



Honorable Al Schmidt
Secretary of the Commonwealth
Office of the Secretary
Pennsylvania Department of State
302 North Office Building, 401 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120

RE: Vote Count Irregularities

Dear Secretary Schmidt:

We thank the Department for its response to our November 17 letter, in which your office attributed the wide swings in the Department's online Election Night results (ENR) to several counties mistakenly uploading the "wrong type of file," a "file with formatting errors" or "another technical issue." The Department's response also informed us that county ENR file submissions are "published on the Department's ENR website automatically...."

Respectfully, the Department's response is troubling and begs many questions. The response assigns fault to the counties, when it's the Department's responsibility to prevent incorrectly formatted submissions from being published.

Also, as the Department's response correctly noted, county vote totals are not official until the county board of elections certifies the returns and submits them to the Department – but as also noted in your office's response, the Department's ENR website is for the "sole purpose of updating the public on unofficial vote totals submitted by county election offices...." Unfortunately, when the Department knowingly permits automatic publishing of results that potentially contain inaccuracies, it sows the seeds of public doubt in our elections.

Further, the absence of any public and transparent explanation from the Department regarding either the November 2023 Election Night vote total swings, or the Department's subsequent corrective actions, is inexplicable.

In the interests of transparency and public confidence, we request your response to the following questions related to the administration of the Department's ENR website:

1. Why is the Department not monitoring county ENR submissions prior to publication?
2. How does the Department go about validating and correcting county submission errors?
3. Why does the Department allow automatic online publication of these results, when it is admittedly aware of the potential for incorrectly formatted county submissions, which can negatively impact public confidence in our elections?
4. Does the Department obtain county ENR from sources other than that which is transferred directly from the counties to the Department's ENR website, and if so, what are those sources?
5. What training, instructions, and support, if any, has the Department provided to ensure county ENR files are transferred correctly?
6. What post-election internal audit/review process does the Department enlist to remedy issues such as these?
7. What policies, training, and procedures can the Department implement that would prevent automatic uploading of data it knows from experience may be submitted by the counties incorrectly?

We anticipate the Department's response to these important questions. We also look forward to reading a public report from your office on the "additional measures the Department can implement to prevent incorrectly formatted files from being published," which your office's response indicated would be forthcoming.

Please provide a written response to this inquiry, via email, by December 6, 2023.

Respectfully,

Angela Nielsen Alleman
Executive Director
Republican Party of Pennsylvania