



**Essay Contest Rules and Prompt**  
**28<sup>th</sup> Annual Essay and Slogan Contest**  
**Secretary of State Alison Lundergan Grimes**

1. The Essay Contest is open to all Kentucky high school students in grades 9-12.
2. Essay entry is limited to one per student. Previous contest entries will not be accepted.
3. Essay may be no longer than 600 words. All entries must be typed and double-spaced.
4. **Student and school names shall not appear anywhere in the body of the essay.**
5. Essays will be judged on research and understanding of voting and the First Amendment, idea development, organization, language, and correctness (see attached rubric).
6. Students must submit their essays with the enclosed entry form. All sections of the entry form must be completed.
7. Essays may be submitted either online at [www.sos.ky.gov/contests](http://www.sos.ky.gov/contests) or by mail to the address below. Essays submitted online must be in Microsoft Word format.
8. All entries must be submitted electronically by 5 p.m. (EST) December 16, 2016, or postmarked by that date.
9. Entries become the property of the Kentucky Secretary of State's Office and will not be returned.
10. All guidelines must be met for any entry to be considered by contest judges.

**Essay Prompt:**

*Our government operates under the theory that citizens will participate in the democratic electoral process and will vote based on their knowledge of the candidates and the issues. That concept is enabled by the First Amendment, which protects freedom of speech and freedom of the press by prohibiting government interference. If media critics were to start a movement to repeal the First Amendment, they might argue that inaccurate information broadcast on talk radio and cable talk shows and misleading political ads serve to confuse voters and corrupt the electoral process.*

*Write a response, (1) agreeing with the movement and suggesting changes to the First Amendment to solve the problems; or (2) disagreeing with the movement, focusing on what the Supreme Court of the United States described as a "profound national commitment to the principle that debate on public issues should be uninhibited, robust, and wide-open, and that it may well include vehement, caustic, and sometimes unpleasantly sharp attacks on government and public officials.*

Mail entries to:           ATTN: Slogan and Essay Contest  
                                  Office of the Secretary of State  
                                  Suite 152, State Capitol  
                                  700 Capital Avenue  
                                  Frankfort, KY 40601

You may also submit entries online at [www.sos.ky.gov/contests](http://www.sos.ky.gov/contests).

Note: Family members of employees of the Office of the Secretary of State or the State Board of Elections are not eligible to enter the Essay Contest.