

SENT VIA EMAIL

April 17, 2020

Hon. John Merrill
Alabama Secretary of State
State Capitol Building Suite S-105
600 Dexter Avenue
Montgomery, Alabama 36130
John.Merrill@sos.alabama.gov

Re: March 19 Letter – Ensuring Ballot Access for Alabama Voters during the Coronavirus Pandemic

Dear Secretary Merrill:

We write to follow up on our March 19 letter—sent on behalf of the undersigned civil and voting rights organizations—in which we requested that you take action to ensure ballot access for all Alabama voters during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Because we have received no response from your office, we write again to request that you implement the below reforms now to ensure that every eligible Alabama voter can vote safely and securely in the upcoming runoff election on July 14, 2020, and in November. These safeguards are necessary to protect Alabama voters’ fundamental constitutional rights. *See De . E ec. C . fF a. . Lee*, 915 F. 3d 1312, 1319 (11th Cir. 2019) (blocking state practices that subjected voters to the “risk of disenfranchisement”).

Specifically, on March 19, we requested that your office:

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Although your office has taken one of these commonsense steps to avoid a public health disaster for the runoff election,¹ you have not offered a comprehensive plan for safeguarding voters throughout 2020. You have yet to adequately explain to voters how to safely navigate the absentee ballot process.²