



Via Electronic Mail

March 17, 2023

Mr. Shane Hamlin
Executive Director, Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC)
1201 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 600
Washington, D.C. 20036

Re: Notice of Resignation from ERIC

Dear Mr. Hamlin and ERIC Board Members:

I am hereby notifying you of Ohio's resignation from the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC), effective 91 days from the date of this letter as stated in the bylaws. This decision does not come without careful thought and extensive conversations with my counterparts in the organization. The action Ohio is taking today follows nearly a year of good faith, bipartisan efforts to reform ERIC's oversight and services. Unfortunately, these attempts to save what could be an unparalleled election integrity service have fallen short.

ERIC has chosen repeatedly to ignore demands to embrace reforms that would bolster confidence in its performance, encourage growth in its membership, and ensure not only its present stability but also its durability. Rather, you have chosen to double-down on poor strategic decisions, which have only resulted in the transformation of a previously bipartisan organization to one that appears to favor only the interests of one political party. I believe the current actions and inactions of ERIC will effectively set in motion its demise.

As stated in my March 6, 2023 letter: [T]he immediate action of the ERIC board at its March 17 meeting can potentially salvage their participation and ours, but **ONLY** if the proposed reforms win the approval of the board. These include:

1. Amending the bylaws to explicitly state that ERIC's membership should only consist of member states, who answer to the voters and taxpayers they represent,
2. Removing ex-officio membership positions from ERIC's bylaws, and
3. Permitting member states to utilize ERIC's data-sharing services 'a la carte,' in the manner which they believe best serves their local interests. For example, members should not be forced to meet specific requirements, such as Eligible but Unregistered voter mailings or cross-state fraud analysis, if they do not deem those actions necessary or relevant to the needs of their respective states.

Unfortunately, you chose to stifle action on these proposed reforms through questionable tactics at the board's February meeting and again today through a selective and overly aggressive enforcement of ERIC's bylaws. We fundamentally disagree with the legal interpretation that every member of ERIC, whether they have resigned or not, must waive notice to offer a proposed amendment for consideration – especially after the proposed amendment was previously noticed and voted on. One must ask what reasons motivated the author of the governing documents to intentionally draft them to be so restrictive and difficult to amend. Nonetheless, my staff solely took the initiative to comply with this onerous interpretation and achieved some of the reforms, while the rest were rejected.

I cannot justify the use of Ohio's tax dollars for an organization that seems intent on rejecting meaningful accountability, publicly maligning my motives, and waging a relentless campaign of misinformation about this effort. The conduct of ERIC and some of its hyper-partisan allies in recent weeks only heightens my suspicion and reinforces my decision. Additionally, I cannot accept the board's refusal – for a third time – to adopt basic reforms to the use of ERIC's data-sharing services. I fundamentally believe that every dues-paying ERIC member should have the right to use these services in the best interest of their own state and its taxpayers. This should be a non-controversial policy, yet you have chosen to make it a hyperbolic, partisan fight that has fractured an organization that had so much potential for good.

As every past and present member of ERIC knows, I have been a hopeful advocate for reform. You had every chance to deliver it, but you chose not to act. Therefore, you have left me with no choice but to look for a more accountable alternative.

Yours in service,



Frank LaRose
Ohio Secretary of State