



OP-ED FOR THE CITIZEN-TRIBUNE
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[Tennessee Voters for Election Integrity](#)

WHAT LEGISLATORS AND BUREAUCRATS AREN'T TELLING THE PEOPLE OF HAMBLÉN COUNTY ABOUT VOTE CENTERS

I'm betting that the citizens of Hamblen County don't have a clue that legislators and bureaucrats in Nashville are about to dramatically change how citizens in the county vote. That certainly was the case in 2020 when Williamson County, Tennessee was forced to begin voting in vote centers, yanking us away from well-known and safe and secure precinct voting.

There is a bill (HB0620/SB0981) currently before the Tennessee General Assembly for Hamblen County to be swept into the vote center sink hole. And citizens better become educated about the significant drawbacks of vote centers so they can voice their opposition. As an election integrity researcher for the past five years, founder of [Tennessee Voters for Election Integrity](#) and a citizen living in a vote center county, let me inform you of all that I've learned about this plague that is presented as a "convenience."

First, start with the basic fact that undergirds everything election integrity. **Voting machines can be hacked and elections affected.** [Whistleblowers and computer experts say so.](#) [Cyber experts say so.](#) [Other computer experts say so.](#) [Democrats say so.](#) [Congressional testimony says so.](#) [Georgia says so.](#) [Even the SVP of Security for ES&S says so.](#) From its 2021 experience when voting machines stopped counting votes on tabulator tapes during an election, [Williamson County, Tennessee already knows that voting machines can malfunction and throw an election into chaos.](#)

Second, elections with mis-performing machines and the internet can turn elections on their head. [Here](#) and [here](#). There are more examples, but this egregious example simply says it all.

Third, you might not be aware, but **no one is allowed to ever internally inspect voting machines before, during or after an election to ensure there are no nefarious components in the machines.** Citizens and even election commissions are given no proof that certain wireless devices (modems, iDRAC chips, [Telit chips](#), Qualcomm chips) are present in the machines before citizens vote on them. But here's [how we know nefarious components are there.](#)

Fourth, vote centers will pipe the internet into every voting location in Hamblen County, placing the internet right next to those unsafe machines. Really! With vote centers, counties have to ensure that no voter can vote again in another vote center, so they tie all vote centers together by the internet so every voter can be crossed off the list once they vote. Therefore, the internet will enter every vote center. How do these election commissions PROVE to citizens that voting machines can't connect to the internet with the internet right there?

Fifth, the Tennessee Coordinator of Elections and Tennessee election commissions that have bought into the belief that everything in vote centers is safe, even with the internet nearby, claim that internet

connections in vote centers are protected by a VPN. **But have you looked at the current research that indicates [VPNs are not dependable](#)? I have. That “protection” is weak at best.**

Sixth, here are [companies that have been hacked in the last couple of years](#) and you can darn well bet they’re spending tons more money than either Williamson County or Hamblen County are spending to protect votes, voter rolls and voter data. **Do we really trust those VPNs with the votes of citizens?**

Seventh, you probably haven’t been told that **vote centers will force Hamblen County to significantly reduce the number of voting locations when they enter the county**. That’s part of their implementation. When vote centers entered Williamson County, we went from 43 precincts in 2019 to 25 vote centers in 2020, a reduction of 42% in voting locations. Precincts used to be quick and easy for voters. Now we understand why the lines to our voting centers are much, much longer, and that much more time is required to vote.

Eighth, did legislators and bureaucrats tell you that vote centers will save Hamblen County money because you’ll need fewer poll workers and fewer poll locations? Or did they say that vote centers will increase turnout? If so, you need to consult this 2021 report to the General Assembly where the Tennessee Coordinator of Elections reveals that **vote centers DO NOT save counties money**. Or check out [this chart with Secretary of State election turnout statistics](#) for some Middle Tennessee counties that use vote centers. Because **voter turnout appears to HAVE ACTUALLY GONE DOWN since vote centers were introduced**. And given all this, the idea that vote centers are “convenient” is now equally questionable.

Ninth, for that matter, no entity charged with protecting voting security is doing so. Not the US Election Assistance Commission (EAC) [here](#) and [here](#), not the [Tennessee State Election Commission \(SEC\)](#) and for us, certainly not the [Williamson County Election Commission \(WCEC\)](#). What has the Hamblen County Election Commission told citizens about election security if vote centers enter the county? What promises have they given you?

Tenth, what I also can’t figure out is if the Secretary of State and his Elections Coordinator are Republican, why haven’t they embraced the national GOP resolution that the Republican National Committee produced in 2023 concerning [“A Return to Excellence in America Voting and Elections?”](#) **It is explicitly AGAINST vote centers**.

Eleventh, like true bureaucrats, **counties that implement vote centers never give citizens the opportunity to vote on such a dramatic change in their voting process**. This change is forced on citizens as it was forced on us in Williamson County. And before citizens became aware of its dire problems, the tentacles of vote centers were already deep in our government. Where is the will of the people listened to? Or even given a voice?

Finally, vote centers are not constitutional according to the [Tennessee Constitution](#) and [Tennessee Code Annotated](#). And there has been **no law nor an Attorney General ruling that affirms that they are constitutional**. So, if you believe in the rule of law and the Constitution, why are vote centers allowed when we should be voting in precincts? And why are they pushing vote centers on citizens?

Hamblen County, you don't have much time to stop vote centers. You need to contact the Tennessee Senate State and Local Government Committee [here](#) and the Tennessee House State and Local Government Committee [here](#) this week to voice your concern.

Before it's too late.

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