



PROTECTING OHIO'S VOTER REGISTRATION SYSTEMS FROM ATTACK

Building Safeguards to Ensure Stability and Security of Ohio's Voter Registration Databases

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 vulnerable to hacking. 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.

Voter registration vendors aren't getting the job done. Secretary LaRose has provided unprecedented levels of transparency into the voter list maintenance effort. In the course of that process, it's been made very clear that the increased oversight and the setting of well-established standards would go a long way in ensuring the vendors' product meets expectations.

It's time to set standards for voter registration system vendors. The Ohio Board of Voting Machine Examiners (BVME) currently ensures only voting machines which meet certain standards of security and accessibility are deployed in Ohio. By placing voter registration database systems under the purview of a re-named Board of Voting Systems 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 mitigate the risk that foreign actors can manipulate our voter registration systems and cause chaos and confusion. A Board of Voting Systems Examiners Board will allow for a stronger, more accurate, and more secure voter registration system.