

Thursday, November 21, 2024

To the Pima County Board of Supervisors:

I haven't spoken here in many years—I didn't need to. But today, I'm back.

Some of you know the work Bill Risner, Arlene Leaf, and I, along with many others, have done through AUDIT AZ—now AUDIT USA—over the past 20 years. Together, we've fought for election transparency and integrity, not just in Arizona but across the country.

First, I want to thank the dedicated people working in elections.

Pima County and Maricopa County now stand as two of the best election departments in the United States. Having seen election systems in many states over two decades, I can confidently say you're leading the way.

But let me get to the point: trust in our election system is fragile. Claims abound—like the Russians boasting they rigged the 2020 election and that Trump owes them. Whether true or propaganda, the public's trust in elections is at an all-time low.

Luckily, verifying election integrity doesn't have to be complicated. We can ensure the system hasn't been tampered with—without even opening a box of ballots.

Here's what we need:

1. **The ES&S Cast Vote Record (CVR) database**—a public record we're entitled to access due to a 2007 court case.
2. **All ballot images**—which are also public records.

With these, we can use a program called ABE (named after Abraham Lincoln) to verify election results. ABE processes ballot images and the CVR to produce precinct-level results in about 90 minutes.

Why do we do this? Because we care deeply about our country, the integrity of our elections, and our democratic republic. Transparency equals truth. As Abraham Lincoln said:

"I have faith in the people. They will not consent to disunion. The danger is, they are misled. Let them know the truth, and the country is safe."

Lincoln also warned that America would crumble from within through division and strife. That warning feels eerily relevant today.

For two decades, AUDIT USA has seen trust in election outcomes erode because too often, people only trust results if their candidate wins. This undermines democracy. Election integrity must be verifiable by everyone, regardless of political affiliation.

A 2023 Pew Research Center report highlights the crisis: only 16% of Americans trust the federal government, and just 4% trust it independently of election results. This is among the lowest trust levels in nearly seven decades.

When people lose faith in elections, voter turnout declines, eroding the foundation of democratic participation. As Barbara F. Walter, author of *How Civil Wars Start*, noted, the 2020 election had the highest turnout in 120 years—yet 80 million eligible Americans didn't vote.

We must move beyond partisan bias and empower citizens to verify election results. Transparent, verifiable election systems are essential to restoring trust and strengthening democracy.

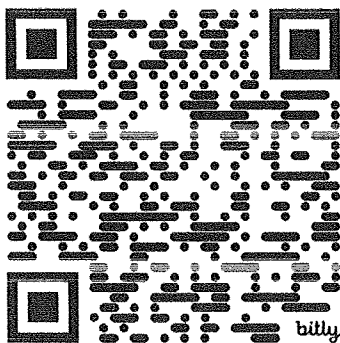
Before I close, I want to recognize our new Elections Director, Constance Hargrove. I've been watching your work, and I thank you for your leadership and dedication.

For those interested in learning more, I've provided a link and QR code with additional information, including documents and a video explaining our process.

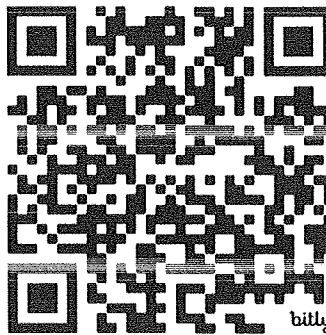
Thank you for your time.

John Brakey, AUDIT USA Cell 520 339 2696

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