



South Dakota Secretary of State

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Secretary of State

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Deputy Secretary of State

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SECRETARY OF STATE ANNOUNCES LEGISLATION FOR THE 2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

(Pierre, S.D.) – Secretary of State Monae L. Johnson announces that the Secretary of State’s Office has proposed a package of legislation for the 2025 Legislative Session that includes bills to define residency, streamline the election process, and provide funds for an upgraded business platform. “Our proposed package of legislation is designed to protect our elections and ensure that they are run smoothly and efficiently,” said Secretary Johnson. “We also look forward to acquiring more funds and using them to develop a new business platform that will allow South Dakota to maintain its ease of doing business.”

SB 20: An Act to require a voter to use a pen when marking a ballot. Black and blue pens are widely regarded as the most secure way for a voter to mark their ballot. Therefore, the Secretary of State’s Office is proposing a change to state law that would standardize the use of pens across South Dakota.

SB 21: An Act to prevent a member of a governing body from assisting in the canvass of the votes for an office for which the member is a candidate. One of the core principles of the American legal system is the idea that “no one should be a judge in their own cause.” As a result, the Secretary of State’s Office is proposing a change to state law that would apply this principle to South Dakota’s elections and ensure that they are being certified by individuals who will be able to remain unbiased because they have no vested interest in the outcome.

SB 22: An Act to modify provisions pertaining to the submission of a nominating petition. Existing laws regarding the deadlines for candidates to submit their nominating petitions will put the Secretary of State’s Office and county auditors in a tough position in 2026 by requiring petitions for dozens of contests, including several statewide contests, to be certified in less than a week. The Secretary of State’s Office is proposing legislation that would move the deadlines up a week and end the use of registered mail for nominating petitions in order to ensure that everything can be certified in time.

SB 23: An Act to require the Secretary of State to publish the numbers pertaining to the collection of signatures on a nominating petition. The Secretary of State’s Office is responsible for tracking the number signatures that a candidate needs to have on their nominating petition in order to have their name placed on the ballot. The Secretary of State’s Office is proposing legislation that would establish a timeline for the number of required signatures to be placed on the Secretary of State’s website and allow voters to challenge the numbers if they believe that there is an error.



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SB 48: An Act to modify provisions pertaining to the registration of voters. The Secretary of State believes that only South Dakotans should vote in South Dakota's elections. As a result, the Secretary of State's Office is proposing legislation that would strengthen South Dakota's residency requirements for voters, move the state's voter registration deadline, and require proof of U.S. citizenship whenever a person registers to vote for the first time. This legislation also includes provisions that would protect the voting rights of individuals who find themselves in certain special circumstances.

HB 1024: An Act to amend certain fees collected by the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State is proud of South Dakota's reputation as an easy place to do business and remains committed to protecting it. Therefore, the Secretary of State's Office is proposing legislation that would slightly increase filing fees for businesses and allow it to retain a greater portion of those fees. The funds raised as a result of this legislation will be used by the Secretary of State's Office to develop a new business platform that will greatly improve the ease of doing business in South Dakota.

The full text of each bill proposed by the Secretary of State's Office can be found on the Legislative Research Council's website at <https://sdlegislature.gov/Session/Bills/70>.