



June 19, 2020

The Honorable Ron DeSantis
Florida State Capitol
400 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Delivered via Email: governorron.desantis@eog.myflorida.com

Dear Governor DeSantis,

We are writing to express our concern over [Executive Order 20-149](#) and the [Secretary of State's June 17th letter](#) to the Supervisors of Elections regarding this action. We believe this response profoundly fails to address the needs of the Supervisors of Elections and Florida's 13.7 million voters.

Our coalition is appreciative of the opportunity to canvas vote-by-mail ballots early, the encouragement of proper social distancing protocols and for appropriately trained state employees to serve as poll workers. However, the Supervisors of Elections' requested executive actions regarding the complex preparations needed because of COVID-19 have not been adequately met.

We find it is important to note that this Executive Order has come more than 10 weeks after the Supervisors urged action "as soon as possible," and just days before Supervisors will send their ballot designs to the printers for the August 18th election.

The Florida Supervisor of Elections requests, as evidenced by their letters on [April 7](#) and [May 13](#), pointed out a number of logistical changes needed to both the in-person and Vote-by-Mail processes. Over thirty organizations, including ours, also submitted a [letter](#) with recommendations accompanied by a more [extensive list](#) to the Governor on April 13th.

As the numbers of COVID-19 cases continue to rise, the current response fails to ensure that voters can cast a ballot without endangering their health and address resources needed to process an already existent surge in vote-by-mail requests (and the mailed in ballots that will be returned to county offices). Significantly, too, your response fails to guard against insufficient poll worker hiring and training, machine failures, and long lines - which the courts have identified as means of disenfranchisement.

To ensure against any Floridian's disenfranchisement, the state must complete the following actions:

- 1) Release CARES Act funds to the local Supervisor of Elections **immediately** so the procurement contracts for necessary supplies and staffing demands can be executed.
- 2) Allow counties the option to begin Early Voting up to 22 days prior to the August and November 2020 elections, notwithstanding the provisions of Section 101.657(1)(d), and allow Early Voting to continue, at the chosen locations, through 7:00 p.m. on Election Day.
- 3) Provide additional support to the State of Florida's Online Voter Registration system.

As mentioned in our previous correspondence, our organizations share a commitment to ensuring that our voting systems are able to be adapted and accessible at all times. We realize these are unprecedented times, but COVID-19 has created a unique opportunity to work together swiftly and innovatively to better prepare for our upcoming elections. We welcome the opportunity to partner with you and Supervisors of Elections to educate voters and ensure they can safely exercise their right to vote during this presidential election cycle.

We are available to meet by conference call and would appreciate the opportunity to work with you and your key staff on a plan to **ensure every eligible Floridian votes - and no one is improperly disenfranchised.**

Sincerely,

American Civil Liberties Union of Florida
All Voting Is Local Florida
Common Cause Florida
League of Women Voters of Florida