

Brett Anderson
Private Citizen

Chairman Thompson and Members of the Rules and Regulations Committee,

I would like to address the findings of the Legislative Post Audit Committee's review of Kansas' Procedures for Election Security. The committee's review of election procedures was an eye-opening event.

The audit looked at 13 counties and what procedures they did or did not do well. The results were less than stellar. A passing grade of higher than 50% was deemed a success. Counties were left up to themselves to make documentation with no real clear direction from the Secretary of State. As commented by the presenter for the LPAC, the Secretary of State had shown to be at fault for the counties not having adequate written policies. Only one county had a higher score than 75% for election management security, all counties struggled in having inadequate testing practices, and all counties struggled in having inadequate transfer and security practices.

Also noted in the review was that no county had adequate practices for all the best practices statutes that were reviewed. All 15 counties did not have adequate written election security policies or guidance as well. The committee concluded that insufficient guidance and oversight at both the county and state levels contributed to these issues.

One other issue was Ford County. That county would not allow the auditors access to their computers and management systems. They also sealed up all election documents after being requested to keep those records available. Thus, forcing the committee to sue if they wanted access to those records.

My concerns are who is going to be held accountable for these oversights and lack of procedural control? If someone is held accountable, what is the punishment? When ordinary citizens have doubts, these results back up that doubt. No counties seem to use a standard operating procedure to keep things in line. The secretary of state wants to interject his control on certain things, like ballot images, and act like he is in charge. But, when an audit like this is released, his response is, well that belongs to the county. Who is really in control of this?

One more small point to make. The same day the LPAC did their review on Election Security Procedures, they also did a review on Specific IT Security Controls Across State Agencies. This audit was a giant failure as well. I won't go into details, but more than half of the 15 entities audited did not comply with the selected IT standards and best practices. If the state cannot make their IT security controls across the state effective and secure and follow them, what makes a person think they can do it for our voting systems as well. This puts a lot of doubt into the ability of these state agencies to adhere to the standards of security.

In closing, you can see the state of Kansas needs some serious help in securing elections. The lack of knowledge of the process, the management systems, security issues is astounding. Processes and procedures need to be standardized and enforced. If they are not followed, then the right corrective action needs to take place. If that means written warnings, termination, or even jail time, then so be it.

If the secretary of state's office is not going to do their job, then the legislature needs to take back their rightful control and fix the situation. If that means more money is allocated to the counties to fix the elections, so be it. YOU, the elected officials need to do what it takes to retake control of the elections in the state of Kansas.

Respectfully submitted,

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