



## **LWV Talking Points: Pence-Kobach/ So-Called 'Election Integrity' Commission September 2017**

### **Lead with values about voting rights:**

- The right to vote is a critical principle of our democracy.
- Our democracy is stronger when every eligible voter can cast a vote and have it count.
- We should encourage every eligible voter to cast a ballot and make their voices heard.
- We want our election system to be free, fair and accessible to all eligible voters.

### **Discredit the Commission as a group that is laying the groundwork to roll back voting access:**

- This Commission has launched an assault on the right to vote in America.
- This Commission is laying the groundwork for potential voter suppression by the wrongful removal of eligible voters, including Black, Hispanic, elderly, and student voters, from the rolls.
- The agenda of this Commission is part of a wider effort to suppress the vote, keep certain politicians in power, and undermine our elections by spreading falsehoods about our election system.
- Secretary Kobach has a long record of discriminatory and regressive actions on voting rights.
- Mr. Kobach has a history of unrepentant attempts to suppress voting has led to thousands of voters being wrongly removed from the rolls and barred from exercising their democratic right.
- Mr. Kobach has been brought to court — and lost — several times for suppressing the constitutional rights of citizens to vote in his home state of Kansas.
- Most recently, Mr. Kobach was fined by a federal magistrate judge for “patently misleading representations to the court.”
- Commission members’ views on elections are well known and members have already been discredited as political ideologues with dangerous agendas.
- This Commission is not interested in facts, but rather false accusations in order to implement dangerous election policy
- This Commission intends to use its “findings” and recommendations to legitimize policies that are known to prevent eligible voters from having a voice in our elections.
- The cost to voters (literally and figuratively), is far greater than anything there is to gain from collecting this data.

## **Express concern over the request for voter information as a legal violation of privacy:**

- Mr. Kobach’s request for sensitive voter roll data, including the names, addresses, dates of birth, political party affiliation, past voter history, and even partial social security numbers of registered voters is a dangerous violation of privacy and the League has serious questions about the legality of releasing this personal information.
- These requests come from an individual who has no interest in free and fair elections, with a recording of preventing eligible citizens from participating in our democracy.
- The sham Commission’s request for voter data should be alarming to any American who values privacy, security, or integrity of our elections.
- These requests come from an individual who has no interest in free and fair elections, with a recording of preventing eligible citizens from participating in our democracy.
- Dozens of Secretaries of State agree with the League and have said publicly they will not comply with Mr. Kobach’s request to turn over sensitive voter information.
- Maintaining accurate voter rolls to ensure eligible citizens can participate is a necessary goal but this Commission has neither the expertise, resources, nor a history of honesty and integrity to ensure the process is conducted in a transparent, secure, and fair manner.
- In [STATE], Secretary of State [NAME] has [denied OR agreed to OR is still considering] Mr. Kobach’s request for voter information. The League of [City/State] [applauds this decision to protect voters OR urges him/her to reconsider/deny this request and defend the privacy of American voters.]

## **Pivot to talking about the real voting issues and the solutions that your League is working on:**

- The REAL problems with our election system are the polling place closures, cuts to early voting, onerous voter ID laws and the illegal purge of registered voters.
- 2016 was the first presidential election without the full protection of the Voting Rights Act.
- Without the protections of the Voting Rights Act, some state governments have:
  - created lists of people to remove from the voter rolls
  - made severe cuts to early voting hours in targeted areas
  - strictly limited what qualifies as a “valid” ID
- In [CITY / STATE / REGION] the League is addressing [REDISTRICING / VOTER ID LAWS] to [EXPAND ACCESS AT THE POLLS / MAKE OUR ELECTIONS MORE FAIR].
- The League is dedicated to ensuring that all eligible voters – particularly those from traditionally underrepresented or underserved communities, including first-time voters, non-college youth, new citizens, communities of color, the elderly and low-income Americans – have the opportunity and the information to exercise their right to vote.

**Finally, reinforce the positives about voting:**

- Voting brings us together as Americans – it is the one time when we are all equal.
- We must encourage voters to stay on the rolls and not be intimidated by this Commission.
- Voting is your opportunity to support your community and have a say in America’s future. Every vote counts and our votes make a difference.
- Encouraging all eligible voters to participate in our elections should be the intention of all politicians.