



**A Citizen's Report**  
on  
**Election Security in Nevada and the Nation**

*Prepared by Indivisible Northern Nevada*

# Election Security in Nevada and the Nation

## Introduction

*Unless everybody's vote is secure, nobody's vote is secure.*

We know that in 2016, Russia targeted voting systems in all 50 states and used social media to spread disinformation and disunity among the American electorate. Voting is the lynchpin of our democracy -- and we can't effect change on the issues that matter to us, from gun safety to health care, without securing the ballot box.

Grassroots organizations around the nation are working together with local and statewide election officials to raise awareness about the threats to our election security and to develop strategies to mitigate existing and evolving threats. But how are regular citizens to judge if their vote can be compromised? **How Secure Is Our Vote in Northern Nevada?**

This report is an effort by [Indivisible Northern Nevada](#) (INN) with help from [Nevadans for Election Reform](#) and the [League of Women Voters of Nevada](#) to answer this question by integrating all publicly available information, interviewing officials and chasing down answers when none were readily accessible.

## Nevada's Election Infrastructure: Strengths and Vulnerabilities

Overall, it is our assessment that, in Nevada, our County Clerks, Registrars, and election officers in the Secretary of State's (SOS) Office have made great strides in securing the election processes. Our state legislators have supported funding for new voting machines and paper ballots that have also bolstered this work throughout Nevada. In Washoe County, and despite record turnout, Deanna Spikula, [Washoe County Registrar of Voters reports](#) the 2018 general election ran without major issues.

We especially commend the work of the [Advisory Committee on Participatory Democracy](#) (ACPD) established in 2017 by the [79th Legislative Session \(NRS 225.250\)](#) and charged with making recommendations concerning programs, activities, and events that promote citizen participation in governance for their dedication to helping all eligible Nevadans vote.

Our citizens' investigation left us feeling comfortable that Nevada's systems, while not perfect, are among the most secure in the country. We also feel that officials at all levels are earnestly working to secure our vote and to deploy all granted resources toward this goal.

However, we note that the structure of our election system in Nevada is such that each county in the state is responsible for running its own elections, including training its own poll workers. We also do not have a single encrypted voter data system, but rather an aggregation of county systems. Resources and staffing are not uniform across counties. Significant additional investment is needed for all the counties to have the systems and labor they need.

**Thus, our statewide vote is only as strong as our weakest county.** Although new voting machines and paper ballots are installed in all 17 counties, to date, we have only been able to research systems in Washoe County. We look forward to continuing our work to evaluate the situation in the other Northern Nevada counties. In addition to this challenge, record numbers of voters in the 2018 midterm elections and expanded voting opportunities for future elections (See Appendix), will require more resources and staff to address new and remaining structural challenges.

**Likewise, our national vote for President and Vice-president, are only as strong as the weakest state.** Despite all the work Nevada is doing to secure our votes, our votes at the national level remain glaringly vulnerable. States vary widely in the attention and resources they have devoted to election security. We believe that the federal agencies with expertise in cybersecurity should be responsible for carrying out comprehensive threat assessments on election infrastructure, as many states need assistance in securing their election systems.

Few issues are more pressing for every citizen of the United States than the security of our vote. It requires relentless vigilance and unity to face increasingly sophisticated and evolving threats. With sufficient funding, we can continue and expand the progress that Nevada has made and support similar efforts in all other states. Lacking that, no one's vote is truly safe.

## Recent History

**No significant voter fraud has been detected in our state.**

In 2018, the Nevada Republican Party Chair publicly voiced concerns about the integrity of the election following sweeping victories in state and federal races for Democrats in the midterm election. Although there were cases under investigation from the **primary** elections, [which were subsequently dismissed](#), no credible reports of voter fraud were received regarding the **midterm**. Clark and Washoe County Registrars, as well as Secretary of State Cegavske and Governor Sandoval - both Republicans - denied any evidence of voter fraud.

Nevada has an [Election Integrity Task Force \(EITF\)](#), which includes the SOS office, Nevada Attorney General's office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the U.S. Attorney's Office, and various other state and local law enforcement agencies such as the Washoe County Sheriff's office. It also includes representatives from the Republican, Democratic, Independent American and Libertarian parties. No non-partisan representative is included; we suggested that a long-standing non-partisan be included on the task force given the growing number of Nevada voters choosing to be unaffiliated.

The EITF assembles on election day and deploys resources on the ground to investigate complaints regarding questionable voter registration practices, potential voter fraud, and the enforcement of laws regarding voter intimidation or electioneering at the polls.

The relevant section in the SOS website has not been updated since 2016, but we were able to speak with [Wayne Thorley](#), Deputy Secretary for Elections, and confirm that the Task Force was indeed convened for the 2018 elections and will be convened again for 2020. Thorley reports that thankfully we did not have many incidents last election and that most concerns were quickly resolved.

## Strengths

## New Voting Machines and Paper Ballots

New [voting machines](#) with the latest security and encryption protocols were purchased in 2017 for all 17 Nevada counties for a combined total of \$25 million, primarily from [Dominion Voting Systems](#). Carson City purchased Election Systems & Software Ballot Marking Devices.

The new voting system was tested to [federal standards](#). Further, our voting machines are secured through a [Chain of Custody](#) where access is restricted and audited in a continuous cycle of testing, reconciliation and certification. Machines are removed from the cycle if there is any suspicion of equipment malfunction, broken chain of custody or malicious activity. Each voting machine is autonomous, and each has 2 thumb drives and the paper roll which record all votes. Once the system is broken down, each of the thumb drives goes in a separate bag which is sealed. The paper rolls, verified and signed, go into a third bag which is sealed. The number of votes cast on each machine are recorded and tallied and reconciled with the number of voters.

[Per Deputy Secretary Thorley](#), the voting system, which consists of the voting machines, central tabulators and scanners that run absentee and mail ballots, is never connected to the Internet. A so-called *air gap* exists between this system and the voter registration system, which **does** occasionally connect to the internet, to prevent the voting system from ever connecting to the Internet.

In Washoe on voting days, a mobile hotspot is individually generated at each polling site. An encrypted router then connects to a closed intranet that is also password protected. A *Voter Kiosk*, which consists of a laptop and tablet, can now connect to this closed intranet. Voters check in and sign on the tablet which displays only limited information to maintain privacy. The poll worker uses the laptop to electronically verify the signature as well as to access a live chat connected to registrar headquarters to facilitate problem solving and answering questions. While there is a paper backup for the precinct, all voting registration is in real-time.

Separate printers are used to generate labels and voting cards, and these are hardwired into the system. Voting sites do not connect to each other.

## Decentralized Data and Encryption

Per [Secretary Cegavske](#), and as mentioned above, Nevada has a decentralized voter registration system, commonly known as a *bottom-up system* where not all the information is held in one place. County clerks and registrars from Nevada's seventeen counties provide information relating to the registration status of all eligible citizens throughout the state. The submitted information is then compiled and verified by the SOS office in accordance with state and federal election laws. [NevVoter](#) is publicly accessible through the SOS office, but access must be requested and approved.

INNV sees this structure as both a strength and a challenge because while an assault on one system may be isolated, there are more systems to secure, each its own access point into the voter rolls. Moreover, counties have varying resources and sophistication when it comes to cybersecurity. Nevada has used a portion of our [HAVA](#) (Help America Vote Act) funds to purchase [albert sensors](#) for all counties in the state meant to function as an intrusion detection system. HAVA granted \$4.5 million in March 2018 and \$104,640 in August 2018. These sensors placed on the county networks that house the voter registration database monitor incoming network traffic for malicious actors, especially looking for certain signatures of known entities and send out alerts for investigations. Per Deputy Secretary Thorley,

in the past year about 24 incident reports have been generated every month. These have been investigated but thus far none have turned out to be genuine attacks.

Nevada is continuing to make [improvements to the statewide voter registration database](#), including improved password strength requirements, multi-factor authentication, and better user access controls. Along with 27 other states and D.C, Nevada is a member of [ERIC](#), the Electronic Information Center, a non-profit organization with the sole mission of assisting states to improve the accuracy of America's voter rolls and increase access to voter registration for all eligible citizens. It provides a cross-check of voter registration data. ERIC was formed in 2012 with assistance from The Pew Charitable Trusts and is governed and managed by member states.

While the new voting machines in all counties have encryption protocols, as noted earlier, Nevada does not have a single encrypted voter data system. So, encryption protocols are implemented at the county level Washoe specifics are [here](#). Of note and not mentioned above are:

- Four points of security back up – Primary and Secondary USB thumb drive, internal memory and VVPAT (Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail). USB thumb drives are encrypted memory devices for enhanced security. Votes are never stored unencrypted and are secure from tampering.
- System requires authentication through smart cards which require a PIN to unlock the encrypted data on the card. Three levels of users:
  - Technician (configures the device and loads election files)
  - Poll Worker (used to open poll and export logs, cannot load election files)
  - and Voter (used only for voting session activation)
- ICX Prime system does not allow any external hardware to be connected to the tablet during official elections other than what is authorized by election officials during the pre- election Logic & Accuracy testing.
- System does not allow any external information or link and does not allow any other information other than what is authorized by election officials which is preprogrammed into the system.
- Security controls include access through controlled mechanisms using security credentials and authentication of authorized users.
- Data integrity and confidentiality of security mechanisms that use National Institute of Standards and Technology ([NIST](#)) approved algorithms for software-based encryption and decryption of data
- Access to results storage area is secured behind a secured door with a security seal.

### **Trained Election Officials and Disciplined Protocols**

State and County staff are working together to assess threats and solve problems.

#### Staff Training

Although staff are not trained to directly identify social media threats, Nevada is one of only a few states to have all our local election officials signed up as members of the national [Election Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EI-ISAC), which monitors social media to alert election officials to potential threats, including disinformation or cyber fraud.

In August 2018, the SOS and a broad group of election security stakeholders (state and local election officials; state and local IT officials; state and local emergency management officials; and federal, state, and local law enforcement officials) participated in a [national tabletop exercise](#) (TTX). The TTX allowed them to role-play various emergency and election security scenarios, with the goal of improving collaboration and cooperation among all the election security stakeholders. The TTX also allowed them to put incident response plans into practice and identify any areas that need improvement. In September 2018, the SOS, election staff, and IT staff attended the [National Election Security Summit](#) (NESS) in St. Louis where they learned about best practices in election security and how to mitigate risks and vulnerabilities in election infrastructure.

Since the 2018 general election, the SOS and the Deputy for Elections attended the annual membership meeting of the EI-ISAC, in April 2019. The meeting included information on how to secure election infrastructure and protect against emerging risks and threats. The Nevada SOS office and local election officials have also participated in a second national TTX, which was held in June 2019. In July 2019, the SOS office hosted a Nevada-specific, in-depth TTX for all our county election officials.

More recently, two employees with the SOS office attended the annual DEF CON hacker conference in Las Vegas in August 2019. DEF CON included a [Voting Village](#) with various speakers on election security and hands-on auditing of voting equipment. In September 2019, election staff went to New Jersey to assist with a state-specific TTX and learn how to better conduct a Nevada-specific TTX.

In June 2019, the National Governors Association (NGA) announced that Nevada was competitively selected as one of six states to participate in a [Policy Academy on Election Security](#). The NGA will come to Nevada to host the Policy Academy in November/December.

The goal of the Policy Academy is to bring election security stakeholders together from all over the state to refine and improve election security practices in Nevada. Additionally, all state employees, including SOS staff, are required to take annual information security and cyber security awareness training. Senate Bill 123 from the 2019 Legislative Session also requires local election officials and local election staff to take annual information security and cyber security awareness training. These trainings include information on how to spot phishing emails, proper password management, and how to create a cybersecurity mindset in all that you do.

County Registrars and Clerks receive further training through the US Department of Homeland Security to role-play emergency situations primarily focused on cyber-related fraud or disinformation.

### Poll Workers

The Nevada SOS office is not involved in the training of poll workers. Nevada counties train thousands of poll workers every year, with the goal of having an efficient and fair voting process, including how to respond to issues such as electioneering or voter intimidation. They also observe the new colored lights on voting machines to provide assistance, if needed.

In Washoe County, poll workers receive mandatory training. Each poll worker is required to complete a 2-hour online course before they attend the training. At the 4-hour in-person training session, a slide show presentation, which is printed for each trainee, goes over the basics and there is a demonstration. Trainees are then paired to set up, run, and repack the equipment. Time is allotted to try the machines and ask more detailed questions.

Each poll worker is issued 2 spiral bound books: one is the Poll Workers Handbook, written by the voting machine manufacturer, which covers setup, verification, managing situations, closing the polls, and breakdown and transport to headquarters specific to Washoe County. The second spiral bound notebook is a step by step, screen by screen guide for every foreseen situation. Poll workers are told in training that these books are only for their use and asked not to give them to anyone who has not had the training.

Poll workers have access to a chat and a hotline that connect directly with headquarters for sending and receiving general information (to all polling places, like alerts, or solutions to problems that have come up) and specifics (like the label printer has jammed and we can't fix it, so that maintenance personnel can be deployed to the site).

They also have a hotline number. Protocol specifies that problems like this be turned over to the poll manager or assistant manager, who contacts headquarters and resolves the problem. Any problems taking more than 5 minutes to solve is logged at headquarters as an issue to be fixed before the next election.

Each of the new voting machines retains a lifetime ballot count log, but each is checked at the beginning of each voting day to confirm that its session log is at zero. If it is not, the machine is taken out of service. Additionally, every log is recorded on sheets, every seal is logged on sheets, and seals that are placed after voting are logged on sheets. All these sheets are sealed in an envelope and turned in separately from any voting tallies.

**Recommendation:** Our observer did note stubborn problems. For example, a voter registered but her registration did not show on the records. Poll staff received a series of steps to get her processed, and tried it twice, but were placed into a loop. It took 45 minutes and multiple staff members and delayed the prompt processing of the other voters at the site. Thus, sometimes the line poll workers may not have the experience, training or expertise to solve such cases.

Given the new challenge of same day registration in the 2020 election, a few sites will be designated for this and staffed with highly trained individuals. Our Fair Elections Team suggests that difficult cases be transferred to one of these sites, instead of to headquarters. We believe they have the best chance to be resolved in lieu of having to issue a problematic [provisional ballot](#). These are indeed a challenge. For example, **out of the 114 provisional ballots submitted in Washoe, only 11 provisional ballots were actually cast.**

That said, in 2018 Washoe County significantly reduced provisional ballots by allowing voters to vote at any location, not just at an assigned poll, but many voters remain unaware of this option. Previously, there were more than 1,000 provisional ballots which had to be verified. In 2018 there were only 105. Registrar Spikula noted that the previous restriction on voting locations accounted for about 50% of provisional ballots: *"All those conditions are actually removed now."*

Our observer also noted that in the case of the label machine, there was no warning color on the tape, like you see in a grocery store. It was recommended that, if this is going to be a problem (and it will, with the volume of voters) there should be a warning to replace the tape. It seems likely this will be implemented.

## Vulnerabilities and Challenges

## Initial Challenges in 2018 Have Been Overcome

The transition to the new machines did not go entirely smoothly in 2018. During the June 2018 primary elections, there were [300 incidents across 11 counties](#) which were not due to hacking or malicious actors, but were due to equipment failures tied to human error. More than [100 were reported in Washoe County](#).

Some ballots were truncated, omitting candidates whose names come later in the alphabet, and some ballots were pre-marked due to a cache issue when voters did not complete the ballot before removing the card. Some voters reported anomalies and were given a second ballot, resulting in unintended duplication. Subsequently, additional training requirements were added for poll workers and firmware upgrades were installed by the manufacturer to clear the cache and record *fled voter* in cases where cards are removed ahead of completion. The SOS office reports the company has already completed a firmware update needed to correct the issues.

Registrar Spikula affirms that she has “*every confidence*” in the Dominion voting machines. Indivisible Northern Nevada can verify that voting booth notification lights and extra poll worker cards were provided in an effort to avoid future voting booth failures.

INNV volunteers, including our Fair Elections Lead, Mary Richardson, received this training and worked the polls in 2016 and 2018. She confirms that the training was updated from 2016 to 2018 as well as between the 2018 primaries and the general vote. Along with the new equipment, she observed other improvements to support a more secure system.

In particular, the previous paper voter verification process compared on-site signatures to original signatures in a book before the voter was issued a voting card to insert into the machine. This was updated in 2018 to an electronic voter book where the specimen signature is now visible to the poll worker only. A one-time use card activates the voting machine which brings up the correct ballot for the individual voter. If a card which has completed the vote is re-inserted into a different machine without being reissued, it creates an error message.

Significantly, to minimize the ‘fled voter’ situation where a voter thinks they have cast their vote, but in fact they have not completed the final step of printing the paper ballot, a (new) light on the top of the machine changes from white to red and the manager is alerted. Staff can now alert the voter, escort them back to the machine, and go through a procedure so their vote can be completed. When the prior vote is registered, the light turns green and the machine is clear for the next voter.

## Current Questions and Concerns

### Accessibility of information

The difficulty of putting this report together highlights the need to update the SOS website. Nevada is in fact doing more than what is specified. Better access to more information will improve voter confidence.

### Registration Challenges

The voter registration system **does**, manually not automatically, connect to the internet occasionally.



Our new laws to expand voter access (See Appendix A) do present some challenges for election officials and poll workers:

*“With Automatic Voter Registration and Same-Day registration with provisional ballots passing in this legislative session and being implemented simultaneously, we will need to secure our voter registration system on a number of fronts before June of 2020.”* (Sondra Consgrove, Chair ACPD)

Doug Goodman, (ACPD) observed that one of the interesting things to watch regarding the same-day voter registration will be the number of nonpartisans that may decide to re-register on primary day in order to be able to vote in a partisan primary.

Secretary Cegavske has concern that the staff at all 17 counties are going to have to verify residence in a short amount of time. She also worries that Nevadans used to quick results will be impatient with the longer wait times that may be needed to accurately count the votes.

Cegavske also has overarching concerns about groups registering voters who might not complete the process accurately. Even though there are groups like the [League of Women Voters](#) who do an exemplary job, she sees problems with untrained and uncertified field registrars. In particular Cegavske believes that some field registrars may be telling people who are not currently eligible to vote that it's okay to go ahead and sign up and that when they become eligible, they will be all set, but then they have problems when they arrive at the polls.

Thorley confirms that according to the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, Nevada has the highest percentage of voter registration coming from third-party voter registration drives. (INNV registered many voters in 2018. We can verify that our volunteers are trained.) Moreover, changes to law via SB452 from the 2019 session provide clearer deadlines for registration groups. (See Appendix)

Chair Cosgrove emphasized that it would be incumbent upon the groups doing voter registration and voter education to exhort people to register now to diminish the numbers of unregistered voters arriving at the polls once early voting has started. She has also clarified that, per the new law, people can now update their registration at the polls and therefore this new option should be specifically updated with additional language in the Voter Registration Toolkit.

To date the [Voter Registration Toolkit](#) showing on the SOS site is still from 2016. The ACPD is doing a total revision of the toolkit. It will be more extensive, renamed [Guide to Elections and Civic Participation in Nevada](#), and be posted as modules on the SOS website. Target for completed draft is the end of September 2019.

## **Concerns for the 2020 Election**

### **Funding is needed to improve elections security**

*“We don't have the funds to create a centralized voter registration system to allow for one encrypted system, so we'll be moving to automatic voter registration and same-day registration with county-level servers that feed information up to the SOS Office. This means that each county will need help to encrypt their data and the smaller counties may need financial or contracted labor help,”* notes Sondra Cosgrove.

Joe Gloria with the Clark Elections Department and Wayne Thorley from the Sec. of State's office are both attending the League of Women Voters Sept. 21st community meeting to explain how Nevada will

be handling all the changes to voter registration and what the various county elections departments and the SOS office are doing to keep the voter rolls secured. Meeting will be live-streamed through the [League of Women Voters Facebook Page](#).

### **Audits Are County by County**

A report stating the percentage of machines/ballots that were randomly audited is included in the election certification report sent to the Nevada Legislature.

The counties and state conduct a number of post-election audits per (NAC 293B.120):

*“After each election, each county clerk shall audit the mechanical recording devices. The devices being audited are selected at random to verify that the hash value of the software and firmware installed matches that on file with the National Software Reference Library. Although law specifies a minimum number of units to be audited, Nevada’s local election officials usually audit more units than required. In a county whose population is 100,000 or more, at least 2 percent but not less than 20 units must be audited. In a county whose population is less than 100,000, 3 percent but not less than four units must be audited.”*

We do note that the [document regarding election security](#) on the SOS website is from 2016.

Washoe performs audits and monitoring before and after every election. Despite record breaking turnout in 2018, the post-election audit was completed Saturday, November 10th by the Accuracy Certification Board (ACB) – Reconciliation completed with no unexplained errors. A final abstract has been printed and vote history posted.

**We look forward to a new SOS program effective January 1, 2022 pursuant to SB123 that will require a post-election audit that manually examines the paper record of the votes cast. All county clerks will be required to conduct risk-limiting audits.** A Pilot program will run in 2020.

### **Recounts are not Automatically Prompted**

Recounts for federal offices (President, Senator, Representative) are subject to federal law. All other elections are subject to Nevada Revised Statutes enacted through the legislature and the Governor. The Elections Division of the Nevada SOS Office published the [Recount and Contest Guide 2018](#) enumerating the policies enacted by the legislature and the procedures designed by the SOS office, when such procedures are not specifically identified by statute.

Indivisible Northern Nevada’s Fair Democracy Team does have concerns about our current system. Most notably:

- **There are no circumstances (margins, anomalies, etc.) that trigger automatic recounts.**
- The person or entity calling for a recount bears a significant financial liability and prospective burden if they do not *prevail* as a result of the recount. Although, the requesting party is entitled to an estimate of the cost of a recount and then is required to deposit the estimated cost prior to the **recount, the cost has become prohibitive for all but the healthiest candidates or organizations.**

Additionally, recounts are often required to be very broad, rather than narrowly defined,

causing the associated costs to be larger. We note a recent example of this process at work: In the 2018 Washoe County Assessor race which ended with a margin of 0.29%. There were only two precincts at serious issue, but the current law required a countywide recount at a cost of \$15,000.

In June 07, 2019 Governor Steve Sisolak and Secretary Cegavske announced that Nevada was chosen to participate in the [National Governors Association \(NGA\) Policy Academy on Election Cybersecurity](#) to work on best practices and improving public confidence in the security of elections in preparation for the 2020 cycle.

Based on our review, INNV asserts the need for more information and better information distribution, especially pursuant to our new laws meant to expand and improve voter participation:

For example, every voter can use any vote center during early voting AND on election day. It appears that we ended up with long lines on election night in 2018 because the news media kept reporting about the vote centers from the malls, so many voters assumed that only the mall voting locations were vote centers. Communication about all our good voter registration and election changes will be vital for those changes to produce good results instead of chaos.

### **Information Regarding Poll Locations**

INNV documented an unintentional, yet significant weakness in the 2018 election that threatened to suppress the vote in Sun Valley. We discovered that due to a delayed venue contract the early voting schedule published by the Washoe County Registrar showed no voting venue for Sun Valley, despite the long history for a specific location. A subsequent schedule was published with the new venue but with no communication from the Registrar highlighting the change. We were told an effort was made to communicate this to voters via post, but INNV's Registration Team was unable to confirm the date the post office sent the notification or whether all affected voters received this notification. We urged election and community officials to find additional ways to communicate accurate information through the press, on electronic billboards, and additional roadway signage to disseminate information throughout the affected community.

The community of Cold Springs did not have an early voting location, so with [record turnout in 2018, they became the last polling site to close in the state](#). Registrar Spikula says her office will look at the issues, but she is confident that they can be solved:

*"I fully anticipate moving forward if we need more locations, more machines, our county commission, our county manager will fully support us in that. We will definitely get all the equipment, people . . . whatever resources we need."*

Indivisible Northern Nevada leadership remain concerned about the dissemination of voting location information. AB345 eliminated the requirement to publish certain information relating to elections in a newspaper, including names of candidates and offices for which they are running and information on all statewide ballot measures, but to our understanding polling locations are still required to be published.

## Election Security at the Federal Level

*Unless everybody's vote is secure, nobody's vote is secure.*

We are only as strong as the weakest state. However, across the US, the votes of millions of citizens are still NOT secure. Despite all the work Nevada is doing to secure our elections, our votes for President and Vice-President remain glaringly vulnerable. States vary widely in the attention and resources they have devoted to election security. We believe that the federal agencies with expertise in cybersecurity should be responsible for carrying out comprehensive threat assessments on election infrastructure. States need assistance in securing their election systems, especially against sophisticated threats foreign and domestic.

In 2020, nearly **16 million people in 12 states will be voting on systems with no auditable paper backup**, according to the [Brennan Center for Justice](#). Other serious election systems vulnerabilities were detailed in a recent [report](#) created by a group of *white hat* hackers investigating voting machines currently in use throughout the U.S. These include the use of outdated software with known, unresolved *bugs* that can be exploited by hackers, along with poor password security, among many other issues.

While the diversity of hardware and software systems across the US makes our entire system virtually impossible to hack all at once, interference in just a few key counties in battleground states would be enough to swing a close election. It is still imperative that Congress and the President act now to provide funding for election security, especially in key counties and states.

### ***Take Action Now:***

#### **A Citizens' Call to Action**

Securing our elections is a matter of **national security**. Here are 3 things we recommend everyone do now:

1. Call your senators and urge them to pass the [election security funding bill](#) that was passed by the House of Representatives earlier this summer.
2. Do your own research. We have provided links to a number of resources that can help you understand this complex issue, and what remedies are needed.
3. Help raise awareness. Share this information with others via social media and letters to the editor in your community.
4. Volunteer in your county: **Interested in becoming a poll worker in Washoe County? [CLICK HERE to apply.](#)**

## APPENDIX

**Assembly Bill 137** specifies that if a request is made to have a polling location (whether for early voting or on election day) on an Indian reservation, that request must continue for all future elections unless withdrawn by the Indian Tribe. *Prior to this bill's passage, the tribes had to request a polling location, for early voting and election day before each election. Effective date: October 1, 2019*

**Assembly Bill 345** requires counties to have at least one place that's known as a vote center where any registered voter in the county can cast a ballot, requires that same day registration be available both during early voting and on election day. It also changes the deadline to request an absentee ballot from the current 7 days to 14 days before the election and allows for a person to request a permanent absentee ballot. Finally, it changes the counting process of absentee ballots such that they need to be *postmarked* by Election Day instead of *received* by Election Day and gives the counties up to 7 days after an election to count them. Counties will have to establish a system to notify absentee voters if there are signature-matching issues and give voters an opportunity to cure that record up to the seventh day after the election.

**Assembly Bill 431** changes the previous cumbersome and limiting process for voting restoration for convicted felons. This bill maintains the right to vote of a convicted person who is not in prison and immediately restores the right to vote to a person that has been released from prison. It also restores the right to vote for those with prior convictions who have not had their vote restored and are not in prison. Bill was effective July 1, 2019. If someone is convicted of a felony in another state and out of prison and now resides in Nevada, he or she can register to vote. There is no distinction based on category of felony or type of felony.

**Assembly Bill 450** deals with the apportionment of voting districts, both Congressional districts and Legislative districts. It requires the Department of Corrections to notify the State Demographer of the last known address of an incarcerated inmate if the person was a resident of Nevada and then count that person for apportionment purposes based on their last known address, not where they are incarcerated.

**Senate Bill 123** requires all county, city clerks and staff to complete cyber security training annually. It also defines and lists the requirements for appointment of a cybersecurity incident response team. In addition, this bill requires the Secretary of State to adopt regulations for conducting risk-limiting audits of elections with a pilot program in place for the 2020 election. This is a type of post-election audit that manually examines the paper record of the votes cast. All county clerks will be required to conduct risk-limiting audits based on the Secretary of State program effective January 1, 2022.

**Senate Bill 450** deals with the recall election process and what must occur before a recall election is held. This bill requires the verification of all the signatures on the petition. It requires the recall petition proponents to pay for the cost of verifying the signatures. And it requires a halfway through check-in process during the 90-day recall process.

**Senate Bill 452** requires organizations that distribute bulk absentee ballot requests to notify the local election officials in the county where they're distributing those forms at least 28 days before distributing the forms. It requires the bulk mailings be done no later than 35 days before an election. The bill revises the deadline for providing such notification to the county or city clerk from not later than 14 days to not later than 28 days before distributing the forms. 25 Sections 1.1 and 2 of this Bill prohibit such a person from mailing the forms to registered voters later than 35 days before the election.

**Senate Bill 557** deals with campaign finance. It defines the term *personal use* and expressly prohibits using campaign finance funds to pay a salary. If a public officer or a candidate for public office has an expense that exists regardless of their duties as a public officer or regardless of their campaign, then they cannot use campaign funds to pay for that. The bill also increases the civil penalty for violating campaign finance law to \$10,000 per violation.

**Senate Joint Resolution 3** proposes to amend the Nevada Constitution to include the [Voter Bill of Rights](#) which is currently in statute in Chapter 293 of NRS. It will go to a vote next year on the 2020 General Election ballot and asks voters whether they want to amend the Constitution to include the Voter Bill of Rights in the Nevada Constitution.