



**December 7, 2023**

Angela Nielsen Alleman  
Executive Director  
Republican Party of Pennsylvania  
[angela@pagop.org](mailto:angela@pagop.org)

Dear Ms. Nielsen Alleman,

The Department shares your interest in transparency and is pleased to provide information about its work to ensure Pennsylvania's elections are free, fair, and secure, which includes our commitment to providing accurate and timely reports as counties tally their votes. It is important to note that errors and resulting fluctuations in the unofficial results posted throughout election night have no impact on the final official results of an election, which are certified by the counties after canvassing all valid ballots, adjudicating challenges, and auditing their totals. We are responding to your further questions in order.

1. The Department monitors counties' submissions to the ENR website throughout the evening; indeed, it is because of that monitoring the Department was able to identify the erroneous upload referenced in the Department's initial letter and immediately work to assist the county in addressing the error<sup>1</sup>. Although the Department is unable to examine every submission from the counties before they are published to the ENR website, the reporting system used by the counties and the Department is designed to prevent the upload of files containing certain obvious errors. For example, submissions will not be automatically uploaded if they are an incorrect file type, if they report totals lower than the prior submission, or if they report a greater number of precincts than the county contains.
2. When the Department discovers a submission error, it deletes the erroneous data file from the ENR website and notifies the county. The Department then assists the county, if necessary, with correcting the error and re-submitting the data as soon as possible. Temporarily deleting a file upload and replacing it with a new file will invariably result in fluctuations in the reported vote totals for the affected county.
3. The Department provides the ENR website as a resource for the media and the public, who are understandably interested in learning about the unofficial results of the election as soon as practicable, and to centralize election reporting, which otherwise would have to be obtained by

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<sup>1</sup> The Department wishes to correct one statement in its initial response. The county referenced in the letter that uploaded the faulty file has approximately 84,000 registered voters, not 140,000. The Department regrets any confusion resulting from that inadvertent misstatement.



surveying 67 different entities across the Commonwealth. While unofficial, the updated totals submitted by the counties throughout the evening present a useful tool for tracking the progress of the counties' vote counting. That said, the Department makes every effort to stress the unofficial and provisional nature of the information on the ENR website. The media and organizations such as yours play an important role in relaying this message to the observing public that vote totals are not final until certified by each of the 67 counties.

4. The only data used to populate the ENR website is what is provided by the counties.
5. The Department provides continual support to counties prior to and throughout the election to assist them with fulfilling their reporting obligations, including to the ENR website. This includes pre-election "mock elections" that provide counties with an opportunity to upload test files, as well as direct lines of communication between the counties and Department staff.
6. Whenever an incident occurs during an election, the Department works closely with the county to investigate the incident, learn why it occurred, and implement measures to mitigate the risk that it will happen again.
7. The Department is still assessing the proper response to any file uploading errors that occurred on election night and can provide more information when that assessment is complete.

The public servants in the Department and in all 67 of Pennsylvania's counties work tirelessly to ensure that elections in the Commonwealth run smoothly. When mistakes occur, the Department works with the counties to correct them as soon as possible. As you are well aware, election officials are under tremendous scrutiny at this moment, and the Department welcomes the opportunity to help the public better understand the Department's work and the many ways in which election officials across the Commonwealth work to make sure that elections are safe, secure, and fair. Yet too often, inadvertent mistakes are exploited to sow distrust in the process or to wrongly attribute ill-will to dedicated public servants. Therefore, we appreciate your outreach about this matter and ask for your continued assistance in assuring the public of the security and legitimacy of our elections.

Sincerely,

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

Jonathan Marks  
Deputy Secretary for Elections and Commissions

CC: Al Schmidt, Secretary of the Commonwealth