Audit Results for the November 3, 2020 Election

Voter History Audit

Audit Description: When voters check in at polling places, they fill out authorization to vote (ATV) forms on Election Day or one-stop applications during early voting. Applications are also part of the absentee by mail container return envelope. Voter history records for each individual are derived from these forms. When ballots are run through tabulators, tabulation software provides election return data that identifies the number of ballots cast. This audit compares the number of ATV forms and applications with the number of physical ballots cast. These two numbers should generally match, but may be *slightly* off for valid reasons, such as if a voter checks in and then decides not to vote.

This audit is designed to identify certain problems or fraud, such as ballot stuffing, fraudulent manual entries, or issues with media cards.

Findings: Currently, 75 of 100 counties have fully processed their voter histories. The absolute value of all variances for these counties is on average seven ballots (7.01) per county, or about 1/100th of 1% of ballots cast. Many counties have provided explanations to account for these differences. As counties continue to enter voter history and address any issues, the variance should narrow. The very small variance of this audit does not affect the outcome of the contests being canvassed by the State Board today.

Votes Cast Audit

Audit Description: County election officials occasionally must enter election results by hand directly into the vote tabulation software. This may occur, for example, due to a media card failure or because a ballot must be manually deducted from the results. This audit can catch inadvertent mistakes in transcribing numbers, as well as purposeful manipulation of data. This audit is run by comparing votes cast for specific candidates to the ballots cast for that contest's respective ballot style, using the following formula: [The Sum of Votes Cast for all Candidates including Undervotes and Overvotes] x [the number of candidates a voter can vote for] = [Ballots Cast for that Ballot Style].

Most, if not all, discrepancies are because county officials did not account for undervotes and overvotes when conducting a manual entry.
* An undervote occurs when no vote is cast for a contest or, for a multi-seat contest, when the number of choices selected by a voter in a single contest is less than the maximum number allowed for that contest
* An overvote is when a voter votes for more than the maximum number of selections allowed in a contest. The result is that the voter's selections in that contest will not count. The rest of that voter's ballot will count, however.

This audit ensures any transcription errors are below a contest's margin of victory.

Findings: This audit indicates that all transcription errors are small and well below the margins of victory in canvassed contests.

Sample Audit

Audit Description: A post-election sample audit that checks the accuracy of the equipment is required by statute. State officials select a statistically significant number of precincts or absentee/early voting groupings (usually two) for county officials, who then conduct a hand-eye-count of all ballots in those precincts or voting methods. These results are compared to the tabulated results and any variances are noted. Permitted variances include the following situations: (1) Human error in processing a ballot, (2) The write-in oval was not filled in but a name was written in the write-in line, or (3) the machine did not count a choice that was represented by checkmarks, x's, or where the oval or box was poorly shaded.

Statewide, more than 150 Election Day precincts and 30 early voting sites were audited. More than a dozen counties conducted a hand-eye audit of all mail-in absentee ballots.

Findings: Of the 200 precincts audited, the audits found a difference between the machine count and the human count in only 13 precincts, and all discrepancies were three votes or fewer per precinct.

Differences were attributed to human error, such as a voter marking outside of the bubble, or to human error during the hand count itself.

Deeper Audits for Close Contests

The last audit that is executed compares the margin of victory in any particular contest to the sum of the aforementioned variances, plus any provisional ballot the disposition of which has not been verified by State Board staff.

Voters cast provisional ballots when questions arise about their qualifications or eligibility to vote in certain contests. Those ballots are held aside for counties to research as to whether they should be counted.

When further auditing of provisional data is necessary, analysts process data from several data sources, including the DMV database, an incomplete queue that catalogs registration attempts that were deemed incomplete and the current registration database as of Election Day. Data analysts execute matching algorithms to determine whether provisional voters were eligible to vote in the counties where they presented to vote. Since the analysis by State Board staff cannot unilaterally determine whether or not a provisional ballot will count since it is based strictly on data and not a review of individual circumstances, audit

results are sent to county boards of elections. Counties then analyze the data and, where appropriate, amend their canvasses to reflect any changes.

Findings: This "Close Contest Audit" revealed no issues that could affect the election outcomes for contests being canvassed by the State Board today.