

Executive Order No. 2019-09

WHEREAS, the Governor can remove members of any county Board of Voter Registration and Elections for incapacity, misconduct, or neglect of duty pursuant to section 7-5-10(A) of the South Carolina Code of Laws; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Richland County (“the Board”) has a history of problems in its county-wide voting and election process; and

WHEREAS, some of the problems to occur include: 2010 certification of incorrect election results after 1,100 votes were not counted; 2012 failure to deploy enough voting machines resulting in lengthy lines and missed deadline for vote certification; and 2016 need for assistance after missing a recount deadline in the 2016 primary; and

WHEREAS, based on this recent history, the Board had knowledge that issues plagued Richland County’s election processes; and

WHEREAS, the Board has acknowledged the serious failures and shortcomings; and

WHEREAS, the State Election Commission determined that in November of 2018 approximately 1,040 votes cast on November 6, 2018 were not counted; and

WHEREAS, the Richland County Elections Commission Director oversees the vote count; and

WHEREAS, in response to the news that 1040 votes were not counted, the Richland County Elections Commission Director resigned, notifying the Board of his decision on Saturday, February 9, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the Board has a fiduciary duty to oversee the organization’s operations appropriately, and is specifically tasked with the duty of hiring and dismissing a Director pursuant to 7-5-10 of the S.C. Code of Laws; and

WHEREAS, the Board has ultimate responsibility for the actions and inactions of the election commission; and

WHEREAS, the Board met February 13, 2019, but failed to move forward and answer questions regarding what it will do to ensure problems did not occur again; and

WHEREAS, members of the Board exhibited misconduct on the February 13, 2019 meeting, and members have done so in previous Board meetings, to include mismanagement of Board Meetings, improper conduct, and bad behavior; and

WHEREAS, the misconduct of the Board affects its ability to perform its duties; and

WHEREAS, the issues affecting the Board are substantial in nature and directly affect the rights and interests of the public; and

WHEREAS, public confidence must be restored in the Board; and

WHEREAS, the actions and inactions of the Board meet the standard of removal set forth in statute allowing removal for incapacity, misconduct, or neglect of duty pursuant to Section 7-5-10(A) of the South Carolina Code of Laws.

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of South Carolina and pursuant to the Constitution and Laws of this State and of these United States and the powers conferred upon me therein, I hereby Order the removal of all members of the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Richland County. This Order is effective immediately.

**GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE GREAT
SEAL OF THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,
THIS 14th DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2019.**

HENRY MCMASTER
Governor