

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2207

June 30, 2020

Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson
430 W. Allegan St.
Richard H. Austin Building - 4th Floor
Lansing, MI 48918

Dear Secretary Benson:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to promote public health and safety in the upcoming elections, voting by absentee ballot will play a significant role in helping to ensure all eligible voters in Michigan have the opportunity to vote.

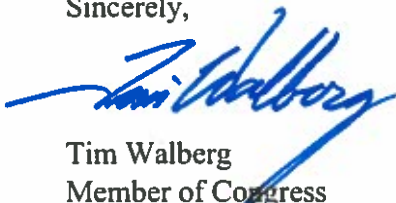
However, after hearing from numerous voters in Michigan's 7th Congressional District, it has come to my attention that absentee ballot applications are being inaccurately distributed throughout the state. Households across my district have reported receiving absentee ballot applications for deceased individuals, prior residents, and individuals who have moved out-of-state years ago. Additionally, I've learned individuals on the inactive voter file are also being sent absentee ballot applications.

In one case, my staff received a complaint from a household of two individuals who were delivered nine absentee ballot applications. In another case, a man received an application after he had successfully removed himself from all voter registrations. Applications for individuals who have been deceased for years are also showing up at households across the state. The inaccurate delivery of applications is leading to confusion regarding the upcoming elections in Michigan.

In addition to the surge of absentee voting and the increased responsibility that accompanies it, local clerks across the state are being tied down with additional work and consuming limited resources as a direct result of the confusion associated with the delivery of incorrect absentee ballot applications.

Strong checks and clear guidance from your office, along with close coordination with the State Legislature, are necessary in order to deal with the accountability of increased absentee voter turnout of Michigan's 7.7 million registered voters for the August and November elections. Please explain what mechanisms were utilized to determine who received absentee ballot applications and what steps are being taken to ensure the security and integrity of Michigan's upcoming elections. Confidence in electoral and political processes is the foundation of our democracy and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Tim Walberg
Member of Congress