

August 3, 2023

Honorable Senators and Representatives,

Thank you very much for your collective letter expressing concerns about reported incidents during a ballot-proposal signature drive.

I share your belief that access to all aspects of the democratic process must be kept free of interference. This is the cornerstone of Washington's governance. As Secretary of State, I have consistently acted in support of this principle, and have been especially proud on the occasions that my proposals to encourage election participation have attracted bipartisan support. I hope many more such partnerships are ahead of us.

My office's roles in administering elections do not include authority to investigate or enforce suspected violations of RCW 29A.84.250 (4). Additionally, the Legislature has not allocated funding to this office to create an investigative role.

Ms. Kruse's correspondence raised deep concerns about the need to protect all voters' rights to participate, as is evident from my detailed response, a copy of which is enclosed. I also published multiple social media messages to increase public awareness that voters' access to participate in democracy is specifically protected in state law, just I previously did when intimidating signs about voter surveillance appeared on ballot drop boxes in 2022.

Again, thank you for reaching out to ensure these reports have my full attention. I shall continue to use the full authority voters have invested in me as Secretary of State to improve access to Washington's democracy, and I welcome your support for future legislation that advances this righteous cause.

Thank you,



Steve R. Hobbs
Secretary of State