Op-ed for Tennessee Conservative News

IS THE AUGUST 1ST ELECTION SECURE IN TENNESSEE?

If you're like us, you're hoping this current election doesn't end up with issues that make you seriously question the election's security, validity and outcome. But based on the actions of our Williamson County Election Commission (WCEC), we can't help but wonder.

As we have done for every Williamson County election since the October 2021 Franklin City municipal election, where seven of nineteen (37%) tabulators on election day stopped counting votes on the tabulator tape, Tennessee Voters for Election Integrity citizens have requested and analyzed the Williamson County election data from a reporting and documentation standpoint.

Here is our report on the October 2021 Williamson County election problems and here is our report on the May 2022 Williamson County election problems.

Every county in the state should be doing what Tennessee Voters for Election Integrity citizens in Williamson County are doing because there's no telling what critical, scary problems might be hidden because of a lack of citizen inspections. Trust but verify.

In Williamson County, the May 2022 election contained enough errors that one candidate contested the election based on documentation that had been signed and approved by six election commission officials. But the document was wrong and obviously wasn't checked by the officials. If we can't trust them in details like this, what about in the big details?

Following the March 5, 2024 election in Williamson County, we documented the election and found 55 instances of highly questionable risks that shouldn't be there. This all comes from the WCEC's own data and documentation.

One tabulator showed a completely different serial number than any on the WCEC's machine manifest list. Meaning the tabulator came from who knows where and most likely did not undergo testing for use in the election.

A tabulator's seal number that secures the compartment where the USB stick sits (and collects votes from the tabulator) was completely different than the seal number placed on that machine by technicians at the January 30th-31st machine testing, without any documentation as to why. Meaning the tabulator could have been broken into between January 31st and March 5th and the USB stick changed. The room where the machines are stored is not monitored by video.

There were four instances where a tabulator's protected count (like an odometer that tracks how many ballots have been run through the machine) changed sometime after the IT technicians set up, tested and sealed the tabulators on January 31st. Meaning the four machines could have been tampered with between January 31st and March 5th and malware placed in the machine to subtly change votes without any election official being able to tell. The technicians do not perform a hash validation security

procedure when setting up the machines. Between these four discrepancies in the protected count, it appears 66 votes were added to the election.

In three early voting vote centers, the number of votes on several voting machines did not agree with the number of voters who registered to vote on those machines. There were 9 more votes on machines in these vote centers than applications to vote. Two election commissioners signed the documents post-election validating that the numbers were correct. Were they?

Here's our report about these and more issues found in the March 5th election and an Excel chart that further documents them.

Like in elections before, these are serious errors that demonstrate the voting machines and processes the WCEC uses are not secure. While the signatures of poll officials and commissioners give a false impression things are. However, there's no doubt the machines could have been tampered with or hacked, possibly altering an election's outcome… with no one noticing.

How do we know these things DIDN'T happen? That safety protocols of seals, chain of custody and pre-election testing weren't tampered with or followed? These machines are highly vulnerable to hacks and manipulation. And this documentation is crucial.

Six weeks-plus after meeting with the WCEC on June 7th about these concerns, we're still waiting for explanations from the WCEC. We've followed up by email and, additionally, asked the WCEC Chairman in-person about the status of their response. Nothing.

Over the last few years, we've asked the WCEC to make changes in the election process to better conduct our elections in a safer, more secure way. But in all but a few minute changes, they have refused to consider credible evidence and researched documentation. For instance, they cavalierly dropped their promise to citizens and county commissioners to perform a study to add hand-marked paper ballots to our process.

Voting is the most critical benefit we Americans have as citizens and we depend upon an unelected group of election bureaucrats and employees to execute elections correctly, with accuracy, security and transparency. If that doesn't happen, citizens will lose confidence in elections and cease voting.

Right now, our research says that secure execution of our elections is not happening and silence from our election commission appears to confirm this. We think citizens should be aware and be very concerned.

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