



IMPROVING AND MODERNIZING OHIO'S VOTER REGISTRATION SYSTEMS

Building Safeguards to Enhance the Accuracy, Efficiency and Security of Ohio's Voter Registration Databases

Voter registration vendors aren't getting the job done. Over the past two months, Secretary LaRose has provided unprecedented levels of transparency into the voter list maintenance effort and partnered with statewide and community organizations to raise the bar on list accuracy. In the course of that process, it's been made very clear that increased oversight and setting meaningful standards would go a long way to ensuring the vendors' product meets expectations.

Voter registration systems are being attacked by foreign adversaries. In 2016, [Russian hackers infiltrated](#) the voter registration databases of two Florida counties. [In the same year](#), twelve Russian hackers utilized what's called a SQL injection technique to hack the names, addresses, dates of birth, driver's license numbers and partial Social Security numbers of about 500,000 Illinois voters.

Ohio counties are a target for hackers. Ohio's county boards of elections own all voter registration information in their county and manage their own elections. Just like other local governments across the nation, they contract with vendors to manage their voter registration systems. Unfortunately, there are no standards, rules, certifications or any general requirements at all that bind these vendors to provide the security or capabilities necessary to give Ohioans the confidence they are owed that their voter registration systems are locked down.

It's time to set standards for voter registration system vendors. The Ohio Board of Voting Machine Examiners (BVME) currently ensures voting machines, marking devices, automatic tabulating equipment, software, and electronic pollbooks are meeting certain standards of security and accessibility before they are deployed in Ohio. By placing voter registration database systems under the purview of a re-named Board of Voting System Examiners (BVSE), these systems can be considered for security and reliability before any county can purchase the software. With technical expertise provided by the Secretary of State's office, the BVSE will be able to ensure our voter rolls meet the required standards of cyber-security as threats evolve.

OUTCOME: By requiring voter registration systems to meet required standards, Ohio will greatly reduce a significant vulnerability. Enhanced cyber-security protections and oversight will mitigate the risk that foreign actors can manipulate our voter registration systems and deliver more accurate and efficient data to Ohio's 88 county boards of elections. A Board of Voting System Examiners will allow for a stronger, more accurate, and more secure voter registration system.

WHAT THEY ARE SAYING ABOUT THIS LEGISLATION

"This legislation provides a much-needed layer of security to protect our elections. We know foreign governments infiltrated voter registration databases in Illinois and Florida leading up to the 2016 election. I want to make sure Ohio is being proactive to this threat and continues to be a national leader in election security."

– **State Senator Michael Rulli (R-Salem)**

"For too long we have overlooked the constantly evolving threats to voter registration systems across the country. Thanks to Secretary Larose and Senator Rulli, Ohio is now leading the way in helping address the issues facing our voter registration database systems."

– **Julie Leathers Stahl, Director, Wayne County Board of Elections**

"In addition to the obvious need to upgrade our cyber security on voter registration systems, it has become clear that system vendors need additional oversight. Any errors in our voter registration databases hurt public trust. Voters need to know that Ohio takes both accuracy and cyber security seriously. This bill will go a long way to help build that trust."

– **Angela White, Member, Fairfield County Board of Elections**