

From the Office of Secretary of State Robert B. Evnen

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For Release

Immediate

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Secretary of State Robert B. Evnen

100 Days in Office

Lincoln- Secretary of State Robert B. Evnen, "I have enjoyed becoming acclimated to the role of Nebraska's 27th Secretary of State. The Secretary of State office has a dedicated team of accomplished professionals whom I have the pleasure of working with every day." The Secretary of State oversees: business services, elections, licensing, rules and regulations, records management, international relations, youth services, keeper of the Great Seal, and various others duties serving and chairing state boards. "It takes a hard-working team of professionals to serve Nebraskans."

This legislative session I have been busy evaluating quite a few bills that would affect the Secretary of State office and the people of Nebraska. The appropriations committee has been reviewing my funding request to replace ballot counting equipment in the counties. Governor Ricketts included funds in his budget for this project. However, appropriations committee members will determine if funding is available to replace ballot counting equipment this year. My office continues to advocate funding for this important investment. New modernized ballot county machines keeps Nebraska up-to-date and our elections secure.

There were a few bills introduced this legislative session, which I opposed. Once such bill was introduced to allow felons to vote while they are in prison. Another similar bill, allowed felons to vote as soon as they are released from prison. Currently, Nebraska allows felons who have been in prison to vote two years after their release. Therefore, I am not in favor of either aforementioned bills and relieved to report neither bill received traction. . Nebraska already has a working provision in place that allows those who are acclimating back into society an opportunity to regain the privilege to vote.

There is a bill of particular interest. It is labeled Vote-by- Mail. Currently, there are three states who exclusively have vote-by-mail. In Nebraska we allow vote-by-mail in counties with less than 10,000 in population. What we know from other states...

The State of Colorado has a hybrid method using both vote-by-mail and voting centers. Washington and Oregon conduct all elections by mail. On the other hand, large vote-by-mail populations could potentially create a challenge, and ballot harvesting is one. It does happen.

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Another challenge is matching signatures to assure that those who vote are the true signatory. With that said, people take great pride in the tradition of going to the polls and casting their vote. Going to the polls carries a sense of civic participation. My father was one such person, maybe your parents are too. Needless to say, once embedded - election fraud is impossible to correct. As always an early ballot by mail is available for those who request one. I continue to monitor and evaluate Vote-by Mail.

On another note, as Chief Protocol officer for the state of Nebraska, I continue to use the strength of my office to welcome foreign delegates to Nebraska's capitol. My offices has greeted well over 150 visitors from more than 25 counties. My international vision to strengthen Nebraska's economy, working together with the Governor to support Nebraska's network, gives me great satisfaction.

The Secretary of State office provides countless public functions. The staff of professionals are here to assist you. Every day I am honored to serve as your Secretary of State. For more information regarding the Secretary of State visit our website: www.sos.ne.gov

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