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MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026

The Honorable Todd Blanche  
Attorney General of the United States Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20530

**Re: Urgent request for federal monitoring and oversight of Michigan's 2026 statewide elections**

Dear Attorney General Blanche,

I would like to begin by congratulating you on your new role as Attorney General of the United States. Before you started in your current position, Republican members of the Michigan House of Representatives and Senate sent a letter to former Attorney General Pam Bondi on November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025. In this letter, my colleagues and I requested the Department of Justice (DOJ) to oversee Michigan's 2026 primary and general elections. Knowing that files may be reorganized or reprioritized under new leadership, I thought it prudent to resend this letter to the DOJ to ensure it remains under your purview. I would like to thank you for your attention to this important matter. Please see the contents of the previous letter below:

"We, the undersigned Republican members of the Michigan Senate and House of Representatives, are writing to formally request that the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) deploy official election monitors and provide comprehensive oversight for Michigan's 2026 primary and general elections. This request is made in light of the DOJ's recent precedent of monitoring elections in other states to ensure compliance with federal voting rights laws and to protect the integrity of the electoral process.

Our concerns center on Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson, who, as the state's chief election official, will oversee the 2026 elections while simultaneously appearing on the ballot as a candidate for governor. This creates an inherent and unavoidable conflict of interest, as Secretary Benson will be administering an election in which she has a direct personal stake in the outcome. Such a situation risks compromising the impartiality required for fair election oversight and demands external federal scrutiny to maintain public trust.

Compounding this conflict are Secretary Benson's repeated violations of election laws, beginning on the very first day of her gubernatorial campaign. On Jan. 22, 2025, she announced her candidacy in the lobby of the Richard H. Austin Building, a state-owned facility housing her own department, in clear violation of Michigan's Campaign Finance Act, as confirmed by an investigation from the Michigan attorney general's office. Although the attorney general issued only a warning without further penalties, this incident exemplifies a pattern of disregard for the laws she is sworn to uphold.

Secretary Benson has also demonstrated a troubling refusal to cooperate with federal authorities on election-related matters. On Sept. 25, 2025, the DOJ filed a lawsuit against her and the state of Michigan for failing to provide

unredacted voter registration records, in violation of the Civil Rights Act, the National Voter Registration Act and the Help America Vote Act. This refusal to hand over critical election materials hinders federal efforts to verify compliance with voting rights laws and raises serious questions about transparency in Michigan's election administration.

Further eroding confidence is Secretary Benson's persistent failure to maintain accurate voter rolls, including her refusal to remove deceased registrants as required by federal law. Audits and investigations have revealed more than 25,000 deceased individuals remaining on Michigan's voter rolls, prompting ongoing litigation that has escalated to the U.S. Supreme Court. Despite clear obligations under the National Voter Registration Act, her office has resisted these cleanup efforts, allowing ineligible entries to persist and potentially enabling fraud.

In the 2024 general election, under Secretary Benson's oversight, at least 16 noncitizens were confirmed to have cast ballots, despite Michigan law prohibiting noncitizen voting. While her office downplayed this as "rare," it underscores systemic failures in citizenship verification processes during voter registration and ballot issuance, failures that could recur without intervention.


Secretary Benson's track record extends back to the 2020 election, where nonpartisan audits exposed her failure to administer elections in accordance with state law, including the unauthorized mass mailing of absentee ballot applications to all registered voters without legislative approval. This action, among others, contributed to widespread concerns about election integrity and led to Michigan receiving a "D" grade from election integrity watchdogs for overall administration.

Moreover, Secretary Benson has been involved in over 69 election-related lawsuits, more than the combined total of Michigan's previous four secretaries of state and has lost several key cases challenging her handling of elections. Notable defeats include a court ruling that she unlawfully restricted poll challengers by banning electronic devices and imposing other unauthorized rules, as well as a successful Republican National Committee lawsuit over her improper guidance on signature verification for mail ballots, which the court found violated state law. These judicial rebukes highlight a pattern of overreach and noncompliance that cannot be ignored.

Given this extensive history of violations, conflicts and failures, we believe federal monitoring is essential to safeguard the 2026 elections. We urge the DOJ to deploy personnel to observe polling places, absentee ballot processing, voter registration activities and central count facilities across Michigan. Such oversight will help ensure adherence to federal laws, prevent irregularities and restore faith in our democratic processes.

We stand ready to provide any additional information or documentation to support this request and appreciate your prompt attention to this matter of national importance."

Sincerely,

  
Aric Nesbitt  
Senate Republican  
Leader District 20

  
Ruth Johnson  
State Senator  
District 24

  
Rachelle Smit  
State Representative  
District 43



Joe Bellino  
State Senator  
District 16



Kevin Daley  
State Senator  
District 26



Michele Hoyenga  
State Senator  
District 36



Dan Lauwers  
State Senator  
District 25



Jim Runestad  
State Senator  
District 23



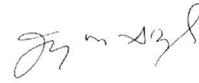
Lana Theis  
State Senator  
District 22



Michael Webber  
State Senator  
District 9



Steve Carra  
State Representative  
District 36




Jay DeBoyer  
State Representative  
District 63



Joseph Fox  
State Representative  
District 101



Mike Hoadley  
State Representative  
District 99



Nancy Jenkins-Arno  
State Representative  
District 34



Gina Johnsen  
State Representative  
District 78



Tom Kunse  
State Representative  
District 100



Matt Maddock  
State Representative  
District 51




Greg Markkanen  
State Representative  
District 110



Dave Prestin  
State Representative  
District 108



Jason Woolford  
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District 50



Jennifer Wortz  
State Representative  
District 35