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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PATRICK GANNON, PIO

Thursday, August 6, 2020

[email](#)

*Statement to Voters About Election-Related Mailers, Text Messages and Phone Calls*

**RALEIGH, N.C.** – North Carolina elections officials are responding to many voters’ questions and concerns about mass mailings, text messages, phone calls and home visits by political and advocacy groups.

[{View a video of Executive Director Karen Brinson Bell discussing this issue.}](#)

Many ongoing outreach efforts by third parties urge residents to request absentee by-mail ballots or register to vote ahead of the November 3 general election. Some mailings include voter registration applications or absentee ballot request forms.

These efforts typically are legal, but they can be confusing or frustrating for voters and erode confidence in elections, especially when they are unsolicited.

The State Board offers to review mailings and other communications for third parties to ensure compliance with state and federal laws and to attempt to avoid voter confusion and anger.

**“The State and County Boards of Elections encourage third-party groups to consider the overwhelming toll that misleading or confusing mailings and other outreach efforts take on elections resources and the damage they cause to voters’ confidence in elections,”** said Karen Brinson Bell, executive director of the State Board of Elections. **“We need our elections officials to be focused on serving more than 7 million voters during a pandemic.”**

For voters, elections officials offer the following tips for dealing with the onslaught of mail, phone calls and text messages this election season:

1. Rely on official sources, especially your state and county elections officials, for accurate information about elections and the voting process. Third-party mailings and other outreach materials may be misleading or false. Go to [NCSBE.gov](https://www.ncsbe.gov) or your county board's website for accurate and up-to-date information about elections. Follow the State Board of Elections on social media.
2. Check your voter registration status with the State Board's "[Voter Search](#)" tool. If you are not registered or want to update your registration, download, complete and sign a [North Carolina Voter Registration Application](#). Return the application to your [county board of elections](#). If you are an existing NCDMV customer, you can register to vote or change certain parts of your registration online [here](#) free of charge.
3. Request an absentee ballot by going to [NCSBE.gov](https://www.ncsbe.gov) and downloading a [2020 State Absentee Ballot Request Form](#). The law has changed to allow request forms to be transmitted to the county board of elections office via fax or email, in addition to by mail or in person. The status of your absentee ballot request remains confidential – and cannot be viewed in your online voter record – until your marked ballot is returned to the county board office. The voter or voter's near relative or legal guardian can still contact the county board of elections to receive that information. Absentee ballots will be mailed to voters who requested them beginning September 4.
4. If you have concerns about a mailing, please contact the group responsible for the mailing. There is rarely anything elections officials can do to stop outreach efforts.
5. State and county elections officials are not associated with third-party groups that send out mass mailings or text messages.
6. Elections officials do not randomly call or text residents to encourage them to register to vote or request absentee ballots.
7. Elections officials do not verify the accuracy of data, such as voter record data, provided by third parties in their mailings. State and county elections officials do not go door-to-door to register voters or encourage them to request absentee ballots.
8. Always ask voter registration workers who come to your door to verify their identities and organizations. If someone refuses, call the State Board office at 919-814-0700 and ask for the Investigations Division.

**"We know these groups are often well intended and we certainly do not want to discourage folks from being active participants in our democracy,"** said Brinson Bell, **"but we must make sure that these actions do not prohibit, impair, or cause voters not to be active participants in democracy."**

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