



State of Vermont
Office of the Secretary of State
128 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-1101

[phone] 802-828-2363
[fax] 802-828-2496
www.sec.state.vt.us

James C. Condos, Secretary of State
Christopher D. Winters, Deputy Secretary

May 12, 2017

For immediate release

Contact: Eric Covey, 802-828-2148

**Secretary of State Jim Condos Issues Statement on
President Trump's Executive Order Establishing a Commission on Election Integrity**

Montpelier – Today Secretary of State Jim Condos released a statement in response to President Trump's Executive Order establishing a Commission on Election Integrity. The statement in full is below.

"Today President Trump announced the establishment of a commission by executive order to investigate the presence of voter fraud in elections.

Despite continued assertions by President Trump that widespread voter fraud, in the millions, occurred during the 2016 election, there has been no evidence that any widespread voter fraud has occurred. In fact, the vast majority of elections administrators and Secretaries of State, both Democrat and Republican, agree that widespread voter fraud does not occur - a fact that independent studies have confirmed.

The President's unsubstantiated statements may actually undermine our elections process by demoralizing voters from believing in the integrity of our participatory democracy. In addition, such baseless accusations discredit our local and state elections officials, who are clearly dedicated to ensuring a fair elections process. It is unfortunate that the President continues to unfairly disparage our voting system - the very cornerstone of our democracy.

The flawed mandate of the Commission, to be headed by Vice President Pence and Kansas Secretary of State Kobach, both of whom have a track record of advocating for oppressively strict voting laws in their states, seems to suggest that the real purpose of the Commission is to provide justification for more efforts to intimidate and suppress voter participation.

Voter ID laws, restrictions on early voting, and aggressive purging of the voter-rolls are unfortunate tactics used to limit certain eligible voter populations from voting, which creates a real threat to our democratic institution of voting.

I anticipate that the recommendations from this Commission will be used to attack the voting rights of eligible voters. I urge my executive and legislative colleagues to remain vigilant, to protect our citizens' rights, and to follow Vermont's lead as a State which provides open and fair ballot access through same day and automatic voter registration, early voting and online registration - all without a single substantiated complaint of voter fraud in the last decade."

###

