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**CITIZENS SEEK TO RESTORE THE TRUST IN STATEWIDE ELECTIONS
THAT WAS DAMAGED IN 2020 BY THE ACTIONS OF OTHERS.**
*Group digs into machinery and processes to address election integrity concerns;
Hopes to establish more secure voting model.*

FRANKLIN, Tenn., (September 21, 2021) – For the last ten months, a group of Tennessee citizens and business professionals have been studying voting machines, voting processes and the need to institute best practices to help government officials fix election vulnerabilities found in both Williamson County and across Tennessee following last November’s voting.

Tennessee Voters for Election Integrity has compiled its findings – and profiled a possible new, more secure voting model -- in a presentation being shown to legislators, state officials and other audiences that reveal issues the group believes must be addressed in order to reestablish citizen trust and confidence in the state’s elections.

“What we saw in several other states last November was extremely troubling, especially since our county voted on Dominion voting equipment, which has been suspect in a number of election issues and heavily questioned by Williamson Countians in large and open, post-election community meetings,” said Frank Limpus, founder of the citizen election integrity group. “We believe that in order to help citizens have trust and confidence in Tennessee elections after all we’ve seen and heard, we needed to investigate these concerns and work with state officials to correct any issues moving forward.”

But while the group’s initial focus was Williamson County, its emphasis has grown to include all of Tennessee as more information has become available. Some of the statewide issues the group found, not only in the machines, but in the voting process, as well, included voting on machines that have been proven able to be hacked, overconfidence in a limited audit process, voter registration weaknesses, the

fact that election results in 70% of Tennessee counties can't fairly and accurately be audited due to no paper ballots being produced outside of the voting machinery, affecting some 2.6 million Tennessee registered voters, and that new machine security standards are being completely ignored. All current voting machines in Tennessee are required by the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to only be certified up to 2005 security standards, criteria that was in place two years before the first smart phone was invented.

"Fortunately, the State Election Commission has committed to perform a recertification on all five brands and versions of the machines used in Tennessee, but we're saying after all we've seen, that is nowhere near enough of a check on the possible vulnerabilities in these machines," Limpus said. "A security risk evaluation absolutely needs to be done on both the precinct voting and registration equipment and measured against some form of the 2021 Voluntary Voting System Guidelines (VVSG 2.0), first produced in 2002 by the bipartisan Commission on Federal Election Reform established under the EAC. And the evaluation needs to be done by a bipartisan and independent citizen committee composed of data/internal/process control experts as well as IT/cybersecurity experts. This particular audit should be the compelling decision point on retaining or adding any voting machine vendor in Tennessee. Right now, it's not."

Unfortunately, the EAC recently granted voting machine vendors the ability to include wireless networking devices in voting machines, a controversial move after the 2020 election that helped the vendors' bottom lines yet greatly weakened the security of voting systems. It cost them one high profile member of their board who is suing the EAC for this provocative move made without the Board's approval or citizen input.

Other recommendations being suggested by the group include strengthening the integrity of the voter rolls and voter check-in process at each precinct to ensure legal, valid, and live citizens of

Tennessee are the only citizens able to vote in our elections; to disallow the move toward voting centers versus precincts because of the added layer of internet connectivity to facility voting centers; plus, the use of hand-marked, high-security paper ballots that adhere to the same standards used by the U.S. Treasury to prevent money counterfeiting. Not only for absentee ballots, as recently approved by the Tennessee General Assembly, but for all ballots.

To remove some of the technology between the voter and his/her vote, the group is recommending ballot marking devices be eliminated from the voting process and all counting of paper ballots be done on optical scanners. The group also recommends that DRE (Direct Recording Electronic) voting machines that don't produce a paper audit trail, but, instead, store a voter's vote in the machine and under the control of the machine's software, be quickly phased out. The presence of these machines in 67 of 95 counties in Tennessee does not allow for a post-election audit of ballots in those counties... because hand-held paper ballots are not produced for those voters in the first place.

Additionally, to check that following an election the electronic voting tallies match the results from paper ballots, the group is advocating for a mandatory, post-election, statistical, random sample, paper ballot, hand-counted enhanced risk limiting audit in every county after every election.

"A one percent random sample of ballots audited in this manner can actually give you a 90+ percent confidence level on election correctness in a two percent margin race," Limpus said. "Vote totals would not be certified until the two numbers – electronic numbers and hand-counted numbers – matched and the process could probably include a complete hand recount until the issue is resolved."

Similarly, they suggest an operational audit be added every five years in every Tennessee county to ensure election commission procedures, systems and training are consistent and up-to-par.

Finally, the group is stressing that best practice solutions replace issues that were uncovered by the researchers in the Williamson County voting process and thought to exist in similar voting and

counting processes across Tennessee. Possible solutions have been divided into three categories – technological solutions, process solutions and legislative solutions – and come from highly recognized, national election integrity sources.

The group has been working with Tennessee Senator Jack Johnson and other state and county election officials on its concerns and is studying the possibility of establishing a 2022 model voting program that reflects its findings.

“All that Tennessee voters want is a transparent, trustworthy, accurate election,” Limpus concluded. “But we uncovered a number of concerning questions, irregularities and vulnerabilities statewide which may impede election accuracy going forward. In our judgment, all of these issues need to be addressed to win back the confidence we citizens had in our elections before the actions of those in other states destroyed that trust.

“Fortunately, we live in a state where legislators and government officials seem open to listening to and ensuring election integrity for all legal and registered Tennessee residents of ALL political persuasions in what they’ve done to this point and what they appear amenable to doing in the future. We’re hopeful these improvements will make it easier for citizens to vote, while making it harder for corrupt individuals and entities to cheat the elections – and the citizens – of Tennessee.”

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About Tennessee Voters for Election Integrity

The Tennessee Voters for Election Integrity seeks to ensure election integrity for all Williamson County (its home county) and Tennessee voters by researching, documenting and alerting legislators, as well as community and state leaders and election officials to the weaknesses in our current election systems that might result in future election fraud from bad actors. This would additionally exacerbate the public’s lack of confidence and trust given credible, widespread allegations of voter fraud nationwide in the 2020 election and the fact that Williamson Countians voted on the same election equipment against which claims, reports and affidavits of fraud in other states have been leveled.

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