



**ALEX PADILLA**  
California Secretary of State

**AP20:046**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**May 14, 2020**

**Contact:**

**SOS Press Office**

**(916) 653-6575**

## **Secretary of State's Office Bringing on Expert Consultants to help with Vote-by-Mail Expansion for General Election**

**SACRAMENTO, CA** – Secretary of State Alex Padilla announced today that the Secretary of State's office has retained a team of expert election consultants to assist California counties for the November 3, 2020 General Election. Amber McReynolds, Jennifer Morrell, and Noah Praetz will provide valuable guidance as counties prepare to send vote-by-mail ballots to every registered voter for the General Election.

“Mailing every registered voter a ballot this fall is a huge first step to preserving access to democracy during the COVID-19 pandemic,” Secretary of State Alex Padilla said. “A rapid expansion of vote-by-mail in a state with over 20 million voters is no small task. As counties prepare to print, mail, and process more vote-by-mail ballots than ever before, an operational game plan is imperative. Amber, Jennifer, and Noah are nationally respected former election administrators who have advised several states across the country. Their expertise will be invaluable as we work together to meet this moment and keep elections running smoothly during this challenging time.”

Statement from Amber McReynolds, Jennifer Morrell, and Noah Praetz:

“We look forward to working with Secretary Padilla, his team, and the incredible election officials across the state of California to prepare for the November election. It is imperative that every voter can vote in a safe, secure, accessible, and equitable manner and we admire California's commitment to deliver democracy in this way.”

The consultant team will stay on through January 15, 2021.

### **Los Angeles County**

The consultant team will also assist the Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters office with the implementation of recommendations identified by an independent third party review of administration of the March 3, 2020 election. The team will focus on vote center implementation, resource planning and management, poll worker training, and contingency planning.

### **Amber McReynolds**

Amber McReynolds is Chief Executive Officer of the Vote at Home Institute, a non-partisan non-profit created to increase voter engagement through Vote at Home systems, including vote-by-mail ballots.

She served as an election official, including as Director of Elections, for the City and County of Denver, Colorado for over a dozen years. She played an integral role in the 2013 Election Modernization Reforms in Colorado, which served as a basis for California's Voter's Choice Act.

### **Jennifer Morrell**

Jennifer Morrell has over 10 years of experience administering and auditing elections. She has served as Deputy of Elections & Recording for Arapahoe County, Colorado and Elections Director for Weber County, Utah.

Since May 2018, she has lead Democracy Fund's Election Validation Project, aimed at increasing trust in elections through rigorous audits, standards, and testing in addition to consulting with state and local election officials seeking guidance on election security and audit requirements.

### **Noah Praetz**

Noah Praetz served in the Cook County, Illinois Clerk's office for nearly 20 years, including six as Director of Elections. His team served 1.6 million voter in Cook County, one of the largest voting jurisdictions in the country.

Noah is also an Adjunct Professor at DePaul University College of Law.

