



# County of Santa Cruz

## County Clerk / Elections

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**Tricia Webber, County Clerk**  
**Rita Sanchez, Assistant County Clerk**

[Date]

The Honorable [Representative/Senator Name]

[Office Address]

[City, State, ZIP Code]

Subject: Opposition to H.R. 22/S128, the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act

Dear [Representative/Senator Last Name],

On behalf of the County of Santa Cruz, I write to express our strong opposition to H.R. 22/S128, the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act.

As the County Clerk/Registrar of Voters, I am deeply concerned about the bill's impact on voter accessibility and the administrative burdens it imposes on our elections office, as well as its potential to disenfranchise eligible voters.

The SAVE Act seeks to amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 by requiring proof of United States citizenship as each voter registers to vote for federal elections. While the intent of this bill is to ensure that only citizens vote, studies consistently show that noncitizen voting is exceedingly rare and already subject to significant legal penalties. 18 U.S.C. § 1015 clearly states that it is illegal for noncitizens to vote in federal elections, and those that break the law can face up to five years in prison and/or be deported. Americans already attest to their citizenship status when registering to vote and my office verifies each voter's eligibility using state and federal data. This is the job of election offices, to ensure that voters who are eligible to register can, and that only registered voters participate in elections. Instead of allowing our office to do their sworn duty, this legislation puts the burden on every single American citizen to prove that they can exercise their right to vote.

The SAVE Act creates unnecessary barriers for eligible voters, disproportionately affecting marginalized populations including low-income individuals, the unhoused, military personnel, college students, and people with disabilities.

Specifically, this legislation would:

- Require in-person voter registration with specified documentation, eliminating online and mail-in voter registration options. This change would particularly burden rural

communities, military stationed outside of Santa Cruz County, overseas citizens, people with disabilities, and those with limited access to transportation.

- Disenfranchise eligible voters who may struggle to obtain required documents, including natural disaster victims, incarcerated individuals, and those whose names have changed due to marriage, transition, or other legal reasons.
- Place undue administrative burdens on local election offices, requiring extensive procedural revisions, staff training, and additional personnel to handle document verification.
- Impose criminal penalties on election officials who inadvertently register voters without the required documentation, potentially deterring civic engagement and discouraging individuals from serving as election workers.

The SAVE Act is an unfunded mandate to both elections offices and all voters. Election offices will not receive federal or state funding to implement these new changes or perform outreach to voters in order to educate them on the new process. Voters will have to take time off from work to obtain the necessary documentation and come in person to register to vote, as well as spend funds to get the necessary documentation, drive to and from their home to the elections office at least once every time there is a change to their registration. Military voters stationed outside of their home county, as well as voters who reside overseas would have to physically come to a county elections office, which is a complicated and highly costly task.

The County of Santa Cruz is committed to ensuring fair, accessible, and secure elections. The SAVE Act threatens to undermine these principles by imposing unnecessary barriers to the democratic process. We urge you to oppose H.R. 22/S128 and work towards solutions that strengthen election security without disenfranchising eligible voters.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to reach out should you require additional information on the impact of this proposed legislation on our community.

Sincerely,



Tricia Webber  
Santa Cruz County Clerk

cc: Members of the 119<sup>th</sup> U.S. Congress