

# Secretary of State Frank LaRose to work with three GOP states after pulling out of bipartisan national voter-monitoring system

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COLUMBUS, Ohio — Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose has reached agreement on partnerships to share voter data with three Republican-led states in an attempt to detect possible fraud, months after he pulled out of a bipartisan national system that largely performed the same function.

LaRose, the state's top elections official, has entered into agreements with his counterparts in three other states: Florida, Virginia and West Virginia. The agreements, which largely involve sharing voter data to try to detect illegal attempts to double vote or register to vote twice, replace a function previously performed by the Electronic Registration Information Center.

However, unlike ERIC, a bipartisan nonprofit with 27 member states, Republicans run elections in all three states in the new partnerships LaRose announced. Florida is of key importance though, because of the state's large population and the significant number of older Ohioans who split time in Florida.

"This is a major new development as states look to move beyond the old model of sharing voter data through an unaccountable third-party vendor," LaRose, a Republican, said in a statement. "Ohio took the lead on this election integrity project, and it's only one aspect of the work we're doing to keep our elections honest as we prepare for the next presidential election year."

Ohio, Florida, Virginia and West Virginia are among the eight Republican-led states that have left ERIC since last year, according to the nonpartisan National Conference of State Legislatures. The exodus has occurred as people and groups on the political right, including ex-President Donald Trump, have raised doubts about the group's operations.

Specific concerns include opposing an ERIC bylaw that requires member states to attempt to reach eligible residents to encourage them to register to vote. Critics also have accused the group of sharing sensitive voter information with liberal groups, a baseless claim that the group denies. The group's founder, David Becker, became controversial after leading a separate effort in 2020 to distribute millions of dollars for

elections administration — including to LaRose's office — from Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg.

ERIC continues to have a mix of Democratic and Republican members, including states like Alaska, Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Utah.

Before dropping out, [LaRose had been a prominent advocate for ERIC](#), and one of his top deputies chaired the organization last year. But he withdrew in June, citing the “diminishing returns” on the state's \$66,000 membership fee as the group lost members. He cited some of the concerns conservatives had raised, including about Becker, although he did not directly reference the elections conspiracies. LaRose is running for U.S. Senate in the Republican primary in March, and concerns about elections integrity is a top concern for GOP voters, particularly in light of Trump's false and legally rejected claims that widespread fraud marred the 2020 presidential election.

Officials in LaRose's office said they want to form similar data-sharing partnerships with additional Democratic and Republican-controlled states, including current ERIC members, and expect to announce a more deals with other states in the near future.