



Dear Michael,

I am writing to you as your State Legislative Director to provide essential information regarding Senate Bill 153. This new law, recently passed by the Utah Legislature, changes how voter registration records are managed in our state. Many of you have already received a "Notice of Reclassification" from Lieutenant Governor Deidre Henderson's office, and it's important that you understand how this transition affects both you and our union.

In the rail industry, we all understand the risks of "dark territory" -- those stretches of track without signals where visibility is low. For years, Utah's voter rolls have operated in a similar way. With nearly 40% of the state's records hidden behind a general privacy check box, it has been difficult for our legislative boards to accurately map where our members live in relation to the politicians making decisions on our safety and livelihoods.

Starting May 25, 2026, the default status for voter registration in Utah will shift from private to public, bringing the state in line with transparency standards used across most of the country. The bill passed with broad bipartisan support -- a 19-5 vote in the Senate and a 56-12 vote in the House -- with most Republicans, some Democrats, and the Forward Party supporting it.

I also want to address some misinformation circulating about this change. Some have incorrectly linked S.B. 153 to recent federal actions, specifically President Trump's proposed national voter registry initiative. These are two entirely separate matters. The federal registry is focused on citizenship verification and mail-in ballot eligibility, while S.B. 153 is purely a state law about the accessibility of Utah's public voter records.

Under S.B. 153, your full legal name, residential address, party affiliation, and voter participation history will become publicly accessible to citizens, political parties, and qualifying organizations like SMART-TD. To be clear, voter history only indicates that you voted in a given election -- it never reveals how you voted. The law also preserves strict privacy protections for sensitive personal information such as your Social Security number and driver's license number, which remain fully confidential.

Ending this "dark territory" improves our ability to use the Labor Action Network (LAN) -- the secure national database used by the AFL-CIO and our union to coordinate member outreach and legislative advocacy. Access to current addresses and participation data will help us close existing gaps, allowing us to better identify where members are located in their specific legislative districts. This enhanced visibility strengthens our voice when pushing for rail safety laws, two-person crew requirements, and other critical worker protections. When we can see the full track ahead, our movement becomes far harder for lawmakers to overlook.

If you are comfortable with your information being made public, no action is needed -- your record will automatically update on May 25, 2026. However, the law provides a permanent "At-Risk" status for certain individuals with documented safety concerns, including veterans, law enforcement officers, or those under protective orders. If you qualify, you can maintain a private record by submitting an application to your County Clerk by May 6, 2026. You can verify your current registration and privacy status anytime at vote.utah.gov.

My goal is to ensure every SMART-TD member is informed and that our collective strength is as visible and effective as possible at the State Capitol.

In solidarity,
Danny Brewer
Utah Safety and Legislative Director
SMART Transportation Division