



September 30, 2013

Via Hand Delivery

Jim Nobles
Legislative Auditor
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Mr. Nobles:

We recently learned from media reports that Secretary of State Mark Ritchie has unilaterally implemented an online voter registration without statutory authority. We share the goal of ensuring Minnesotans have access to vote. However, we have concerns that the new system exceeds the legal authority of the Office of the Secretary of State, lacks legislative oversight and could subject Minnesotans to unwanted data security risks.

We request that you review the statutory authorization for the online registration system and review the system for possible security risks. It is our understanding that Secretary Ritchie cites Chapter 325 for his stated authority to operate an online registration system without legislative authorization. We know of no other state that operates an online registration system that does not have authority in state election law.

We also request that you use your authority to examine what, if any, safeguards are in place to prevent access of or improper disclosure of private data in this system. The recent data breaches at MNsure show that it is more important than ever to make sure our private information is protected. Minnesotans deserve a peace of mind knowing that their privacy should be protected in all aspects of government.

We are extremely concerned that Secretary Ritchie has decided to use dubious authority to make this change. Minnesota has a rich history of requiring broad bipartisan support for any changes to election policy, and that history should be respected.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Senator David Hann in black ink.

Senator David Hann

Handwritten signature of Senator Scott Newman in black ink.

Senator Scott Newman

Handwritten signature of Representative Kurt Daudt in black ink.

Representative Kurt Daudt

Handwritten signature of Representative Tim Sanders in black ink.

Representative Tim Sanders

