



WHEN THE FOUNDATION IS POOR, THE HOUSE WILL COLLASPE UNDER ITS OWN WEIGHT

The Williamson County Election Commission's audit of the August 6, 2026 election was sound, but it can't correct an election system and process that's flawed from the start.

In 2024, the Tennessee legislature enacted the Tennessee Voter Confidence Act (Chapter 20 of the Tennessee book of laws), which implemented steps they considered improvements to elections.

One step was the inclusion of several post-election audits that counties would occasionally be instructed to go through. One is a performance audit where election commissions work through a checklist to be sure they did everything in the election they were supposed to do. And the second was a Risk Limiting Audit (RLA), a protocol that checks a random sample of ballots chosen by the Williamson County Election Commission (WCEC) and comparing them against the number on a random few tabulator tapes that track the votes.

On Thursday, August 13, 2026, the WCEC conducted a mandated RLA of the August 6, 2026 election. Specifically looking at the county mayor's race.

The audit process performed by the four Williamson County Election Commission members and ten citizen "auditors" went smoothly. It was very well organized, quick and very easy to follow from a citizen's standpoint. The result? All the number of ballots matched the numbers the audited tabulator tapes showed post-election. So, the WCEC will claim a 100% match, which was correct. **(If interested in the specific steps of the audit, check at the end of this op-ed.)*

But there's a problem.

If one wanted to feel confident that after performing this audit there were no significant issues in the election, they couldn't trust that feeling. And here's why.

The audit only looked at 2.66% of the ballots voted...1,267 out of 47,646 total ballots. This percentage is as close as one would want to go towards the lower limit of an RLA cited in expert literature for achieving a trustworthy answer as to the validity of the election's results without a full recount.

But, more importantly, because the audit is based on a foundation of problems -- such as voting machines that can't be inspected, vote centers that pipe the internet into each vote center right next to the tabulators that can't be inspected, non-verifiable ballots and other processes that are never addressed in the audit -- the entire process does nothing but give citizens a false sense of confidence in the election.

Garbage in, garbage out.

It doesn't confirm that the election was secure, accurate and transparent. And it certainly doesn't confirm that Tennessee is #1 in election integrity as bureaucrats like to claim.

You can thank Tennessee legislators, Secretary of State Tre Hargett, Tennessee Coordinator of Elections Mark Goins, and the Tennessee State Election Commission for building an audit – and an election system – that is fraught with issues.

And then refuse to pay attention to any research that presents the truth about the process and its machinery.

Here's what the RLA audit does NOT consider that could dramatically affect the security of the election and the accuracy of an audit:

- The voting machine/tabulators can't be inspected by cyber experts – or anyone -- before, during or after an election for [nefarious components](#) that could change how the machines operate when counting ballots.
- The WCEC refuses to implement a hash validation on the tabulators before and after the election, so there is no way they can say with a straight face that there has been no nefarious manipulation of the tabulators after Logic & Accuracy testing. We've been requesting [hash validations](#) be added to their process since 2022.
- Precincts are no longer used as voting locations because more and more voters have been squeezed into 42% fewer vote centers that [haven't increased voter turnout](#) or decreased election expenses. Instead, they've piped the internet into the vote centers right next to those voting machines we can't inspect for wireless components.
- Is the WCEC aware that the registration Dell laptops contain Qualcomm chips that can conduct wireless activity? They do. We've researched this. The WCEC also claims their VPNs can keep machines safe from internet interference, but they certainly haven't looked at [some recent research about the weaknesses of VPNs](#). And do you think a little VPN is going to stop a rouge state or nefarious hacker from getting to Williamson County's voting data?
- Did the ballot accurately reflect the choices of the voter? Since the voter's selections are [encased in a bar code](#) and it is the bar code – not the ballot's text -- that is read by the tabulator, how does the voter know his selections are truly in the bar code and were correctly counted as he wished... when no one can read bar code? That ballot is not voter-verifiable. But it's supposed to be.
- Scientists and lawyers have proven the [unreliability of the ballot marking devices](#) and [tabulators on which we're forced to vote](#). But the state and WCEC ignore these documented revelations. Why?
- The WCEC and the State Election Commission have refused to answer citizen questions about a small computer repair shop (Embry Consulting) that sits in the middle of a Crockett County cornfield that [manages the software and voter registration rolls and voter registration processes of 91 out of 95 Tennessee counties](#). No one at the firm, the state or county will tell us what cyber expertise Embry has in place (or if they have any...) to protect all voter rolls from hacks, nor if the firm is even certified to do such highly sensitive work.

In essence, while the mandated audit may be okay in how it is conducted, the foundation underneath the audit – the system of machines and other election complications created by Tennessee bureaucrats and legislators – is completely fallible. No number of audits will improve that foundation. It's cracked, broken, sinking and one day will crumble.

And the blame for that rests squarely with Secretary of State Hargett, Coordinator Goins, the State Election Commission and Tennessee legislators.

Frank Limpus

[Tennessee Voters for Election Integrity](#)

**The audit process the WCEC used:*

- *They planned for 16 "auditors," 10 arrived and were grouped at three tables of 3 or 4.*
- *WCEC Commissioners Rod Williamson & Donna Choate pitched in at 2 tables.*
- *One person is the designated witness at each table; the other three handle/count the ballots.*
- *First: WCEC officials checked the security tags on the chosen ballot boxes.*
- *Second, the absentee collection of ballots had only three ballots... and were checked.*
 - *When the absentee board counted all of the absentee ballots on election day, they compiled the 711 ballots into districts/precincts. One precinct was chosen via a drawing to be audited; and as it ended up, there were only 3 absentee ballots from that precinct.*
- *Third: Parrish Presbyterian tabulator B was counted with 164 ballots.*
 - *All ballots were pulled out of the ballot box and sorted by who it was voted for -- Marshall, Muvvala or other (no choice or write-in).*
 - *They were collated into stacks of 25 ballots and then bulk counted.*
 - *The stacks were re-counted by other teams/auditors and the tally compared to the tabulator tape numbers. Check.*
 - *The ballots were returned to, locked and sealed in the blue ballot box.*
- *Fourth: The Columbia State early voting tabulator A with 1100 ballots was audited.*
 - *Same process. Same result.*
- *The 1,267 ballots were counted in approximately 60 minutes.*

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