



Elad Hakim

Florida Takes Another Important Step Toward Election Integrity

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis [recently](#) appointed Representative Cord Byrd as Florida's secretary of state. A [news release](#) from the governor's office said that, while in office, Byrd was a "staunch advocate for election security, public integrity, the fight against big tech censorship and the de-platforming of political candidates." With this important appointment, DeSantis has taken another important step toward making Florida's elections more secure.

Byrd, an attorney, is a longtime advocate for election integrity and freedom. Over the last six years in the Florida House, he [sponsored](#) several important bills that banned sanctuary cities in Florida, required the use of E-Verify in Florida, supported law enforcement in Florida (HB 1), helped establish/expand the Parents' Bill of Rights in Florida, and improved the state's cybersecurity infrastructure.

Following the appointment, [Byrd](#) stated:

Under the leadership of Governor DeSantis, Florida has led the way on election security and preserving freedom for its residents. As Secretary of State, I will make sure Florida continues to have secure elections and that we protect the freedom of our citizens in the face of big-tech censorship and ever-growing cybersecurity threats.

Byrd will replace Secretary of State [Laurel Lee](#), who recently announced her resignation. In 2021, Lee rejected a

The New American

Author: [Elad Hakim](#)

Date: May 16, 2022



call by Central Florida Representative [Anthony Sabatini](#) to hold “forensic audits” of the 2020 election results in Florida’s five biggest counties, including Hillsborough, Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and Orange counties, all of which went to Joe Biden in 2020. At the time, [Sabatini](#) stated:

There’s an enormous amount of people that are very concerned about the integrity of the elections. Why not just do the audits? That way everybody can just say, “OK, good,” now you can either prove that either everything did go well, or there were mistakes that were made and we’re going to fix those, too.

Despite Sabatini’s request, [Lee](#) insisted that “Florida’s election in 2020 was accurate, transparent and conducted in compliance with Florida law,” and that “Florida has already conducted both pre and post elections audits, and we are confident in the security and integrity of our 2020 election.”

Notwithstanding Lee’s prior “assurances,” Byrd’s selection could not have come at a better and more important time in the Sunshine State. With the midterm elections coming up, Byrd will not only continue to promote/support election integrity by way of bills such as [SB 524](#), but he will also oversee Florida’s [Office of Election Crimes and Security](#) (which falls under the Florida Department of State), a new office that will investigate election-law violations. This office was created as part of a larger election-integrity [bill](#) recently signed by the governor.

Predictably, some Democrats immediately criticized the nomination. For example, when discussing Byrd, Representative [Angie Nixon](#), D-Jacksonville, stated:

He is unqualified in both his credentials and his temperament, has proved time and again he will put partisanship ahead of good policy, and is unfit to lead the elections department of a diverse state of more than 20 million people.

Florida Commissioner of Agriculture and Democratic gubernatorial candidate [Nikki Fried](#) also criticized the governor’s selection and tweeted:

The Secretary of State should serve the people of Florida, but Cord Byrd today was appointed because he will serve only Ron DeSantis.

This reckless appointment should make every Floridian question Ron DeSantis’ commitment to free, fair, and democratic elections.

Notwithstanding these commonly used left-wing talking points and baseless attacks, the governor’s selection is an excellent one for all Floridians. Byrd will put election integrity at the top of his priority list and will help ensure that Florida’s elections are fair. As [DeSantis](#) stated:

Cord Byrd has been an ally of freedom and democracy in the Florida Legislature, and I am confident he will carry that mission forward as Secretary of State. I look forward to his successes ensuring Florida’s elections remain safe, secure and well-administered.

Like the governor, many Floridians are also very excited about Byrd and his efforts to make Florida’s elections and the way they are conducted a blueprint for the rest of the country.