm US citizenship.** "Iowa voters' registration status could be revoked if state elections officials

cannot confirm a voter's U.S. citizenship under legislation proposed by Iowa's top elections official. Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate plans to propose the measure as part of a package of bills he plans to introduce to state lawmakers when they convene starting Monday for the 2025 session of the Iowa Legislature. Pate deployed a similar tactic during the November 2024 general election. His office cross-checked state voter registration and voting activity information with state transportation department documents to produce a list of over 2,000 Iowans whose citizenship the office could not confirm. Pate then instructed local elections workers to automatically challenge the ballots of any Iowans on that list. Hundreds of Iowans' ballots were challenged, and some cases of noncitizen voters being registered or having voted in previous elections were discovered by county elections officials.” [Sioux City Journal, 1/6/25]

**2025: Pate announced 35 votes cast by Iowans in 2024 who weren't full US citizens.** “There were 35 votes cast by Iowans who are not full U.S. citizens and thus were ineligible to vote in the 2024 general election, the state's top elections official said Thursday. Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate has been attempting to identify Iowans without full U.S. citizenship since before the November election, and he has proposed legislation that would allow his office to revoke the voter registration of any Iowan whose citizenship his office cannot confirm. Shortly before the November election, the Republican secretary distributed to local elections officials a list of more than 2,000 names of Iowans whose citizenship his office was unable to confirm. He instructed local officials to have poll workers challenge the ballots of any individual on the list who attempted to vote. They were to cast provisional ballots, after which they would have a week to provide documentation of their citizenship.” [The Gazette, 3/20/25]

### Voting Restoration

**1998: Pate said 450 convicted felons in Iowa were registered to vote despite not being allowed to vote.** “Convicted felons are not allowed to vote under Iowa law, but Secretary of State Paul Pate said Wednesday that a check of records shows more than 450 are registered to do so. In addition, Pate said those records indicate that 129 of those people have actually voted in the past eight years. The Iowa Constitution provides that conviction of a felony carries with it the loss of voting rights. Pate said normal procedures call for the courts to notify local election officials of who has been convicted of a felony but conceded that has been sloppy in practice. ‘The process has been sporadic in the past,’ Pate said. ‘It has been somewhat inconsistent.’ New legislation that goes into force July 1 calls for court clerks to provide monthly notice to local and state election officials. At a press conference, Pate said he would send his listing of felons who are registered to county auditors so the names can be deleted, but he said dealing with the issue should be part of changes in election laws that he is pushing.” [Omaha World Herald, 6/18/98]

**2016: Pate spent months compiling list of Iowa felons who had had voting rights restored.** “County auditors should be able to better spot convicted felons who are barred from voting in the 2016 general election thanks to a database created by Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate since his office changed the approach to voter fraud when he took over in January 2015. Pate's staff spent months working with officials in the State Department of Corrections, the Iowa Judicial Branch and Gov. Terry Branstad's office to compile a list of Iowa felons who have had their voting rights restored to better help elections' officials ascertain Iowans who are eligible for or disqualified from casting ballots now that early voting is under way in Iowa's 99 counties. The result is election officials statewide now have access to databases that contain 56,997 records of convicted felons not eligible to vote and about 250,000 Iowans who have had their voting rights restored, according to records dating back to 1984 in the office of the Secretary of State who also serves as Iowa's election commissioner. ‘It's about as comprehensive as we're going to see,’ Pate said in an interview last week. ‘It's the first time that we're aware of that we

have a complete list of felons with their rights restored. It's not just a list of felons. That was always the question mark.” [Sioux City Journal, 10/1/16]

**2019: Pate’s office undertook major review of Iowa’s felon database to ensure all eligible registrants could vote.** “Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate says his office is undertaking a major hands-on review of the state's felon database to ensure all eligible registrants are able to exercise their constitutional right at the ballot box in the 2020 presidential election. Iowa is one of only two states — Kentucky is the other — that permanently bar felons from voting unless they petition the governor for a restoration of rights. Yet the state's list of roughly 69,000 felons who cannot vote is riddled with inaccuracies, according to a Des Moines Register investigation published earlier this year after scrutinizing elections in six counties. The Republican secretary of state said Tuesday a ‘clean’ felon database is needed, so he ‘repurposed’ some existing staff and plans to hire more to review — electronically and manually — more than 90,000 files. He said the goal is to have an accurate list in county auditors' hands before the 29-day absentee balloting window opens in October 2020, heading into the Nov. 3 general election. ‘It's taking a proactive step to fix the problem,’ Pate said of discrepancies in Iowa's current felon database.” [Sioux City Journal, 11/20/19]

**2019: Pate: “Every eligible Iowan should be able to vote.”** ““Every eligible Iowan should be able to vote. This is a huge fix,’ he added in an interview. ‘My team has put in countless hours to update the felon database, and many more hours of work are needed. I want to ensure every single file is accurate. That is going to take a lot of time, energy and resources, but we will get it done.’” [Sioux City Journal, 11/20/19]