



# ELIZABETH HUNDLEY LIVINGSTON COUNTY CLERK

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## **For Immediate Release**

May 20, 2020

Contact: Elizabeth Hundley

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### Response to Secretary of State announcing all voters will receive an absentee ballot application.

I support the right of all registered voters to cast an absentee ballot and encourage all voters who want to vote using an absentee ballot to do so. The Michigan Constitution was amended by the passage of Proposal 18-3 in November of 2018. As a result, voters have the right to vote an absentee ballot without a reason. However, a voter who wishes to receive an absentee ballot must request it in writing from their city or township clerk.

As recent as our Presidential Primary on March 10, 2020, a city, township, or county clerk was prohibited by various sources of law in Michigan from mailing an absent voter ballot application to all registered voters within their jurisdiction. An absent voter ballot application requires a verbal or written request from the voter. Regardless, the Bureau of Elections proceeded to mail out absent voter ballot applications to all registered voters impacted by a Special Election on May 5, 2020.

Without a change in law and absent an executive order by the governor granting authority, the Secretary of State began the process of mailing absent voter ballot applications in advance of the August and November elections to every registered voter who is not on a permanent absentee voter ballot application list. The process of mailing the applications to voters began before the Secretary of State even notified city, township, and county clerks that the Bureau of Elections was going to do so.

The Michigan Constitution provides the legislature the authority to enact laws governing absentee voting. Mich. Const. art 2, §4. Every Michigan resident should be concerned when the executive branch of government unilaterally determines what laws are valid and will be followed and what laws will be blatantly disregarded even during a time of crisis.

The city and township clerks in Livingston County are some of the most professional clerks within our state. They are prepared to adapt to the ever changing landscape of election administration and I am confident elections in Livingston County will be held with integrity and transparency.

