

Williamson County Election Commission Trust & Citizens Truth Review news release

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Citizens ask the State Election Commission and Williamson County Board of Commissioners to replace biased Williamson County Election Commissioners following their use of misleading information to sway purchases

FRANKLIN, Tenn. (January 9, 2024) – On the heels of taking their concerns last month to the Tennessee State Election Commission (SEC), a group of Williamson County citizens last night asked the Williamson County Board of Commissioners to appoint new, more ethical, unbiased commissioners to the Williamson County Election Commission (WCEC). The move came following proof uncovered by the group that WCEC commissioners used biased and misleading information this past May and June to sway County Commissioners into approving a resolution to purchase election equipment.

Since county, state and federal taxpayer monies were on the table, this misinformation placed County Commissioners in an awkward position based upon their fiduciary responsibility to taxpayers.

In both presentations, the citizens provided a [“Citizens Truth Review”](#) report documenting their claims, comparing election commission statements against findings from expert sources regarding vulnerable voting machines, such as ballot marking devices (BMDs), and the security of hand-marked paper ballots.

The striking aspect of the citizens’ report is the number of sources and footnotes provided. The sources were more fully represented than what the WCEC provided in their May and June communications.

“After deeply researching BMD touch screen voting systems versus hand-marked paper ballots (HMPBs) with optical scanners used in precincts, it became apparent the WCEC’s May 4th budget proposal to the Williamson County Commissioners contained a number of concerning statements regarding HMPBs.” said Carl Allison, a Williamson County resident.

“We have spoken with top cyber security, IT and election experts across the nation –many of whom are published and from top universities -- and all supported HMPBs over BMDs. When the WCEC provides mischaracterizations, inaccurately cited sources and [misleading answers](#) to influence approval of expenditures of tax-payer dollars, it creates a public trust issue.”

“We believe we needed to stand up against what occurred,” said Katherine Makinney, another concerned citizen. “Otherwise, this type of calculated, deceptive behavior will continue.”

Following the early 2022 expulsion of Dominion election equipment from Williamson County because of machines that stopped counting votes on tabulator tapes in the October 2021 Franklin election, the WCEC had been renting ES&S equipment and wanted to purchase it. But in town halls, WCEC meetings, editorials and other communications, citizens had been verbal in rejecting that plan based on the extensive research of cyber and election experts concerning machine and voting system vulnerabilities.

The fact that Williamson County is more than \$1.2 billion in debt and that taxpayer money would be involved in the purchase was also a factor.

After the County Commission had denied the WCEC's request at their May meeting, the WCEC returned in June with the identical resolution, but included a promise to pursue a feasibility study to bring in hand-marked paper ballots. The resolution was then passed.

"Given the insistence with which the election commission told Commissioners in both meetings they couldn't support bringing hand-marked paper ballots into Williamson County, we question the seriousness and validity of their promise of the feasibility study," Elise Farrell, a third member of the group, said. "Seven months after receiving approval to start the study, no study has begun and there's no indication one would be finished before the 2024 presidential election. We believe this was nothing more than a carrot to sway County Commissioners for the money and a slow walk on the deliverables."

"We are asking the State Election Commission to conduct an investigation of the Williamson County Election Commission's conduct and we're also requesting new informed, ethical and unbiased WCEC representation," Allison said. "You have to ask the question, 'Why would the WCEC present mischaracterizations of HMPBs plus optical scanner vote systems?'"

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