



November 22, 2023

Angela Nielsen Alleman
Executive Director
Republican Party of Pennsylvania
angela@pagop.org

Dear Ms. Nielsen Alleman,

Thank you for your letter dated November 17, 2023, relaying voter concerns regarding unofficial statewide vote totals appearing to decrease on the night of the November 7, 2023, municipal election.

The Department of State's Election Night Returns ("ENR") website—which I assume is the subject of your letter—provides unofficial vote totals based on information reported to the Department by Pennsylvania's 67 county election offices. The ENR website is maintained by the Department for the sole purpose of updating the public and the press on unofficial vote totals submitted by county election offices as they tabulate votes cast in a primary or election. After voting has concluded, officials from each of Pennsylvania's 67 counties periodically transfer to the Department's ENR website files containing updated unofficial vote totals. These files are published to the ENR website automatically, which the Department monitors throughout the evening.

Vote totals presented on the Department's ENR website are unofficial, and remain so, until each county board of elections certifies its official election returns to the Secretary of the Commonwealth. The counties certify election returns after officially canvassing and tabulating votes following Election Day, a process which candidates and political parties can observe through duly authorized representatives. The Department updates the ENR website to present the official election returns once the 67 county boards of elections certify the results.

If a county uploads the wrong type of file or a file with formatting errors or if another technical issue prevents counties from uploading their unofficial results, that sometimes prevents county data from being successfully uploaded on election night. When these issues are caught, Department staff work to correct the errors, either by manually entering reported unofficial vote totals as confirmed by counties or by removing the incorrectly formatted data files. Removing a county data file will temporarily result in the ENR website reporting zero returns from that county until the county can upload replacement data.

I am aware that at different points during the reporting process on November 7, 2023, the Department's staff flagged and removed incorrectly formatted files submitted by three counties. When initially uploaded, one of these incorrect files resulted in temporarily inflated Election Day vote totals for all statewide candidates on the ENR website. In this specific instance, the incorrectly formatted file



contained data adding a '0' to every candidate's Election Day vote total, leading to results that are clearly absurd. For example, shortly after the first incorrectly uploaded file, the ENR website was showing that in a county with roughly 140,000 registered voters, candidate Carolyn Carluccio had received 469,400 Election Day votes while candidate Dan McCaffery had received 166,300 Election Day votes.

After Department staff removed the incorrect data and the county uploaded the correct data, the ENR website appeared to show a decline in unofficial Election Day vote tallies for every candidate in all statewide races. However, that is because the temporarily inflated vote totals included the error mentioned above.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide transparency and communication around these important concerns. Please be assured that I will be following up with the Department's staff to determine what additional measures we can implement to prevent incorrectly formatted files from being published, even temporarily, to the ENR website. If you have additional information regarding what has been reported to you, I am happy to have our staff review that information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Marks", is positioned above the printed name.

Jonathan Marks
Deputy Secretary for Elections and Commissions

CC: Al Schmidt, Secretary of the Commonwealth