

**Subject:** RE: Public Information Request (TX-SOS-22-0148) PIR 22-0218 (1 of 2)  
**Date:** Monday, November 14, 2022 at 11:05:46 AM Eastern Standard Time  
**From:** GeneralCounsel  
**To:** AO Records  
**CC:** GeneralCounsel  
**Attachments:** 11.14.22 Documents Batch 1.zip

EXTERNAL SENDER

Good morning,

Consistent with our October 14 email, please find the attached zipped folder containing documents responsive to your request for information under Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code. Due to file size, an additional zipped folder will follow.

We have completed the review of our records and do not anticipate any additional production of documents in response to this request.

The responsive documents contain email addresses of the general public. An email address of a member of the public is confidential under section 552.137 of the Texas Government Code. The attorney general authorized all governmental bodies to withhold an email address of a member of the public without first requesting an attorney general opinion in Open Records Decision No. 684 (2009). Thus, this information has been redacted.

Kind regards,

Jennifer Williams  
Legal Assistant to the General Counsel  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

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**From:** GeneralCounsel <GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 14, 2022 11:16 AM  
**To:** 'AO Records' <records@americanoversight.org>  
**Cc:** GeneralCounsel <GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Public Information Request (TX-SOS-22-0148) PIR 22-0218

Good morning,

Consistent with our September 16 email, please find the attached zipped folder containing documents responsive to your request for information under Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code.

The responsive documents contain email addresses of the general public. An email address of a member of the public is confidential under section 552.137 of the Texas Government Code. The attorney general authorized all governmental bodies to withhold an email address of a member of the public without first requesting an attorney general opinion in Open Records Decision No. 684 (2009). Thus, this information has been redacted.

The information you requested contains the home telephone number of a public employee or official. As allowed by section 552.024 of the Texas Government Code, this public employee or official has chosen to make this personal information confidential. Section 552.024 allows us to withhold this specific information without requesting a ruling from the attorney general. You have the right to appeal our decision to withhold this information from you. Instructions for appeal are also attached. If you do not want to appeal, you do not need to do anything else.

We appreciate your patience as we continue to process your request in accordance with the terms of the PIA. We require additional time to review our records and produce additional responsive documents. We will provide you additional responsive documents on a rolling basis—to the extent such information is not excepted from disclosure under state or federal law—with our next production by 5:00 p.m. on November 14, 2022. *See* Tex. Gov't Code § 552.221(d).

Kind regards,

Jennifer Williams  
Legal Assistant to the General Counsel  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

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**From:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 16, 2022 2:18 PM  
**To:** 'AO Records' <[records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org)>  
**Cc:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Public Information Request (TX-SOS-22-0148) PIR 22-0218

Good afternoon,

Consistent with our September 2 email, please find the attached zipped folder containing documents responsive to your request for information under Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code.

The responsive documents contain email addresses of the general public. An email address of a member of the public is confidential under section 552.137 of the Texas Government Code. The attorney general authorized all governmental bodies to withhold an email address of a member of the public without first requesting an attorney general opinion in Open Records Decision No. 684 (2009). Thus, this information has been redacted.

We appreciate your patience as we continue to process your request in accordance with the terms of the PIA. We require additional time to review our records and produce additional responsive documents. We will provide you additional responsive documents on a rolling basis—to the extent such information is not excepted from disclosure under state or federal law—with our next production by 5:00 p.m. on October 14, 2022. *See* Tex. Gov't Code § 552.221(d).

Kind regards,

Jennifer Williams  
Legal Assistant to the General Counsel  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

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**From:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 2, 2022 1:29 PM  
**To:** 'AO Records' <[records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org)>  
**Cc:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Public Information Request (TX-SOS-22-0148) PIR 22-0218

Good afternoon,

Regarding our August 19 email, we appreciate your patience as we continue to process your request in accordance with the terms of the PIA. We require additional time to review our records and produce additional responsive documents. We will provide you additional responsive documents on a rolling basis—to the extent such information is not excepted from disclosure under state or federal law—with our next production by 5:00 p.m. on September 16, 2022. *See* Tex. Gov't Code § 552.221(d).

Kind regards,

Jennifer Williams  
Legal Assistant to the General Counsel  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

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**From:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 19, 2022 4:38 PM  
**To:** 'AO Records' <[records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org)>  
**Cc:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Public Information Request (TX-SOS-22-0148) PIR 22-0218

Good afternoon,

As a follow up to our July 22 email, we appreciate your patience as we continue to process your request in accordance with the terms of the PIA. We require additional time to review our records and produce additional responsive documents. We will provide you additional responsive documents on a rolling basis—to the extent such information is not excepted from disclosure under state or federal law—with our next production by 5:00 p.m. on September 2, 2022. *See* Tex. Gov't Code § 552.221(d).

Kind regards,

Jennifer Williams  
Legal Assistant to the General Counsel  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

**From:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 22, 2022 4:28 PM  
**To:** 'AO Records' <[records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org)>  
**Cc:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Public Information Request (TX-SOS-22-0148) PIR 22-0218

Good afternoon,

Consistent with our July 8 email, please find the attached zipped folder containing documents responsive to your request for information under Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code.

The responsive documents contain email addresses of the general public. An email address of a member of the public is confidential under section 552.137 of the Texas Government Code. The attorney general authorized all governmental bodies to withhold an email address of a member of the public without first requesting an attorney general opinion in Open Records Decision No. 684 (2009). Thus, this information has been redacted.

We appreciate your patience as we continue to process your request in accordance with the terms of the PIA. We require additional time to review our records and produce additional responsive documents. We will provide you additional responsive documents on a rolling basis—to the extent such information is not excepted from disclosure under state or federal law—with our next production by 5:00 p.m. on August 19, 2022. *See* Tex. Gov't Code § 552.221(d).

Kind regards,

Jennifer Williams  
Legal Assistant to the General Counsel  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

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**From:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 8, 2022 4:45 PM  
**To:** 'AO Records' <[records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org)>  
**Cc:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Public Information Request (TX-SOS-22-0148) PIR 22-0218

Good afternoon,

As a follow up to our June 17 email, we appreciate your patience as we continue to process your request in accordance with the terms of the PIA. We require additional time to review our records and produce additional responsive documents. We will provide you additional responsive documents on a rolling basis—to the extent such information is not excepted from disclosure under state or federal law—with our next production by 5:00 p.m. on July 22, 2022. *See* Tex. Gov't Code § 552.221(d).

Kind regards,

Jennifer Williams  
Legal Assistant to the General Counsel  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

**From:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 17, 2022 4:17 PM  
**To:** 'AO Records' <[records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org)>  
**Cc:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Public Information Request (TX-SOS-22-0148) PIR 22-0218

Good afternoon,

Regarding our May 27 email, we appreciate your patience as we continue to process your request in accordance with the terms of the PIA. We require additional time to review our records and produce additional responsive documents. We will provide you additional responsive documents on a rolling basis—to the extent such information is not excepted from disclosure under state or federal law—with our next production by 5:00 p.m. on July 8, 2022. See Tex. Gov't Code § 552.221(d).

Kind regards,

Jennifer Williams  
Legal Assistant to the General Counsel  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

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**From:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 27, 2022 2:39 PM  
**To:** 'AO Records' <[records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org)>  
**Cc:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Public Information Request (TX-SOS-22-0148) PIR 22-0218

Good afternoon,

Regarding our April 22 email, we appreciate your patience as we continue to process your request in accordance with the terms of the PIA. We require additional time to review our records and produce additional responsive documents. We will provide you additional responsive documents on a rolling basis—to the extent such information is not excepted from disclosure under state or federal law—with our next production by 5:00 p.m. on June 17, 2022. See Tex. Gov't Code § 552.221(d).

Kind regards,

Jennifer Williams  
Legal Assistant to the General Counsel  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

**From:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 22, 2022 4:22 PM  
**To:** 'AO Records' <[records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org)>  
**Cc:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Public Information Request (TX-SOS-22-0148) PIR 22-0218 (1 of 2)

Good afternoon,

Consistent with our March 25 email, please see the attached zipped folder containing documents responsive to your request for information under Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code. Due to file size, an additional email will follow with another zipped folder.

Pursuant to Section 31.006(b) of the Texas Election Code, the attached election complaint files provided to you today (and on March 4) are not considered confidential under the PIA and may be released publicly.

Dates of birth have been redacted from the attached documents as we await a determination from the Attorney General's Open Records Division on our request for a ruling. The responsive documents also contain email addresses of the general public. An email address of a member of the public is confidential under section 552.137 of the Texas Government Code. The attorney general authorized all governmental bodies to withhold an email address of a member of the public without first requesting an attorney general opinion in Open Records Decision No. 684 (2009). Thus, this information has been redacted.

We require more time to continue reviewing our records and produce additional responsive information. We will provide you additional responsive documents on a rolling basis—to the extent such information is not excepted from disclosure under state or federal law—with our next production by 5:00 p.m. on May 27, 2022. See Tex. Gov't Code § 552.221(d).

Kind regards,

Jennifer Williams  
Legal Assistant to the General Counsel  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

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**From:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 25, 2022 2:45 PM  
**To:** 'AO Records' <[records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org)>  
**Cc:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Public Information Request (TX-SOS-22-0148) PIR 22-0218

Good afternoon,

Regarding our March 4 email, we appreciate your patience as we continue to process your request in

accordance with the terms of the PIA. We require additional time to review our records and produce additional responsive documents. We will provide you additional responsive documents on a rolling basis—to the extent such information is not excepted from disclosure under state or federal law—with our next production by 5:00 p.m. on April 22, 2022. See Tex. Gov't Code § 552.221(d).

Kind regards,

Jennifer Williams  
Legal Assistant to the General Counsel  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

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**From:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 3:49 PM  
**To:** 'AO Records' <[records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org)>  
**Cc:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Public Information Request (TX-SOS-22-0148) PIR 22-0218

Good afternoon,

Please see the attached letter, with enclosures, in response to your request for information under Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code.

Dates of birth have been redacted from the attached documents as we await a determination from the Attorney General's Open Records Division on our request for a ruling.

The responsive documents also contain email addresses of the general public. An email address of a member of the public is confidential under section 552.137 of the Texas Government Code. The attorney general authorized all governmental bodies to withhold an email address of a member of the public without first requesting an attorney general opinion in Open Records Decision No. 684 (2009). Thus, this information has been redacted.

Additionally, the information you requested also contains information that relates to a motor vehicle operator's or driver's license or permit issued by an agency of this state or another state or country. This information is confidential under section 552.130 of the Texas Government Code. Section 552.130 allows us to withhold this specific information without requesting a ruling from the attorney general. You have the right to appeal our decision to withhold this information from you. Instructions for appeal are also attached. If you do not want to appeal, you do not need to do anything else.

Consistent with our February 24, 2022 letter, please find the attached zipped folder containing documents responsive to the Request. We require more time to continue reviewing our records and produce additional responsive information. We will provide you additional responsive documents on a rolling basis—to the extent such information is not excepted from disclosure under state or federal law—with our next production by 5:00 p.m. on March 25, 2022. See Tex. Gov't Code § 552.221(d).

Kind regards,

Jennifer Williams  
Legal Assistant to the General Counsel  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

**From:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 24, 2022 2:10 PM  
**To:** 'AO Records' <[records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org)>  
**Cc:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Public Information Request (TX-SOS-22-0148) PIR 22-0218

Good afternoon,

Please see the attached letter, with enclosures, in response to your request for information under Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code.

Kind regards,

Jennifer Williams  
Legal Assistant to the General Counsel  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

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**From:** AO Records <[records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 9, 2022 1:00 PM  
**To:** GeneralCounsel <[GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Public Information Request (TX-SOS-22-0148)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from OUTSIDE of the SOS organization. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you are expecting the email and know that the content is safe. If you believe this to be a malicious or phishing email, please send this email as an attachment to [informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov](mailto:informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov).

**CAUTION:** This email originated from OUTSIDE of the SOS organization. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you are expecting the email and know that the content is safe. If you believe this to be a malicious or phishing email, please send this email as an attachment to [informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov](mailto:informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov).

Dear Public Information Officer:

Unfortunately, our tracking number for this request was incorrect. Please find the corrected version here.

For clarification with the last batch of emails, TX-SOS-22-0132 is TX-SOS-22-0147, and TX-SOS-22-0133 is TX-SOS-22-0148. Apologies for these mix-ups.

Sincerely,  
Dylan Winters (he/him)

Paralegal  
American Oversight  
[records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org)  
[www.americanoversight.org](http://www.americanoversight.org) | @weareoversight

PIR: TX-SOS-22-0148

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**From:** Dylan Winters <[dylan.winters@americanoversight.org](mailto:dylan.winters@americanoversight.org)> on behalf of AO Records  
<[records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org)>  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 9, 2022 at 10:12 AM  
**To:** "[generalcounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:generalcounsel@sos.texas.gov)" <[generalcounsel@sos.texas.gov](mailto:generalcounsel@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Public Information Request (TX-SOS-22-0133)

Dear Public Information Officer:

Please find attached a request for records under the Texas Public Information Act.

Sincerely,  
Dylan Winters (he/him)  
Paralegal  
American Oversight  
[records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org)  
[www.americanoversight.org](http://www.americanoversight.org) | @weareoversight

PIR: TX-SOS-22-0133

**From:** [Sam Taylor](#)  
**To:** ["michael.scarpello@dallascounty.org"](mailto:michael.scarpello@dallascounty.org)  
**Cc:** [John Scott](#); [Keith Ingram](#)  
**Subject:** Dallas County - Partial Manual Count - November 2020  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 29, 2021 4:37:08 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[Dallas County Partial Manual Count November 2020 Election.xlsx](#)  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

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Hi Michael,

Thanks for chatting earlier and apologies for bothering you on your travels! I've attached the chart of the partial manual count numbers that your office provided us after the November 2020 election.

You'll see the red highlighted cells (J15 and K15) show that the electronic count for candidate Matt Sterett was 1, while the manual count was 11. We presume this was because of a data entry/clerical error, but wanted to make sure and confirm with your office.

Please let us know if y'all have any information on this you'd like to provide so we can note it in our progress report.

Much appreciated!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



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**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 9:24 AM  
**To:** 'Celine Castronuovo'  
**Subject:** FW: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Attachments:** 9.28.2021\_Full Forensic Audit Summary\_Texas Secretary of State.pdf

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Celine,

Here's the e-mail confirmation from yesterday, including the plan and confirmation that we will not be hiring or contracting with an outside firm for the audit.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



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**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 6:38 PM  
**Subject:** Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Evening, All –

Many of you have inquired about additional details relating to the full forensic election audit announced last week. Attached, below, and on our web site ([link here](#)), please find an outline of the parameters of the audit and relevant sections of the Texas Election Code. This information has already been provided to the Election Administrators in Dallas, Harris, Collin and Tarrant counties.

**I want to be absolutely crystal clear about one thing: no, we will not be hiring or contracting with an outside firm to conduct these audits.**

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*



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## **Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election**

The Texas Secretary of State's office has announced a full forensic audit of the 2020 General Election in Dallas, Harris, Tarrant and Collin counties. The full forensic audit is being conducted in two phases, the first of which is already underway. The purpose of this audit is to ensure all Texas voters can have confidence in the elections systems in our state, and to address any outstanding issues county election officials may face that undermines the integrity of our elections.

### **Phase 1: Testing Voting Machine Accuracy, Cybersecurity Assessments, and Identifying and Removing Ineligible Voters Who Cast Ballots in 2020 (Already Completed or Underway)**

- After every single Texas election, counties are required to conduct a partial manual count of electronic voting system ballots within 72 hours of the polls closing to ensure the accuracy of the tabulation of electronic voting systems results ([Sec. 127.201](#)).
- All counties are required to undergo an Election Security Assessment (ESA) of the county's election system ([Sec. 279.003](#)). All 254 counties have completed these assessments.
- Under both state and federal law, the Texas Secretary of State's office is empowered to maintain the accuracy of the statewide voter registration list to ensure that ineligible voters – including deceased individuals, individuals registered in multiple states or counties, and non-U.S. citizens – do not remain on the voter rolls ([Secs. 18.061 – 18.0681](#)).
- As part of the audit process, the office has received reports from the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) regarding voters who may have voted twice in state and across state lines. We have also received a report of persons who may have been deceased when a vote was cast in their name. Finally, we have identified potential non-U.S. citizen voters and have directed county voter registrars to take action to verify the eligibility of registered voters and cancel their registration if they do not present proof of eligibility. Once that action has been taken, our office evaluates the persons cancelled and refers any instances of possible illegal voting to the Office of the Texas Attorney General for investigation ([Sec. 31.006](#)).

### **Phase 2: Comprehensive Election Records Examination (Spring 2022)**

- As part of the Texas Secretary of State's duty to assist and advise all election authorities with regard to the application, operation, and interpretation of the Texas Election Code ([Sec. 31.004](#)) and to obtain and maintain uniformity in the application of the Code ([Sec. 31.003](#)), the office will conduct a comprehensive election records examination over the next several months to ensure election administration procedures were properly followed during the 2020 General Election.
- The records examined from each county will include – but are not limited to – the following types of documents:
  - Logic & Accuracy Testing Records for Voting Machines, including:

- All test ballots voted
- Test Deck Records
- Testing Media
- Early Voting and Election Day Materials, including:
  - List of registered voters used in the 2020 General Election
  - Daily Early Voting Rosters for in-person voting
  - Chain of Custody forms that document the seals on the ballot boxes
  - Chain of Custody delivery and pickup of equipment at voting sites
  - Statements of Residence
  - Reasonable Impediment Declarations
  - Limited Ballot Applications
  - Audit Logs from applicable Voting System Devices
  - List of Rejected Provisional Ballots and reason for rejection
  - Ballot and Seal Certificates
  - Hand Delivery of a Ballot by Mail Roster and Forms
  - Receipts of Sealed Early Voting Ballot Boxes
- Signature Verification Committee Materials
- Early Voting Ballot Board Materials, including:
  - Receipt of Sealed Early Voting Ballot Boxes
  - Poll List of Mail Voters
  - Notice of Rejected Carriers and reasons
- Central Counting Station Plan
- Training Materials
- County election officials must retain these records for 22 months under both federal law ([52 USC 20701](#)) and state law ([Texas Election Code Sec. 66.058](#)).
- All of this information is available to the general public ([Sec. 1.012](#)).
- After a thorough examination of the abovementioned records and materials in each county, irregularities or deviations from election administration procedures that may have affected the accuracy of the electronic voting system ballot count could trigger a full manual recount of ballots in the affected precincts or polling locations, pursuant to the Secretary of State's authority to ensure the accuracy of the tabulation of electronic voting system results ([Sec. 127.202](#)).

# **Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit of 2020**

## **General Election**

The Texas Secretary of State's office has announced a full forensic audit of the 2020 General Election in Dallas, Harris, Tarrant and Collin counties. The full forensic audit is being conducted in two phases, the first of which is already underway. The purpose of this audit is to ensure all Texas voters can have confidence in the elections systems in our state, and to address any outstanding issues county election officials may face that undermines the integrity of our elections.

### **Phase 1: Testing Voting Machine Accuracy, Cybersecurity Assessments, and Identifying and Removing Ineligible Voters Who Cast Ballots in 2020 (Already Completed or Underway)**

- After every single Texas election, counties are required to conduct a partial manual count of electronic voting system ballots within 72 hours of the polls closing to ensure the accuracy of the tabulation of electronic voting systems results ([Sec. 127.201](#)).
- All counties are required to undergo an Election Security Assessment (ESA) of the county's election system ([Sec. 279.003](#)). All 254 counties have completed these assessments.
- Under both state and federal law, the Texas Secretary of State's office is empowered to maintain the accuracy of the statewide voter registration list to ensure that ineligible voters – including deceased individuals, individuals registered in multiple states or counties, and non-U.S. citizens – do not remain on the voter rolls ([Secs. 18.061 – 18.0681](#)).
- As part of the audit process, the office has received reports from the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) regarding voters who may have voted twice in state and across state lines. We have also received a report of persons who may have been deceased when a vote was cast in their name. Finally, we have identified potential non-U.S. citizen voters and have directed county voter registrars to take action to verify the eligibility of registered voters and cancel their registration if they do not present proof of eligibility. Once that action has been taken, our office evaluates the persons cancelled and refers any instances of possible illegal voting to the Office of the Texas Attorney General for investigation ([Sec. 31.006](#)).

### **Phase 2: Comprehensive Election Records Examination (Spring 2022)**

- As part of the Texas Secretary of State's duty to assist and advise all election authorities with regard to the application, operation, and interpretation of the Texas Election Code ([Sec. 31.004](#)) and to obtain and maintain uniformity in the application of the Code ([Sec. 31.003](#)), the office will conduct a comprehensive election records examination over the next several months to ensure election

administration procedures were properly followed during the 2020 General Election.

- The records examined from each county will include – but are not limited to – the following types of documents:
  - Logic & Accuracy Testing Records for Voting Machines, including:
    - All test ballots voted
    - Test Deck Records
    - Testing Media
  - Early Voting and Election Day Materials, including:
    - List of registered voters used in the 2020 General Election
    - Daily Early Voting Rosters for in-person voting
    - Chain of Custody forms that document the seals on the ballot boxes
    - Chain of Custody delivery and pickup of equipment at voting sites
    - Statements of Residence
    - Reasonable Impediment Declarations
    - Limited Ballot Applications
    - Audit Logs from applicable Voting System Devices
    - List of Rejected Provisional Ballots and reason for rejection
    - Ballot and Seal Certificates
    - Hand Delivery of a Ballot by Mail Roster and Forms
    - Receipts of Sealed Early Voting Ballot Boxes
  - Signature Verification Committee Materials
  - Early Voting Ballot Board Materials, including:
    - Receipt of Sealed Early Voting Ballot Boxes
    - Poll List of Mail Voters
    - Notice of Rejected Carriers and reasons
  - Central Counting Station Plan
  - Training Materials
- County election officials must retain these records for 22 months under both federal law ([52 USC 20701](#)) and state law ([Texas Election Code Sec. 66.058](#)).
- All of this information is available to the general public ([Sec. 1.012](#)).
- After a thorough examination of the abovementioned records and materials in each county, irregularities or deviations from election administration procedures that may have affected the accuracy of the electronic voting system ballot count could trigger a full manual recount of ballots in the affected precincts or polling locations, pursuant to the Secretary of State's authority to ensure the accuracy of the tabulation of electronic voting system results ([Sec. 127.202](#)).

---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 10:03 AM  
**To:** 'Audrey Henvey'  
**Subject:** FW: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Attachments:** 9.28.2021\_Full Forensic Audit Summary\_Texas Secretary of State.pdf

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Audrey,

Apologies for not including you on this – I sent as a one-off e-mail to a list of folks who had inquired about the audit details over the past several days, but forgot to include your e-mail. I'm so sorry about that, please let me know if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 6:38 PM  
**Subject:** Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Evening, All –

Many of you have inquired about additional details relating to the full forensic election audit announced last week. Attached, below, and on our web site ([link here](#)), please find an outline of the parameters of the audit and relevant sections of the Texas Election Code. This information has already been provided to the Election Administrators in Dallas, Harris, Collin and Tarrant counties.

**I want to be absolutely crystal clear about one thing: no, we will not be hiring or contracting with an outside firm to conduct these audits.**

Best,

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- All counties are required to undergo an Election Security Assessment (ESA) of the county's election system ([Sec. 279.003](#)). All 254 counties have completed these assessments.
- Under both state and federal law, the Texas Secretary of State's office is empowered to maintain the accuracy of the statewide voter registration list to ensure that ineligible voters – including deceased individuals, individuals registered in multiple states or counties, and non-U.S. citizens – do not remain on the voter rolls ([Secs. 18.061 – 18.0681](#)).
- As part of the audit process, the office has received reports from the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) regarding voters who may have voted twice in state and across state lines. We have also received a report of persons who may have been deceased when a vote was cast in their name. Finally, we have identified potential non-U.S. citizen voters and have directed county voter registrars to take action to verify the eligibility of registered voters and cancel their registration if they do not present proof of eligibility. Once that action has been taken, our office evaluates the persons cancelled and refers any instances of possible illegal voting to the Office of the Texas Attorney General for investigation ([Sec. 31.006](#)).

### **Phase 2: Comprehensive Election Records Examination (Spring 2022)**

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- The records examined from each county will include – but are not limited to – the following types of documents:
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    - Testing Media
  - Early Voting and Election Day Materials, including:
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**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 10:22 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Attachments:** 9.28.2021\_Full Forensic Audit Summary\_Texas Secretary of State.pdf

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Kami,

Thanks for reaching out on this! As I mentioned, we released additional details of the full scope of the audit – Phase 1 of which is already underway and Phase 2 of which is set to begin next Spring in Dallas, Harris, Tarrant and Collin Counties (see attached and below).

Happy to block off 9:45 – 10:15 tomorrow for the interview, in case it runs long. Please let me know if there’s any particular topics or questions Chris wants to cover and I’ll make sure I’m prepared to address them.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 6:38 PM  
**Subject:** Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

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---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 9:20 AM  
**To:** 'James Barragán'  
**Subject:** FW: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Attachments:** 9.28.2021\_Full Forensic Audit Summary\_Texas Secretary of State.pdf

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi James,

Apologies for not including you on this – I sent as a one-off e-mail to a list of folks who had inquired about the audit details over the past several days. Received inquiries from Reese and Alexa so they were on my list for this one, but realize now I should have included you as well – sorry about that! You are still on the press release list!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

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**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 6:38 PM  
**Subject:** Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

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**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 17, 2021 4:04 PM  
**To:** 'Mankad, Raj'  
**Subject:** FW: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Attachments:** John B. Scott\_OpEd Submission\_Houston Chronicle\_11.17.21.docx  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Afternoon Raj,

Let me know if y'all are interested in publishing the updated version of the piece (attached here). This is still being offered as an exclusive to the Chronicle if you choose to publish it. Thanks again for your time, feedback, and consideration.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



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**From:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 17, 2021 11:22 AM  
**To:** 'Mankad, Raj' <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Thank you for the feedback, Raj. Attached, please find an updated version of the piece addressing your comments.

To answer your first question, the theme of the piece is restoring confidence among a voting public that has voiced diminished faith in our election systems. Nevertheless, we added a notable example in Harris county that specifically involves a discrepancy in the number of votes cast vs. the number of voters who checked in at drive-thru locations in Harris County in 2020. This is an example of the type of irregularity that, while maybe not nefarious in nature, does diminish voters' confidence in the integrity of elections if it is not resolved and explained by an objective third party – which is the role our agency is taking on through this election audit.

To your second question about ‘why these four counties?’ – as noted in the updated piece, these are the two largest counties with Democratic and Republican Commissioners Courts, who oversee the elections offices in each county. It is only fair that we examine the two largest Democratic and two largest Republican counties, rather than choosing the four largest counties by population, which would undoubtedly be panned as a partisan ‘witch hunt’ against Democratic-leaning counties only. If you’d like that clarified more in the piece, we’re happy to make adjustments as needed.

Thanks again for your time to carefully review and consider the piece, and please let me know ASAP if you’d like to publish the attached version.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 17, 2021 9:15 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

**CAUTION:** This email originated from OUTSIDE of the SOS organization. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you are expecting the email and know that the content is safe. If you believe this to be a malicious or phishing email, please send this email as an attachment to [Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov](mailto:Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov).

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Hello Sam,

I’m open to publishing this piece but there are a couple of counter arguments that I’d like the op-ed to anticipate.

One is that there haven’t been specific allegations of irregularities in Texas. The Texas AG devoted considerable resources to look for fraud and found almost nothing, and nothing that would impact the integrity of the elections. Why should there be an audit here? The previous secretary of state said that the election in Texas was secure.

And why just those four counties? I think our readers will be quick to point out that the one example of an election-changing irregularity cited in the piece took place in a county that’s not being audited.

Best wishes,  
Raj

Raj Mankad  
Op-Ed Editor  
Houston Chronicle

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 16, 2021 10:05 AM  
**To:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Raj,

Just checking back in on this submission. Feel free to give me a call on my direct line if any questions – 512-463-6116.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Monday, November 15, 2021 3:12 PM  
**To:** 'Mankad, Raj' <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Got it – let me know if any questions in the meantime. Thanks!

Best,

-Sam

---

**From:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Monday, November 15, 2021 2:58 PM

**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

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Hello Sam,

I need a little more time to finish reviewing it.

Best wishes,

Raj

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Monday, November 15, 2021 12:10 PM

**To:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED] >

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Raj,

Circling back on the Secretary's op-ed submission. Have you/your team had an opportunity to review it yet? Let me know, thank you!

Best,

Sam Taylor

Texas Secretary of State's office

512-463-6116

---

**From:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED] >

**Sent:** Friday, November 12, 2021 9:01 AM

**To:** Sam Taylor

**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

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Good morning,

I've received the op-ed and will be back in touch early next week.

Best wishes,  
Raj

Raj Mankad  
Op-Ed Editor  
Houston Chronicle

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Friday, November 12, 2021 8:45 AM

**To:** Mankad, Raj <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] FW: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Morning Raj,

Passing this along to you because I received an out-of-office reply from Lisa.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Friday, November 12, 2021 8:42 AM

**To:** 'viewpoints@chron.com' <[viewpoints@chron.com](mailto:viewpoints@chron.com)>; 'outlook@chron.com' <[outlook@chron.com](mailto:outlook@chron.com)>

**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Morning,

On behalf of Texas Secretary of State John B. Scott, I am submitting the attached op-ed on our agency's full forensic audit of the 2020 Election. In the op-ed, Secretary Scott makes clear that the purpose of the audit is to restore voters' confidence in the integrity of our election system – which has been brought into question by critics on both sides of the political aisle since 2016. Contrary to narratives [published in the Chronicle](#) and elsewhere that Secretary Scott's previous

representation of former President Trump disqualifies him to run an independent and objective audit, the piece makes clear that our agency approaches this election audit with no preconceived notions regarding what the results and conclusions will be. Secretary Scott's legal career has been defined by following the evidence and the facts, which is exactly what the Texas Secretary of State's office is doing in undertaking the full forensic election audit in Harris, Dallas, Tarrant and Collin counties.

We'd like to submit this piece **exclusively** to the Houston Chronicle for publication. Please let me know if you are interested in publishing this piece early next week, as I understand we may have missed the deadline for a Sunday opinion publication.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



## Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State

Word Count: **733**

For the past several election cycles, voters have faced a crisis of confidence in the very system that underpins our representative form of government. Whether it was the specter of foreign interference in our elections or allegations of widespread mail ballot fraud during the pandemic, voters have been hit with a barrage of reasons to not trust the system.

And, unsurprisingly, it's starting to take its toll on their faith in the integrity of our elections.

According to a Pew poll released earlier this year, large shares of Americans of both parties believe there is cheating in elections, with [79% indicating illegal activity swings elections](#).

This is why, in order to restore voters' confidence in the strength and resilience of our election systems, Texas is conducting the largest and most comprehensive forensic audit of the 2020 General Election.

Over the next several months, the Texas Secretary of State's office will complete a top-to-bottom examination of election records in the **two largest counties with Democratic Commissioners Courts – Harris and Dallas – as well as the two largest counties with Republican Commissioners Courts – Tarrant and Collin – accounting for 35% of all votes cast in the historically high-turnout election in Texas last year. Commissioners Courts oversee each county's Elections Administrators, with whom our office will be working closely to obtain the materials and information we need to complete the full forensic audit.**

While manual recounts, election security assessments, and verification of voters' eligibility has already been conducted, the Texas Forensic Audit goes well beyond any other legislative election audit proposals or models in other states. Our audit examines, among other items: chain of custody records of voted ballots and voting equipment, audit logs from electronic voting systems, and materials from Early Voting Ballot Boards and Signature Verification Committees to ensure that mail ballots were not subjected to tampering and match the list of voters who requested them.

Importantly, this will be the only truly 'forensic' audit of the 2020 election, using analytical tools to examine the literal nuts and bolts of election administration to determine if any illegal activity may have occurred. Using the authority given to our agency by the Texas Legislature, we will conduct a manual recount of any and all precincts affected by election irregularities.

We will follow the facts, follow the evidence, and ensure any cases of illegal voting or election crimes are investigated by the proper law enforcement authorities, including the Texas Attorney General's office.

Texans should be encouraged by the dedicated county election officials who work cycle after cycle to conduct elections with the integrity and professionalism that voters deserve.

But voters also need peace of mind – they need assurances that Texas election law and federal laws protecting the rights of legal, eligible voters are being followed at every step in the process. When irregularities occur, no matter how inconsequential they may seem, it takes a concerted effort to restore faith in elections among voters.

For example, when a recount in a 2019 Midland ISD bond election showed that more than 800 ballots were unaccounted for, our office worked meticulously to retrace the steps of local election officials and [discovered a box of uncounted ballots](#). We were able to determine exactly how they were misplaced and implement targeted training to fix any deficiencies that led to the [election-changing irregularity](#).

Using those same methods and techniques, the Texas Secretary of State's office will endeavor to deliver the same peace of mind to Texas voters and ensure that any irregularities that compromise the integrity of our elections are uncovered, fixed, and not repeated in future elections.

We will work to determine why, for example, Harris County [recorded 1,884 more votes than voters who checked in across several drive-thru locations during the 2020 General Election](#).

Most importantly, we are conducting this forensic election audit without any preconceived notions about what we are going to find. We will separate evidence from hearsay, facts from rumors, and empirical data from unverifiable theories.

Ultimately, we want to make sure every single eligible Texas voter – regardless of political affiliation – knows that voting in our state is fair and secure, and that only legal votes are cast and counted in Texas elections.

Any crack in the confidence of our elections is a crack in the foundation of our democracy. We must restore confidence in the integrity of our elections before the entire structure crumbles under the weight of mistrust.

*John B. Scott is the 114<sup>th</sup> Texas Secretary of State.*

---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Friday, November 12, 2021 8:45 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Attachments:** John B. Scott\_OpEd Submission\_Houston Chronicle\_11.12.21.docx  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Morning Raj,

Passing this along to you because I received an out-of-office reply from Lisa.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 12, 2021 8:42 AM  
**To:** 'viewpoints@chron.com' <viewpoints@chron.com>; 'outlook@chron.com' <outlook@chron.com>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Morning,

On behalf of Texas Secretary of State John B. Scott, I am submitting the attached op-ed on our agency's full forensic audit of the 2020 Election. In the op-ed, Secretary Scott makes clear that the purpose of the audit is to restore voters' confidence in the integrity of our election system – which has been brought into question by critics on both sides of the political aisle since 2016. Contrary to narratives [published in the Chronicle](#) and elsewhere that Secretary Scott's previous representation of former President Trump disqualifies him to run an independent and objective audit, the piece makes clear that our agency approaches this election audit with no preconceived notions regarding what the results and

conclusions will be. Secretary Scott's legal career has been defined by following the evidence and the facts, which is exactly what the Texas Secretary of State's office is doing in undertaking the full forensic election audit in Harris, Dallas, Tarrant and Collin counties.

We'd like to submit this piece **exclusively** to the Houston Chronicle for publication. Please let me know if you are interested in publishing this piece early next week, as I understand we may have missed the deadline for a Sunday opinion publication.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

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## Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State

Word Count: **653**

For the past several election cycles, voters have faced a crisis of confidence in the very system that underpins our representative form of government. Whether it was the specter of foreign interference in our elections or allegations of widespread mail ballot fraud during the pandemic, voters have been hit with a barrage of reasons to not trust the system.

And, unsurprisingly, it's starting to take its toll on their faith in the integrity of our elections.

According to a Pew poll released earlier this year, large shares of Americans of both parties believe there is cheating in elections, with [79% indicating illegal activity swings elections](#).

This is why, in order to restore voters' confidence in the strength and resilience of our election systems, Texas is conducting the largest and most comprehensive forensic audit of the 2020 General Election.

Over the next several months, the Texas Secretary of State's office will complete a top-to-bottom examination of election records in four of Texas' largest counties – Harris, Dallas, Tarrant and Collin – accounting for 35% of all votes cast in the historically high-turnout election in Texas last year.

While manual recounts, election security assessments, and verification of voters' eligibility has already been conducted, the Texas Forensic Audit goes well beyond any other legislative election audit proposals or models in other states. Our audit examines, among other items: chain of custody records of voted ballots and voting equipment, audit logs from electronic voting systems, and materials from Early Voting Ballot Boards and Signature Verification Committees to ensure that mail ballots were not subjected to tampering and match the list of voters who requested them.

Importantly, this will be the only truly 'forensic' audit of the 2020 election, using analytical tools to examine the literal nuts and bolts of election administration to determine if any illegal activity may have occurred. Using the authority given to our agency by the Texas Legislature, we will conduct a manual recount of any and all precincts affected by election irregularities.

We will follow the facts, follow the evidence, and ensure any cases of illegal voting or election crimes are investigated by the proper law enforcement authorities, including the Texas Attorney General's office.

Texans should be encouraged by the dedicated county election officials who work cycle after cycle to conduct elections with the integrity and professionalism that voters deserve.

But voters also need peace of mind – they need assurances that Texas election law and federal laws protecting the rights of legal, eligible voters are being followed at every step in the process. When irregularities occur, no matter how inconsequential they may seem, it takes a concerted effort to restore faith in elections among voters.

For example, when [a box of uncounted ballots was found in a Midland ISD bond election in 2019](#), our office moved swiftly to retrace the paths of those ballots to find out exactly how they were misplaced, determine if any illegal activity had occurred, and identify and fix any deficiencies that led to the [election-changing irregularity](#).

Using those same methods and techniques, the Texas Secretary of State's office will endeavor to deliver the same peace of mind to Texas voters and ensure that any irregularities that compromise the integrity of our elections are uncovered, fixed, and not repeated in future elections.

Most importantly, we are conducting this forensic election audit without any preconceived notions about what we are going to find. We will separate evidence from hearsay, facts from rumors, and empirical data from unverifiable theories.

Ultimately, we want to make sure every single eligible Texas voter – regardless of political affiliation – knows that voting in our state is fair and secure, and that only legal votes are cast and counted in Texas elections.

Any crack in the confidence of our elections is a crack in the foundation of our democracy. We must restore confidence in the integrity of our elections before the entire structure crumbles under the weight of mistrust.

*John B. Scott is the 114<sup>th</sup> Texas Secretary of State.*

---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 16, 2021 4:35 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Opinion/Commentary Submission: Texas Secretary of State John B. Scott: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Attachments:** John B. Scott\_OpEd Submission\_Dallas Morning News\_11.16.21.docx  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Elizabeth,

I send the below and attached op-ed submission from Texas Secretary of State John Scott to the viewpoints inbox, however wanted to be sure to bring it to your personal attention as well. I hope you and your team would consider reviewing this submission from the current Secretary regarding the full forensic audit of the 2020 election.

Thanks for your consideration and feel free to give me a call if you have any questions.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 16, 2021 4:27 PM  
**To:** 'viewpoints@dallasnews.com' <viewpoints@dallasnews.com>  
**Cc:** 'editorialboard@dallasnews.com' <editorialboard@dallasnews.com>  
**Subject:** Opinion/Commentary Submission: Texas Secretary of State John B. Scott: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Afternoon,

On behalf of Texas Secretary of State John Scott, I am submitting the attached op-ed (also included below) on Texas' full forensic election audit, which is being conducted in four major Texas counties, including in your readership area of Dallas, Collin and Tarrant counties.

Please confirm receipt and let me know if you are interested in publishing the piece from Secretary Scott, and I'm happy to answer any questions you may have in the meantime.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



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## **Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections**

John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State

Word Count: **653**

For the past several election cycles, voters have faced a crisis of confidence in the very system that underpins our representative form of government. Whether it was the specter of foreign interference in our elections or allegations of widespread mail ballot fraud during the pandemic, voters have been hit with a barrage of reasons to not trust the system.

And, unsurprisingly, it's starting to take its toll on their faith in the integrity of our elections.

According to a Pew poll released earlier this year, large shares of Americans of both parties believe there is cheating in elections, with [79% indicating illegal activity swings elections](#).

This is why, in order to restore voters' confidence in the strength and resilience of our election systems, Texas is conducting the largest and most comprehensive forensic audit of the 2020 General Election.

Over the next several months, the Texas Secretary of State's office will complete a top-to-bottom examination of election records in four of Texas' largest counties – Harris, Dallas, Tarrant and Collin – accounting for 35% of all votes cast in the historically high-turnout election in Texas last year.

While manual recounts, election security assessments, and verification of voters' eligibility has already been conducted, the Texas Forensic Audit goes well beyond any other legislative election audit proposals or models in other states. Our audit examines, among other items: chain of custody records of voted ballots and voting equipment, audit logs from electronic voting systems, and materials from Early Voting Ballot Boards and Signature Verification Committees to ensure that mail ballots were not subjected to tampering and match the list of voters who requested them.

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have occurred. Using the authority given to our agency by the Texas Legislature, we will conduct a manual recount of any and all precincts affected by election irregularities.

We will follow the facts, follow the evidence, and ensure any cases of illegal voting or election crimes are investigated by the proper law enforcement authorities, including the Texas Attorney General's office.

Texans should be encouraged by the dedicated county election officials who work cycle after cycle to conduct elections with the integrity and professionalism that voters deserve.

But voters also need peace of mind – they need assurances that Texas election law and federal laws protecting the rights of legal, eligible voters are being followed at every step in the process. When irregularities occur, no matter how inconsequential they may seem, it takes a concerted effort to restore faith in elections among voters.

For example, when [a box of uncounted ballots was found in a Midland ISD bond election in 2019](#), our office moved swiftly to retrace the paths of those ballots to find out exactly how they were misplaced, determine if any illegal activity had occurred, and identify and fix any deficiencies that led to the [election-changing irregularity](#).

Using those same methods and techniques, the Texas Secretary of State's office will endeavor to deliver the same peace of mind to Texas voters and ensure that any irregularities that compromise the integrity of our elections are uncovered, fixed, and not repeated in future elections.

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## Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State

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While manual recounts, election security assessments, and verification of voters' eligibility has already been conducted, the Texas Forensic Audit goes well beyond any other legislative election audit proposals or models in other states. Our audit examines, among other items: chain of custody records of voted ballots and voting equipment, audit logs from electronic voting systems, and materials from Early Voting Ballot Boards and Signature Verification Committees to ensure that mail ballots were not subjected to tampering and match the list of voters who requested them.

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*John B. Scott is the 114<sup>th</sup> Texas Secretary of State.*

---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Friday, November 12, 2021 8:42 AM  
**To:** 'viewpoints@chron.com'; 'outlook@chron.com'  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Attachments:** John B. Scott\_OpEd Submission\_Houston Chronicle\_11.12.21.docx  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Morning,

On behalf of Texas Secretary of State John B. Scott, I am submitting the attached op-ed on our agency's full forensic audit of the 2020 Election. In the op-ed, Secretary Scott makes clear that the purpose of the audit is to restore voters' confidence in the integrity of our election system – which has been brought into question by critics on both sides of the political aisle since 2016. Contrary to narratives [published in the Chronicle](#) and elsewhere that Secretary Scott's previous representation of former President Trump disqualifies him to run an independent and objective audit, the piece makes clear that our agency approaches this election audit with no preconceived notions regarding what the results and conclusions will be. Secretary Scott's legal career has been defined by following the evidence and the facts, which is exactly what the Texas Secretary of State's office is doing in undertaking the full forensic election audit in Harris, Dallas, Tarrant and Collin counties.

We'd like to submit this piece **exclusively** to the Houston Chronicle for publication. Please let me know if you are interested in publishing this piece early next week, as I understand we may have missed the deadline for a Sunday opinion publication.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



## Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State

Word Count: **653**

For the past several election cycles, voters have faced a crisis of confidence in the very system that underpins our representative form of government. Whether it was the specter of foreign interference in our elections or allegations of widespread mail ballot fraud during the pandemic, voters have been hit with a barrage of reasons to not trust the system.

And, unsurprisingly, it's starting to take its toll on their faith in the integrity of our elections.

According to a Pew poll released earlier this year, large shares of Americans of both parties believe there is cheating in elections, with [79% indicating illegal activity swings elections](#).

This is why, in order to restore voters' confidence in the strength and resilience of our election systems, Texas is conducting the largest and most comprehensive forensic audit of the 2020 General Election.

Over the next several months, the Texas Secretary of State's office will complete a top-to-bottom examination of election records in four of Texas' largest counties – Harris, Dallas, Tarrant and Collin – accounting for 35% of all votes cast in the historically high-turnout election in Texas last year.

While manual recounts, election security assessments, and verification of voters' eligibility has already been conducted, the Texas Forensic Audit goes well beyond any other legislative election audit proposals or models in other states. Our audit examines, among other items: chain of custody records of voted ballots and voting equipment, audit logs from electronic voting systems, and materials from Early Voting Ballot Boards and Signature Verification Committees to ensure that mail ballots were not subjected to tampering and match the list of voters who requested them.

Importantly, this will be the only truly 'forensic' audit of the 2020 election, using analytical tools to examine the literal nuts and bolts of election administration to determine if any illegal activity may have occurred. Using the authority given to our agency by the Texas Legislature, we will conduct a manual recount of any and all precincts affected by election irregularities.

We will follow the facts, follow the evidence, and ensure any cases of illegal voting or election crimes are investigated by the proper law enforcement authorities, including the Texas Attorney General's office.

Texans should be encouraged by the dedicated county election officials who work cycle after cycle to conduct elections with the integrity and professionalism that voters deserve.

But voters also need peace of mind – they need assurances that Texas election law and federal laws protecting the rights of legal, eligible voters are being followed at every step in the process. When irregularities occur, no matter how inconsequential they may seem, it takes a concerted effort to restore faith in elections among voters.

For example, when [a box of uncounted ballots was found in a Midland ISD bond election in 2019](#), our office moved swiftly to retrace the paths of those ballots to find out exactly how they were misplaced, determine if any illegal activity had occurred, and identify and fix any deficiencies that led to the [election-changing irregularity](#).

Using those same methods and techniques, the Texas Secretary of State's office will endeavor to deliver the same peace of mind to Texas voters and ensure that any irregularities that compromise the integrity of our elections are uncovered, fixed, and not repeated in future elections.

Most importantly, we are conducting this forensic election audit without any preconceived notions about what we are going to find. We will separate evidence from hearsay, facts from rumors, and empirical data from unverifiable theories.

Ultimately, we want to make sure every single eligible Texas voter – regardless of political affiliation – knows that voting in our state is fair and secure, and that only legal votes are cast and counted in Texas elections.

Any crack in the confidence of our elections is a crack in the foundation of our democracy. We must restore confidence in the integrity of our elections before the entire structure crumbles under the weight of mistrust.

*John B. Scott is the 114<sup>th</sup> Texas Secretary of State.*

---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 16, 2021 4:27 PM  
**To:** 'viewpoints@dallasnews.com'  
**Cc:** 'editorialboard@dallasnews.com'  
**Subject:** Opinion/Commentary Submission: Texas Secretary of State John B. Scott: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Attachments:** John B. Scott\_OpEd Submission\_Dallas Morning News\_11.16.21.docx  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Afternoon,

On behalf of Texas Secretary of State John Scott, I am submitting the attached op-ed (also included below) on Texas' full forensic election audit, which is being conducted in four major Texas counties, including in your readership area of Dallas, Collin and Tarrant counties.

Please confirm receipt and let me know if you are interested in publishing the piece from Secretary Scott, and I'm happy to answer any questions you may have in the meantime.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



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John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State

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*John B. Scott is the 114<sup>th</sup> Texas Secretary of State.*

---

**From:** Mekelburg, Madlin [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 11:46 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: Texas Secretary of State's Office Announces Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election in Four Texas Counties

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Got it. To confirm, is that a review of voters who were registered and voted during the last election? Or just registered voters?

Can you share the state statute that specifically addresses this review? I'd love to take a look.

Thanks!

Madlin

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 11:40 AM  
**To:** Mekelburg, Madlin [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: Texas Secretary of State's Office Announces Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election in Four Texas Counties

Madlin,

Texas counties receive lists of potentially illegally registered voters for their voter registrars to investigate and cancel their registration if they do not present proof of eligibility. This is required by both federal and state law and the counties are familiar with this process.

That is the part of the audit that is already underway. More details to come on additional elements of the audit in the near future.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Mekelburg, Madlin [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 11:04 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: Texas Secretary of State's Office Announces Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election in Four Texas Counties

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To clarify...the audit referenced in this press release is an effort to "identify and remove illegally registered voters"?

Why is that happening now, almost a year after the election? Is that standard practice?

All of my other questions are still relevant here, including who is conducting this review, how much it will cost and whether lawmakers have indeed agreed to pay for the process. Is this something the SOS does after every single election? How does the process actually work?

Thanks,

Madlin

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 11:00 AM  
**To:** Mekelburg, Madlin [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** RE: Texas Secretary of State's Office Announces Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election in Four Texas Counties

Hi Madlin,

Election audits have been underway for several months to identify and remove illegally registered voters, and we refer these cases to the Attorney General's office.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Mekelburg, Madlin <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 10:59 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Texas Secretary of State's Office Announces Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election in Four Texas Counties

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Hi Sam —

I wanted to follow up on these questions and add a few more to the list:

- When was the audit started?
- What will the audit process look like?
- Has the SOS submitted an appropriations request to the lege for the audit? Can I see a copy?
- When will the audit be completed?
- Has the SOS ever conducted a similar audit? Or any audit of this scale?
- Which law allows the SOS to conduct a "forensic audit" of election results?

Thanks,

Madlin

---

**From:** Mekelburg, Madlin <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 23, 2021 9:41 PM  
**To:** [smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov) <[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Fw: Texas Secretary of State's Office Announces Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election in Four Texas Counties

Hey Sam,

Hope you're well. I've got a few questions for you on this.

- Why was this audit started?
- Who will conduct this audit?
- How were these counties selected?
- How will the results be distributed?
- Has the SOS office been in touch with Gov. Abbott about this decision?
- How much state funding will be needed to complete the process?

Thanks,

Madlin

---

**From:** Texas Secretary of State Press Office <[TXSoSPress@public.govdelivery.com](mailto:TXSoSPress@public.govdelivery.com)>

**Sent:** Thursday, September 23, 2021 7:21 PM

**To:** Mekelburg, Madlin [REDACTED] >

**Subject:** Texas Secretary of State's Office Announces Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election in Four Texas Counties



## Texas Secretary of State

### For Immediate Distribution

September 23, 2021

Contact: Sam Taylor  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
(512) 463-6116

### Texas Secretary of State's Office Announces Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election in Four Texas Counties

AUSTIN - Under existing Texas laws, the Secretary of State has the authority to conduct a full and comprehensive forensic audit of any election and has already begun the process in Texas' two largest Democrat counties and two largest Republican counties—Dallas, Harris, Tarrant, and Collin—for the 2020 election. We anticipate the Legislature will provide funds for this purpose.

###

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**From:** Mekelburg, Madlin <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 11:09 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: Texas Secretary of State's Office Announces Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election in Four Texas Counties

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Also: Have any cases been referred to the AG's office so far?

---

**From:** Mekelburg, Madlin <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 11:04 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Texas Secretary of State's Office Announces Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election in Four Texas Counties

To clarify...the audit referenced in this press release is an effort to "identify and remove illegally registered voters"?

Why is that happening now, almost a year after the election? Is that standard practice?

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Thanks,

Madlin

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**From:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 11:00 AM  
**To:** Mekelburg, Madlin <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** RE: Texas Secretary of State's Office Announces Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election in Four Texas Counties

Hi Madlin,

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Best,

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Assistant Secretary of State for Communications

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

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**From:** Mekelburg, Madlin <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 10:59 AM

**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** Re: Texas Secretary of State's Office Announces Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election in Four Texas Counties

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**Sent:** Thursday, September 23, 2021 9:41 PM

**To:** [smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov) <[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** Fw: Texas Secretary of State's Office Announces Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election in Four Texas Counties

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**Sent:** Thursday, September 23, 2021 7:21 PM

**To:** Mekelburg, Madlin <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** Texas Secretary of State's Office Announces Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election in Four Texas Counties



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September 23, 2021

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**From:** Clayton Neville <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 9:31 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: [EXT] RE: QUESTION-WBAP/KLIF Radio Dallas

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Thanks!

I've spoken with County Judges in Dallas and Tarrant Counties who said they weren't aware of the audit until last week. Is this typical? Is there a need to notify the counties when the audit starts? Could you explain a bit about that process?

**Clayton Neville**  
**Reporter/Anchor WBAP/KLIF**  
**Westwood One News Correspondent**  
**Cumulus Radio Station Group | Dallas / Fort Worth**  
**O:** 214.765.5296  
**M:** 469.487.6772

3090 Olive Street, Suite 400, Dallas, TX 75219  
Clayton.Neville@cumulus.com  
[cumulusmedia.com](http://cumulusmedia.com)

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 9:18 AM  
**To:** Clayton Neville <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** [EXT] RE: QUESTION-WBAP/KLIF Radio Dallas

Hi Clayton,

Election audits have been underway for several months to identify and remove illegally registered voters, and we refer these cases to the Attorney General's office.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**  
*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



**From:** Clayton Neville <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 8:44 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** QUESTION-WBAP/KLIF Radio Dallas

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Sam,  
Could you send me a statement or update regarding the status of the election audit? When it began where it currently stands?

**Clayton Neville**  
**Reporter/Anchor WBAP/KLIF**  
**Westwood One News Correspondent**  
**Cumulus Radio Station Group | Dallas / Fort Worth**  
**O: 214.765.5296**  
**M: 469.487.6772**

3090 Olive Street, Suite 400, Dallas, TX 75219

[REDACTED]

[cumulusmedia.com](http://cumulusmedia.com)

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**From:** Wiersema, Alisa [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 4:28 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: ABC News Question

**CAUTION:** This email originated from OUTSIDE of the SOS organization. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you are expecting the email and know that the content is safe. If you believe this to be a malicious or phishing email, please send this email as an attachment to [Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov](mailto:Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov).

Great, got it, thank you!

Alisa Wiersema  
ABC News | Politics Producer  
O: 202.222.7039 | C: 202.812.7161  
@alisawiersema

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 5:26 PM  
**To:** Wiersema, Alisa [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** Re: ABC News Question

No problem — yes that was me!

Also another update: Tarrant County has also responded to our audit survey. That leaves Dallas and Harris that still need to respond, as of 4:30pm CT this afternoon.

Best,

-Sam

---

**From:** Wiersema, Alisa <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 3:49:26 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: ABC News Question

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Thank you, Sam.

And apologies if I missed you-- I was in a meeting and saw a missed call from an Austin area code afterwards. I'm sure we will be in touch more. In the meantime, enjoy the holiday season!

Alisa Wiersema  
ABC News | Politics Producer  
O: 202.222.7039 | C: 202.812.7161  
@alisawiersema

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 4:08 PM  
**To:** Wiersema, Alisa [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** RE: ABC News Question

Hi Alisa,

I can confirm that Collin County submitted its responses to our audit survey earlier this afternoon. Secretary Scott personally called to thank Collin County Elections Administrator Bruce Sherbet for his prompt responses to the audit survey, which will help our office focus on the areas we need to examine for the in-person visits.

We expect and encourage Tarrant, Dallas and Harris counties to respond to the survey in a timely manner.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Wiersema, Alisa [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 2:17 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: ABC News Question

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Thank you, Sam!

Just a quick follow up -- which two counties do you expect to respond today? Off the record is fine, too, if you prefer.

Alisa Wiersema  
ABC News | Politics Producer  
O: 202.222.7039 | C: 202.812.7161  
@alisawiersema

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 3:08 PM

**To:** Wiersema, Alisa [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: ABC News Question

Hi Alisa,

Thanks for reaching out – just to be clear, we asked that the county election officials provide us responses to the questions in the initial audit survey (the bolded, bulleted list included in the [cover letter of the document request](#)) by today. We expect at least two counties will be providing us the information requested for the initial survey by today's deadline, and look forward to hearing from all four counties so that our office can prepare for the on-site visits next year. The on-site visits will cover the remaining documents and records listed in the [comprehensive records examination portion of the request](#).

Hope this helps – and Merry Christmas to you and your family as well!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Wiersema, Alisa [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 1:42 PM

**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** ABC News Question

**CAUTION:** This email originated from OUTSIDE of the SOS organization. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you are expecting the email and know that the content is safe. If you believe this to be a malicious or phishing email, please send this email as an attachment to [Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov](mailto:Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov).

Good afternoon, Sam,

I hope you and yours are looking forward to a Merry Christmas in the coming days!

I want to follow up on whether all four counties that were required to turn over information for the next phase of the 2020 election audit had already done so, or whether the timeline was extended in any way?

Thank you for your help.

Best,  
Alisa

Alisa Wiersema  
ABC News | Politics Producer  
O: 202.222.7039 | C: 202.812.7161  
@alisawiersema

---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 4:01 PM  
**To:** 'Wiersema, Alisa'  
**Subject:** RE: ABC News Question

Yes that was me – let me know if you need anything else!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Wiersema, Alisa [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 3:49 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: ABC News Question

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Thank you, Sam.

And apologies if I missed you-- I was in a meeting and saw a missed call from an Austin area code afterwards. I'm sure we will be in touch more. In the meantime, enjoy the holiday season!

Alisa Wiersema  
ABC News | Politics Producer  
O: 202.222.7039 | C: 202.812.7161  
[@alisawiersema](https://twitter.com/alisawiersema)

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 4:08 PM  
**To:** Wiersema, Alisa <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** RE: ABC News Question

Hi Alisa,

I can confirm that Collin County submitted its responses to our audit survey earlier this afternoon. Secretary Scott personally called to thank Collin County Elections Administrator Bruce Sherbet for his prompt responses to the audit survey, which will help our office focus on the areas we need to examine for the in-person visits.

We expect and encourage Tarrant, Dallas and Harris counties to respond to the survey in a timely manner.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

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[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Wiersema, Alisa [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 2:17 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: ABC News Question

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Thank you, Sam!

Just a quick follow up -- which two counties do you expect to respond today? Off the record is fine, too, if you prefer.

Alisa Wiersema  
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[@alisawiersema](https://twitter.com/alisawiersema)

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**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 3:08 PM  
**To:** Wiersema, Alisa [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** RE: ABC News Question

Hi Alisa,

Thanks for reaching out – just to be clear, we asked that the county election officials provide us responses to the questions in the initial audit survey (the bolded, bulleted list included in the [cover letter of the document request](#)) by today. We expect at least two counties will be providing us the information requested for the initial survey by today's deadline, and look forward to hearing from all four counties so that our office can prepare for the on-site visits next year. The on-site visits will cover the remaining documents and records listed in the [comprehensive records examination portion of the request](#).

Hope this helps – and Merry Christmas to you and your family as well!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Wiersema, Alisa <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 1:42 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** ABC News Question

**CAUTION:** This email originated from OUTSIDE of the SOS organization. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you are expecting the email and know that the content is safe. If you believe this to be a malicious or phishing email, please send this email as an attachment to [Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov](mailto:Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov).

Good afternoon, Sam,

I hope you and yours are looking forward to a Merry Christmas in the coming days!

I want to follow up on whether all four counties that were required to turn over information for the next phase of the 2020 election audit had already done so, or whether the timeline was extended in any way?

Thank you for your help.

Best,  
Alisa

Alisa Wiersema

ABC News | Politics Producer

O: 202.222.7039 | C: 202.812.7161

@alisawiersema



---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 22, 2021 8:02 AM  
**To:** Wiersema, Alisa  
**Subject:** Re: ABC News Question

Harris County responded by 10:00 p.m. last night. All 4 counties are in.

Best,

-Sam

---

**From:** Wiersema, Alisa [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 8:27:55 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: ABC News Question

**CAUTION:** This email originated from OUTSIDE of the SOS organization. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you are expecting the email and know that the content is safe. If you believe this to be a malicious or phishing email, please send this email as an attachment to [Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov](mailto:Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov).

Got it, thank you!

Alisa Wiersema  
ABC News | Politics Producer  
O: 202.222.7039 | C: 202.812.7161  
@alisawiersema

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 8:35:28 PM  
**To:** Wiersema, Alisa [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: ABC News Question

Additional update: Dallas County has also responded to our audit survey request. That leaves Harris County which has yet to respond as of 7:15 pm Today.

Best,

-Sam

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 4:26:38 PM  
**To:** Wiersema, Alisa [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** Re: ABC News Question

No problem — yes that was me!

Also another update: Tarrant County has also responded to our audit survey. That leaves Dallas and Harris that still need to respond, as of 4:30pm CT this afternoon.

Best,

-Sam

---

**From:** Wiersema, Alisa [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 3:49:26 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: ABC News Question

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Thank you, Sam.

And apologies if I missed you-- I was in a meeting and saw a missed call from an Austin area code afterwards. I'm sure we will be in touch more. In the meantime, enjoy the holiday season!

Alisa Wiersema  
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O: 202.222.7039 | C: 202.812.7161  
@alisawiersema

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**To:** Wiersema, Alisa [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** RE: ABC News Question

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We expect and encourage Tarrant, Dallas and Harris counties to respond to the survey in a timely manner.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**  
*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Wiersema, Alisa <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 2:17 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: ABC News Question

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Thank you, Sam!

Just a quick follow up -- which two counties do you expect to respond today? Off the record is fine, too, if you prefer.

Alisa Wiersema  
ABC News | Politics Producer  
O: 202.222.7039 | C: 202.812.7161  
@alisawiersema

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 3:08 PM  
**To:** Wiersema, Alisa <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** RE: ABC News Question

Hi Alisa,

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Hope this helps – and Merry Christmas to you and your family as well!

Best,

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[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Wiersema, Alisa <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 1:42 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** ABC News Question

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Good afternoon, Sam,

I hope you and yours are looking forward to a Merry Christmas in the coming days!

I want to follow up on whether all four counties that were required to turn over information for the next phase of the 2020 election audit had already done so, or whether the timeline was extended in any way?

Thank you for your help.

Best,  
Alisa

Alisa Wiersema  
ABC News | Politics Producer  
O: 202.222.7039 | C: 202.812.7161  
[@alisawiersema](https://twitter.com/alisawiersema)

---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Monday, September 27, 2021 9:35 AM  
**To:** 'Patrick Svitek'  
**Subject:** RE: Audit question

Morning Patrick,

Election audits have been underway for several months to identify and remove illegally registered voters, and we refer these cases to the Attorney General's office.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

Assistant Secretary of State for Communications  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Patrick Svitek <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 26, 2021 12:36 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** Audit question

**CAUTION:** This email originated from OUTSIDE of the SOS organization. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you are expecting the email and know that the content is safe. If you believe this to be a malicious or phishing email, please send this email as an attachment to [Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov](mailto:Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov).

Hey Sam, Abbott said on TV this morning that the audit that was announced Thursday "actually began months ago" (full quote below). How do we square that with the audit announcement? Thanks.

*"These audits that the state of Texas is doing, they actually began months ago because the secretary of state of Texas has an obligation to make sure that we do conduct audits in the state of Texas and they have to be done in a way before any evidence of about it would be eliminated, which would be next September."*



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**Patrick Svitek**

Primary political correspondent

919 Congress Ave., Sixth Floor  
Austin, TX 78701  
[www.texastribune.org](http://www.texastribune.org)

**M** (260) 615-7351 **D** (512) 716-8623 **F** (512) 716-8601  
[@PatrickSvitek](https://twitter.com/PatrickSvitek)

**From:** [Sam Taylor](#)  
**To:** "Elvi, Zel"  
**Cc:** [@CND National Desk Staff](#)  
**Subject:** RE: CBS News Inquiry  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 7:31:55 AM  
**Attachments:** image001.png

---

Hi Zel,

A copy of the press release from last night is available on our web site here:  
<https://www.sos.texas.gov/about/newsreleases/2021/092321.shtml>

Have added you to our press release list.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Elvi, Zel [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 23, 2021 8:50 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Cc:** [@CND National Desk Staff](#) <[CNDNationalStaff@cbs.com](mailto:CNDNationalStaff@cbs.com)>  
**Subject:** CBS News Inquiry

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Hello Sam,

Reaching out from CBS News. We're following a report that the Texas Secretary of State's Office announced today it will conduct an "audit" for the 2020 election. Can you confirm? Is there a statement you can share?

**Please reply all.**

Thanks,

Zel Elvi  
CBS News

---

**From:** Murray, Sara [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 13, 2022 3:50 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: CNN follow up

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Hi Sam,

Thanks very much for checking and passing on these links. I appreciate it! If the Secretary is interested in doing an interview on the continuing concerns about the 2020 election, we will be in Austin on Monday for some other interviews. If he has any availability we would love to chat with him. Thanks again!

Best,  
Sara Murray  
CNN  
C: 202-340-7167

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Date:** Thursday, January 13, 2022 at 4:15 PM  
**To:** Sara Murray [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: CNN follow up

Hi Sara,

Thanks for reaching out. Just checked with the Deputy Secretary, the Secretary's scheduler and our executive assistants and we have not received a request to meet with Douglas Frank as of today, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

VoteBeat did some reporting at the end of last year on a presentation that inspired the Potter County GOP (Amarillo, Texas-area) to try to make the move to all hand-marked paper ballots for the March 1<sup>st</sup> Republican Primary there: <https://www.votebeat.org/2021/12/13/22832485/jeff-zink-election-integrity-symposium-hand-counted-ballots-potter-county>

Ultimately, the Potter County GOP abandoned that plan after failing to get a resolution through the Commissioner's Court to move the entire county to all-paper elections: <https://www.votebeat.org/2021/12/30/22860724/potter-county-2022-primary-republican-party-dan-rogers>

On the audit front, I can say that from our office's perspective that our audit is [examining a wide range of documents – including logic and accuracy test records for voting machines, chain of custody records, and more](#) – that would absolutely uncover any attempts to alter election results on a such a scale that is being alleged.

Hope this helps, let me know if you need anything else.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**  
*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Murray, Sara <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 13, 2022 2:35 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** CNN follow up

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Thanks for your help. As I mentioned on the phone, I wanted to see if Douglas Frank has requested a meeting or previously met with Secretary Scott. He isn't affiliated with a group, although he is an associate of Mike Lindell's. Frank has a couple upcoming events in Texas and previously appeared at a ["Women for Freedom" event](#) in Dallas. He has said he uncovered an algorithm that proves there was election fraud in all 50 states. Anyway, if you wouldn't mind checking, I would appreciate it! And I'd love to take a look at the Potter County paper ballot push as well. Thanks very much!

Best,  
Sara Murray  
CNN  
C: 202-340-7167

---

**From:** Young, Steven [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 10:59 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** RE: Comprehensive Forensic Audit

**CAUTION:** This email originated from OUTSIDE of the SOS organization. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you are expecting the email and know that the content is safe. If you believe this to be a malicious or phishing email, please send this email as an attachment to [Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov](mailto:Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov).

I am specifically referring to more information about the “comprehensive forensic audit” of the 4 counties that was announced last week. Steve.

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 10:41 AM  
**To:** Young, Steven <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** RE: Comprehensive Forensic Audit

Hi Steven,

Election audits have been underway for several months to identify and remove illegally registered voters, and we refer these cases to the Attorney General’s office.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Young, Steven [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 9:52 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Comprehensive Forensic Audit

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When will some more details will be released about this? What exactly “has already begun” and who is involved? Will any other counties be added? How long this take? How much will it cost? Thanks. Steve Young. Fox4 News. Dallas

## Texas Secretary of State's Office Announces Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election in Four Texas Counties

September 23, 2021  
Contact: [Sam Taylor](#)  
512-463-6116

**AUSTIN** - Under existing Texas laws, the Secretary of State has the authority to conduct a full and comprehensive forensic audit of any election and has already begun the process in Texas’ two largest Democrat counties and two largest Republican counties—Dallas, Harris, Tarrant, and Collin—for the 2020 election. We anticipate the Legislature will provide funds for this purpose.

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**From:** [Sam Taylor](#)  
**To:** "Dearman, Eleanor"  
**Subject:** RE: Election Audit  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 7:29:05 AM  
**Attachments:** image001.png

---

Hi Eleanor,

Apologies for the delay – I've added you to our press release list, and last night's release is available on our web site here: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/about/newsreleases/2021/092321.shtml>

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Dearman, Eleanor [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 23, 2021 8:56 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Election Audit

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Also, what triggered this audit? Is there something specific that's being investigated?

Thank you!  
Eleanor

On Thu, Sep 23, 2021 at 8:31 PM Dearman, Eleanor <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Hi Sam,

Would I be able to get a copy of the news release related to the election audit in Tarrant and

three other counties? Also would I be able to get on the mailing list? I was on it in the past but didn't get tonight's release.

Also does the office have any additional comment on why the election audit is being requested now, how the counties were selected and what the forensic audit will entail? Please let me know if anyone is available for an interview.

Thank you,  
Eleanor

--

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Star-Telegram**  
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### Eleanor Dearman

State Government Reporter

P 817-807-3200

E [REDACTED]

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**Fort Worth  
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### Eleanor Dearman

State Government Reporter

P 817-807-3200

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---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 2:31 PM  
**To:** 'Daniel Friend'  
**Subject:** RE: Election Audit Division Funding  
**Attachments:** Leadership Letter\_11.19.21.pdf; Gov. Abbott Letter to Legislative Leadership 11.18.21.pdf

Hi Daniel,

Yes – I've attached both letters here and you can attribute the following statement to me/the Texas Secretary of State's office:

**“We thank Governor Abbott, Lieutenant Governor Patrick, Speaker Phelan, Senator Nelson and Representative Bonnen for approving critical funds to support the Texas Secretary of State’s Forensic Audit Division. In order to complete our ongoing full forensic audit of the 2020 General Election and conduct subsequent audits as required by SB 1, our agency will be using these funds to dedicate additional staff to oversee audit activities, including: verifying counties’ removal of ineligible voters from the rolls, meticulously reviewing each county’s election materials for our comprehensive document examination, and ensuring compliance with state and federal election laws. These resources are essential for maintaining the integrity of Texas elections and identifying issues that must be fixed in order to restore voters’ confidence in our state’s election systems.”**

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Daniel Friend [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 1:28 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** Election Audit Division Funding

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Hi Sam,

Are you able to provide any additional background information and/or statement regarding Rep. Greg Bonnen's [announcement](#) that he signed approval of \$4 million of funding for forensic election audits?

Additionally, do you know if it would be possible to obtain copies of the letters sent regarding the subject between Gov. Abbott and lawmakers that was [reported](#) by the *Dallas Morning News*?

If you're able to respond this afternoon, that would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks,  
Daniel

--

**Daniel Friend**  
Reporter, [The Texan](#)  
C: (918) 316-2703



## LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

Robert E. Johnson Bldg.  
1501 N. Congress Ave. - 5th Floor  
Austin, TX 78701

512/463-1200  
Fax: 512/475-2902  
<http://www.lbb.state.tx.us>

November 19, 2021

The Honorable Greg Abbott  
Governor of the State of Texas  
Capitol Building  
Room 2S.1  
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Governor Abbott,

Pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 317.002, this budget execution order is proposed for the following action affecting items of appropriation made by Senate Bill No. 1, General Appropriations Act, Acts of the 87th Legislature, Regular Session, 2021.

There are not sufficient funds appropriated to the Secretary of State to ensure election integrity for the 2022-2023 state fiscal biennium and this insufficiency of funds creates an emergency. We therefore propose that:

From appropriations made to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice by Senate Bill No. 1, General Appropriations Act, Acts of the 87th Legislature, Regular Session, 2021, the amount of \$4,000,000 in General Revenue appropriated for fiscal year 2023 in Strategy C.1.1. Correctional Security Operations, shall be transferred to the Secretary of State for use during the 2022-2023 state fiscal biennium, for the purpose of ensuring election integrity.

Respectfully,

Handwritten signature of Dan Patrick in blue ink.

Dan Patrick  
Lieutenant Governor  
Joint Chair, Legislative Budget Board

Handwritten signature of Dade Phelan in black ink.

Dade Phelan  
Speaker of the House  
Joint Chair, Legislative Budget Board

Handwritten signature of Jane Nelson in black ink.

Jane Nelson  
Chair, Senate Finance Committee

Handwritten signature of Greg Bonnen in black ink.

Greg Bonnen  
Chair, House Appropriations Committee



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

November 18, 2021

The Honorable Dan Patrick  
Lieutenant Governor of Texas  
P.O. Box 2910  
Austin, Texas 78711

The Honorable Dade Phelan  
Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 2910  
Austin, Texas 78768

Dear Governor Patrick and Speaker Phelan,

Election integrity is a core tenet of any healthy and successful democracy. The people of Texas must have trust and confidence in the election process as well as in the outcomes of our elections.

The Legislature clearly showed a strong commitment to this principle when it passed Senate Bill 1 during the Second Called Session of the 87<sup>th</sup> Legislature, which I signed into law. This law makes it easier to vote—and harder to cheat—in Texas elections by expanding voting hours while also taking steps to stop voter fraud.

Importantly, the law includes county audits to be carried out by the Texas Secretary of State (SOS). Currently, the SOS is conducting the largest forensic audit in the country.

As we expand voting opportunities in Texas, we must also ensure the integrity of those elections. To do that, the SOS needs resources to establish an Election Audit Division.

However, the SOS does not currently have the budget authority to adequately accomplish the goals sought by the Legislature. That is why I am requesting that you provide \$4 million to the SOS in order to establish an Election Audit Division.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Abbott".

Greg Abbott  
Governor

GA: cww

cc: The Honorable Jane Nelson, Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
The Honorable Greg Bonnen, Chair, House Appropriations Committee

---

**From:** Daniel Friend [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 2:54 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: Election Audit Division Funding

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Thank you; that is much appreciated!

On Fri, Nov 19, 2021 at 2:31 PM Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)> wrote:

Hi Daniel,

Yes – I’ve attached both letters here and you can attribute the following statement to me/the Texas Secretary of State’s office:

**“We thank Governor Abbott, Lieutenant Governor Patrick, Speaker Phelan, Senator Nelson and Representative Bonnen for approving critical funds to support the Texas Secretary of State’s Forensic Audit Division. In order to complete our ongoing full forensic audit of the 2020 General Election and conduct subsequent audits as required by SB 1, our agency will be using these funds to dedicate additional staff to oversee audit activities, including: verifying counties’ removal of ineligible voters from the rolls, meticulously reviewing each county’s election materials for our comprehensive document examination, and ensuring compliance with state and federal election laws. These resources are essential for maintaining the integrity of Texas elections and identifying issues that must be fixed in order to restore voters’ confidence in our state’s election systems.”**

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Daniel Friend [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 1:28 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Election Audit Division Funding

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Hi Sam,

Are you able to provide any additional background information and/or statement regarding Rep. Greg Bonnen's [announcement](#) that he signed approval of \$4 million of funding for forensic election audits?

Additionally, do you know if it would be possible to obtain copies of the letters sent regarding the subject between Gov. Abbott and lawmakers that was [reported](#) by the *Dallas Morning News*?

If you're able to respond this afternoon, that would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks,

Daniel

--

**Daniel Friend**

Reporter, [The Texan](#)

C: (918) 316-2703

---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 5:33 PM  
**To:** 'Windy Johnson'  
**Subject:** RE: Election Audit Funds

Hi Windy,

Please see our statement from this afternoon after the funding was announced:  
<https://twitter.com/TXsecofstate/status/1461815486551887872/photo/1>

Happy to chat at a later time if you'd like to know additional details. Thanks, have a great weekend!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Windy Johnson [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 4:09 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** Election Audit Funds

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Good afternoon Sam,

Hope you are doing well. Can you please share how the additional funds will be used for election audits? I know my counties have a particular interest in how it will affect us. Thank you!

**Windy Johnson**  
Program Manager  
**Texas Conference of Urban Counties**  
500 W 13th St. | Austin TX 78701  
P: 512.476.6174 Cell: 512.731.3246  
E: [REDACTED] | W: [www.cuc.org](http://www.cuc.org)



**January 12-14, 2022**  
Texas A&M Hotel & Conference Center  
Early Registration - \$400  
General Registration - \$425  
Late Registration - \$475  
[cuc.org/cstat2022](http://cuc.org/cstat2022)

---

**From:** lmafortrump2024 [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 3, 2022 8:11 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** RE: Epoch times interview - election integrity

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Mr. Taylor- am super impressed you replied. Thank you. However, none of the documentation you sent clarifies anything specifically regarding a forensic audit of the mail in ballots audited against the actual voter registration records.

To manually count laundered mail in ballots that were electronically tabulated doesn't make sense...of course you'd get the same answer assuming the electronic count was right.

The point of a specific manual audit of mail in ballots to actual voter registration is where you will find the MOST fraud occurred. It's very easy to falsify and thus launder those mail in votes and somewhat difficult to compare those to actual voter registration records...which is why they chose to attack the integrity of the election in this manner.

Please let me know if missed anything from phase 1 or 2 and let me know where the results of any specific audit of mail in ballots compared to actual voter registration is documented or will take place.

Thank you again!

Sent with [ProtonMail](#) Secure Email.

- - - - - Original Message - - - - -

On Monday, January 3rd, 2022 at 11:15 AM, Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)> wrote:

Hello,

I encourage you to read the full Phase 1 progress report of our full forensic audit, which specifically does examine mail-in ballots, and identified several discrepancies between mail ballots counted electronically versus those counted by hand: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/forms/phase1-progress-report.pdf>

We will be examining additional documents – including those regarding signature and registration verification for mail-in ballots cast – during Phase 2 of the full forensic audit.

Here is the full press release: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/about/newsreleases/2021/123121.shtml>

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Imafortrump2024 [REDACTED] >

**Sent:** Saturday, January 1, 2022 3:10 PM

**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>; [REDACTED]

**Subject:** Epoch times interview - election integrity

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Mr. Taylor- I' ve asked numerous government officials this specific question and have yet to receive a single response. Would you please reply given your recent commentary to Epoch news on the subject.

Why are politicians, media, pundits etc specifically EXCLUDING to audit mail in ballots (not talking about absentee ballots) compared specifically to voter registration. For example, if John Smith from 101 Main Street supposedly signed and mailed in a ballot, has anyone cared to audit if in fact there is a John Smith at 101 Main Street registered to vote? Do the signatures match?

There is obviously WAY more risk of fraud from mail in ballots than “thousands of votes cast by non-citizens”, especially if those specific mail in ballots are only laundered votes that are never audited.

In your role, you should be keenly aware of this and yet no mention regarding this much higher risk in the article you were interviewed for..begging the question, why did you not raise this clarification?

Please respond.

Thanks!

Sent with [ProtonMail](#) Secure Email.

**From:** [mei wang](#)  
**To:** [Secretary](#); [Sam Taylor](#)  
**Cc:** [Kelly Hancock](#); [jeff.cason@house.texas.gov](mailto:jeff.cason@house.texas.gov); [beverly.powell@senate.texas.gov](mailto:beverly.powell@senate.texas.gov); [matt.krause@house.texas.gov](mailto:matt.krause@house.texas.gov); [jane.nelson@senate.texas.gov](mailto:jane.nelson@senate.texas.gov); [stephanie.klick@house.texas.gov](mailto:stephanie.klick@house.texas.gov)  
**Subject:** Re: False hand count results - Nov 2020 election - SOS Phase 1 Audit Results in Tarrant County  
**Date:** Thursday, January 6, 2022 4:38:13 PM  
**Attachments:** [1\\_Four\\_County\\_Partial\\_M\\_C\\_2020\\_SOS.xlsx](#)  
[image001.png](#)

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Hi, Mr. Taylor:

Could you provide me the keys for the following headers in your attached file for the manual count in Phase 1?

CORDER  
VSID  
CANDIDATE\_NAME  
VOTINGSYS  
EVBMEC  
EVBMMC  
EVIPEC  
EVIPMC  
EDEC  
EDMC  
PROV  
TXTEVBMEC  
TXTEVBMMC  
TXTEVIPEC  
TXTEVIPMC  
TXTEDEC  
TXTEDMC  
TXTPROV  
ALTPC  
TXTALTPCT

Thank you very much!

Sincerely,  
Xiaomei Wang

On Thursday, January 6, 2022, 02:27:55 PM CST, Sam Taylor <[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)> wrote:

Ms. Wang,

Thank you for reaching out. The results of the partial manual count in our Phase 1 progress report were taken directly from the partial manual count report that Tarrant county sent to our office following the November 2020 General Election. I have attached the file here. You can click on the 'Tarrant County' tab to see the results.

If you look at [page 2 of our Phase 1 progress report](#), you will see the following paragraph regarding the Election Day ballots chosen (which is why the numbers you outlined below do not match up):

*Under TEC Section 127.201, counties are required to conduct a manual count in at least one percent of the election precincts or in three precincts, whichever is greater, in which an electronic voting system was used in a general election. The SOS is responsible for choosing the race(s) and precinct(s) used to conduct the partial manual count in a general election. For the November 2020 Election, the office of Texas Railroad Commissioner was chosen as the race for which counties conducted their respective partial manual counts. In order to protect the security and integrity of the voted ballots, the SOS has provided alternate Election Day locations for the partial manual count for counties that are part of the Countywide Polling Place Program (CWPP). This is done to ensure that the accuracy of the voting system equipment is thoroughly audited in a specific location while also ensuring that fewer election office personnel are handling voted ballots from across the county. None of the four counties reported any discrepancies in Election Day ballots counted electronically versus those counted by hand.*

We published the numbers of the electronic count (those counted by ballot tabulators) versus the hand count (counted manually) exactly as they were reported to us by all four counties, including Tarrant County.

Our office can assure you that should we discover any additional discrepancies during our Phase 2 in-person comprehensive document examinations, those will be included in the final report.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** mei wang <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 6, 2022 2:12 PM  
**To:** Secretary <Secretary@sos.texas.gov>  
**Cc:** Kelly Hancock <kelly.hancock@senate.texas.gov>; jeff.cason@house.texas.gov;  
beverly.powell@senate.texas.gov; matt.krause@house.texas.gov;  
jane.nelson@senate.texas.gov; stephanie.klick@house.texas.gov; Sam Taylor  
<SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** False hand count results - Nov 2020 election - SOS Phase 1 Audit Results in  
Tarrant County

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Hello, Mr. Secretary of State John Scott:

I am a citizen live in Tarrant County, Texas.

I have read the released documents of TX SOS election audit phase 1. I took this audit seriously and hope it approves the election been with integrity or finds the problems.

Just want to report this finding about the SOS audit hand-count results for Tarrant County seven precinct ballots .

The hand count comparison results of the seven precincts have been reported in SOS document dated on Dec.31,2021. This document shows the hand count results agreed to the electronic results. However, neither the numbers of the electronic count or the comparison numbers from hand counts of the seven precincts were agreed to the county report: - precinct report - published in Tarrant county website:

<https://www.tarrantcounty.com/content/dam/main/elections/2020/1120/reports/precinct.pdf>

Tarrant County Precinct report vs Electronic count/handcount:

Prcnt 1061: 176 vs 714

Prcnt 1460: 1744 vs 1510

Prcnt 2381: 392 vs 738

Prcnt 3160: 1768 vs 1878

Prcnt 4285: 487 vs 354

Prcnt 4452: 2415 vs 2098

Prcnt 4591: 2230 vs 1869

Please see the attached details and each top page of the seven precinct reports by the county for backing up this finding.

There are more discrepancies between absentee ballots, early voting in person and Election day in person in this hand count samples when comparing to the county published election results. The discrepancies are material. Thus the hand count results are 100% false!!

What is "the electronic count"? Where "the electronic count " numbers come from? Who provided "the electronic count" to Phase 1 for the sampling check? Who conducted the hand count? I suggest that the SOS audit requires a full hand count/verification on all Ballots of Tarrant County due this false results - this is what would happen to a private business when such false information provided for a Tax audit - Our government should not be an exception. Each task conducted should be fully transparent to citizens. I personally would like to be a citizen observer if any hand count conducted in the county.

I would like to request a formal response regarding to my report and my questions. I would love to answer any question from you.

Thanks!

Sincerely,

Xiaomei Wang  
3708 Burgee Ct.,  
Fort Worth, TX 76244  
Phone#: 682-203-8584

Also copied to some State rep's and Senators.

**From:** [mei wang](#)  
**To:** [Secretary](#); [Sam Taylor](#)  
**Cc:** [Kelly Hancock](#); [jeff.cason@house.texas.gov](mailto:jeff.cason@house.texas.gov); [beverly.powell@senate.texas.gov](mailto:beverly.powell@senate.texas.gov); [matt.krause@house.texas.gov](mailto:matt.krause@house.texas.gov); [jane.nelson@senate.texas.gov](mailto:jane.nelson@senate.texas.gov); [stephanie.klick@house.texas.gov](mailto:stephanie.klick@house.texas.gov)  
**Subject:** Re: False hand count results - Nov 2020 election - SOS Phase 1 Audit Results in Tarrant County  
**Date:** Thursday, January 6, 2022 3:18:58 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Hi, Mr. Taylor:

Thanks for quick response and attached detailed date for the four counties.

Please help me to make sure I understand "the Electronic count" regarding to the hand count in Phase 1:

By reading the paragraph you cite, the electronic counts of the 7 precincts were specifically for the office of Texas Railroad Commissioner, and the ballots cast on Election day by a specific voting electronic equipment in a selected polling location? Then the hand counts would be for checking the electronic count of it? so when called partial manual count.

When the electronic counts have been generated and reported to SOS from Tarrant County? were the data of the electronic counts published any where for the citizens to know?

Thank you Again!

Sincerely,

Xiaomei Wang

On Thursday, January 6, 2022, 02:27:55 PM CST, Sam Taylor <[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)> wrote:

Ms. Wang,

Thank you for reaching out. The results of the partial manual count in our Phase 1 progress report were taken directly from the partial manual count report that Tarrant county sent to our office following the November 2020 General Election. I have attached the file here. You can click on the 'Tarrant County' tab to see the results.

If you look at [page 2 of our Phase 1 progress report](#), you will see the following paragraph regarding the Election Day ballots chosen (which is why the numbers you outlined below do not match up):

*Under TEC Section 127.201, counties are required to conduct a manual count in at least one percent of the election precincts or in three precincts, whichever is greater, in which an electronic voting system was used in a general election. The SOS is responsible for choosing the race(s) and precinct(s) used to conduct the partial manual count in a general election. For the November 2020 Election, the office of Texas Railroad Commissioner was chosen as the race for which counties conducted their respective partial manual counts. In order to protect the security and integrity of the voted ballots, the SOS has provided alternate Election Day locations for the partial manual count for counties that are part of the Countywide Polling Place Program (CWPP). This is done to ensure that the accuracy of the voting system equipment is thoroughly audited in a specific location while also ensuring that fewer election office personnel are handling voted ballots from across the county. None of the four counties reported any discrepancies in Election Day ballots counted electronically versus those counted by hand.*

We published the numbers of the electronic count (those counted by ballot tabulators) versus the hand count (counted manually) exactly as they were reported to us by all four counties, including Tarrant County.

Our office can assure you that should we discover any additional discrepancies during our Phase 2 in-person comprehensive document examinations, those will be included in the final report.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** mei wang <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 6, 2022 2:12 PM  
**To:** Secretary <Secretary@sos.texas.gov>  
**Cc:** Kelly Hancock <kelly.hancock@senate.texas.gov>; jeff.cason@house.texas.gov;  
beverly.powell@senate.texas.gov; matt.krause@house.texas.gov;  
jane.nelson@senate.texas.gov; stephanie.klick@house.texas.gov; Sam Taylor  
<SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** False hand count results - Nov 2020 election - SOS Phase 1 Audit Results in  
Tarrant County

**CAUTION:** This email originated from OUTSIDE of the SOS organization. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you are expecting the email and know that the content is safe. If you believe this to be a malicious or phishing email, please send this email as an attachment to [Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov](mailto:Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov).

Hello, Mr. Secretary of State John Scott:

I am a citizen live in Tarrant County, Texas.

I have read the released documents of TX SOS election audit phase 1. I took this audit seriously and hope it approves the election been with integrity or finds the problems.

Just want to report this finding about the SOS audit hand-count results for Tarrant County seven precinct ballots .

The hand count comparison results of the seven precincts have been reported in SOS document dated on Dec.31,2021. This document shows the hand count results agreed to the electronic results. However, neither the numbers of the electronic count or the comparison numbers from hand counts of the seven precincts were agreed to the county report: - precinct report - published in Tarrant county website:

<https://www.tarrantcounty.com/content/dam/main/elections/2020/1120/reports/precinct.pdf>

Tarrant County Precinct report vs Electronic count/handcount:

Prct 1061: 176 vs 714

Prct 1460: 1744 vs 1510

Prcnt 2381: 392 vs 738

Prcnt 3160: 1768 vs 1878

Prcnt 4285: 487 vs 354

Prcnt 4452: 2415 vs 2098

Prcnt 4591: 2230 vs 1869

Please see the attached details and each top page of the seven precinct reports by the county for backing up this finding.

There are more discrepancies between absentee ballots, early voting in person and Election day in person in this hand count samples when comparing to the county published election results. The discrepancies are material. Thus the hand count results are 100% false!!

What is "the electronic count"? Where "the electronic count " numbers come from? Who provided "the electronic count" to Phase 1 for the sampling check? Who conducted the hand count? I suggest that the SOS audit requires a full hand count/verification on all Ballots of Tarrant County due this false results - this is what would happen to a private business when such false information provided for a Tax audit - Our government should not be an exception. Each task conducted should be fully transparent to citizens. I personally would like to be a citizen observer if any hand count conducted in the county.

I would like to request a formal response regarding to my report and my questions. I would love to answer any question from you.

Thanks!

Sincerely,

Xiaomei Wang

3708 Burgee Ct.,

Fort Worth, TX 76244

Phone#: 682-203-8584

Also copied to some State rep's and Senators.

**From:** [Celine Castronuovo](#)  
**To:** [Sam Taylor](#)  
**Subject:** Re: FW: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 9:25:47 AM  
**Attachments:** image001.png

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Great, thank you. I will let you know if I have any further questions.

Best regards,  
Celine

On Wed, Sep 29, 2021 at 10:23 AM Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)> wrote:

Hi Celine,

Here's the e-mail confirmation from yesterday, including the plan and confirmation that we will not be hiring or contracting with an outside firm for the audit.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



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**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 6:38 PM  
**Subject:** Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Evening, All –

Many of you have inquired about additional details relating to the full forensic election audit announced last week. Attached, below, and on our web site ([link here](#)), please find an outline of the parameters of the audit and relevant sections of the Texas Election Code. This information has already been provided to the Election Administrators in Dallas, Harris, Collin and Tarrant counties.

**I want to be absolutely crystal clear about one thing: no, we will not be hiring or contracting with an outside firm to conduct these audits.**

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116



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## **Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election**

The Texas Secretary of State's office has announced a full forensic audit of the 2020 General Election in Dallas, Harris, Tarrant and Collin counties. The full forensic audit is being conducted in two phases, the first of which is already underway. The purpose of this audit is to ensure all Texas voters can have confidence in the elections systems in our state, and to address any outstanding issues county election officials may face that undermines the integrity of our elections.

### **Phase 1: Testing Voting Machine Accuracy, Cybersecurity Assessments, and Identifying and Removing Ineligible Voters Who Cast Ballots in 2020 (Already Completed or Underway)**

- After every single Texas election, counties are required to conduct a partial manual count of electronic voting system ballots within 72 hours of the polls closing to ensure the accuracy of the tabulation of electronic voting systems results ([Sec. 127.201](#)).
- All counties are required to undergo an Election Security Assessment (ESA) of the county's election system ([Sec. 279.003](#)). All 254 counties have completed these assessments.
- Under both state and federal law, the Texas Secretary of State's office is empowered to maintain the accuracy of the statewide voter registration list to ensure that ineligible voters – including deceased individuals, individuals registered in multiple states or counties, and non-U.S. citizens – do not remain on the voter rolls ([Secs. 18.061 – 18.0681](#)).
- As part of the audit process, the office has received reports from the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) regarding voters who may have voted twice in state and across state lines. We have also received a report of persons who may have been deceased when a vote was cast in their name. Finally, we have

identified potential non-U.S. citizen voters and have directed county voter registrars to take action to verify the eligibility of registered voters and cancel their registration if they do not present proof of eligibility. Once that action has been taken, our office evaluates the persons cancelled and refers any instances of possible illegal voting to the Office of the Texas Attorney General for investigation ([Sec. 31.006](#)).

## **Phase 2: Comprehensive Election Records Examination (Spring 2022)**

- As part of the Texas Secretary of State's duty to assist and advise all election authorities with regard to the application, operation, and interpretation of the Texas Election Code ([Sec. 31.004](#)) and to obtain and maintain uniformity in the application of the Code ([Sec. 31.003](#)), the office will conduct a comprehensive election records examination over the next several months to ensure election administration procedures were properly followed during the 2020 General Election.

- The records examined from each county will include – but are not limited to – the following types of documents:

- Logic & Accuracy Testing Records for Voting Machines, including:
  - All test ballots voted
  - Test Deck Records
  - Testing Media
- Early Voting and Election Day Materials, including:
  - List of registered voters used in the 2020 General Election
  - Daily Early Voting Rosters for in-person voting
  - Chain of Custody forms that document the seals on the ballot boxes
  - Chain of Custody delivery and pickup of equipment at voting sites
  - Statements of Residence
  - Reasonable Impediment Declarations
  - Limited Ballot Applications
  - Audit Logs from applicable Voting System Devices
  - List of Rejected Provisional Ballots and reason for rejection
  - Ballot and Seal Certificates
  - Hand Delivery of a Ballot by Mail Roster and Forms
  - Receipts of Sealed Early Voting Ballot Boxes
- Signature Verification Committee Materials

- Early Voting Ballot Board Materials, including:
  - Receipt of Sealed Early Voting Ballot Boxes
  - Poll List of Mail Voters
  - Notice of Rejected Carriers and reasons
- Central Counting Station Plan
- Training Materials
- County election officials must retain these records for 22 months under both federal law ([52 USC 20701](#)) and state law ([Texas Election Code Sec. 66.058](#)).
- All of this information is available to the general public ([Sec. 1.012](#)).
- After a thorough examination of the abovementioned records and materials in each county, irregularities or deviations from election administration procedures that may have affected the accuracy of the electronic voting system ballot count could trigger a full manual recount of ballots in the affected precincts or polling locations, pursuant to the Secretary of State's authority to ensure the accuracy of the tabulation of electronic voting system results ([Sec. 127.202](#)).

---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 30, 2021 12:32 PM  
**To:** 'Randy Samuelson'  
**Subject:** RE: INETMAIL: Voting Machines -lack of certification ES&S

Thanks for passing along, Randy. These are the types of certifications (along with cybersecurity assessment) we'll be including in the Phase 1 progress report, which we're hoping to have ready for release before the holidays.

In order to be used in Texas elections, voting systems have to be both EAC certified and certified by the state -- for the EVS 6.1.0.0 system that Mrs. Lindstrom references in citation #6 below, that system was certified by the State of Texas on April 24, 2020, with the report available here: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/forms/sysexam/EVS-6100-certification-order.pdf>

You can also feel free to point constituents to our certification page, with all of the reports and findings for each round of certification, on our web site here: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/laws/certinfovendor.shtml>

Note that Dominion systems are no longer in use in any Texas counties, and have been denied certification by the State of Texas: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/laws/dominion.shtml>

Hope this is helpful, and thanks again to you and the Senator for having the Secretary on for the town hall -- very positive feedback on the conversation from those who have seen it.

Best,

Sam Taylor  
Assistant Secretary of State for Communications  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293

-----Original Message-----

From: Randy Samuelson <[Randy.Samuelson@senate.texas.gov](mailto:Randy.Samuelson@senate.texas.gov)>  
Sent: Tuesday, November 30, 2021 11:46 AM  
To: Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
Subject: FW: INETMAIL: Voting Machines -lack of certification ES&S

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Sam,

I hope you had a good Thanksgiving.

I am passing along a summary of an email from Mrs. Debbie Lindstrom who contacted our office by phone and followed up with an email this morning regarding the certification of the voting machines in Collin County. This has been an ongoing question/concern from some Collin County residents this year.

I let Mrs. Lindstrom know that the certification of the voting systems and machines, the cybersecurity of the machines, and accuracy of the voting machines is all going to be reviewed in phase 1 of the forensic audit in Collin County. Once we have audit findings, appropriate actions can then be taken by the Secretary of State and Collin County. If there is information I can update her (and other interested residents on), I'll be happy to pass it along.

--

Randy A. Samuelson  
Chief of Staff, Senator Angela Paxton  
512-463-0108

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED] >  
Sent: Tuesday, November 30, 2021 10:22 AM  
To: District8 Paxton <[District8.Paxton@senate.texas.gov](mailto:District8.Paxton@senate.texas.gov)>  
Subject: INETMAIL: Voting Machines -lack of certification ES&S

First Name: Debbie  
Middle Name:  
Last Name: Lindstrom  
Suffix:  
Title:  
Business:

Address line 1: 14055 RED WOOD CIR N  
Address line 2:  
City: MCKINNEY  
State: TX  
Zipcode: 75071-6138  
Phone: 469-387-5560  
E-mail: [REDACTED]

Subject:  
Voting Machines -lack of certification ES&S

Summary of Message:

I called this morning and left a message about the issue of a lack of certification of the ES&S voting machines used in Collin County and throughout the state of Texas.

The EAC machines have not been certified since 2017 and excuses were made for "critical failures."

Citations from Mrs. Lindstrom:

Link from the above video.

1. EAC website:

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2F&data=04%7C01%7Csmta%7C4c8721e1e5ec448b739c08d9b429437a%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0>

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fassets%2F1%2F28%2F&data=04%7C01%7Csmtaylor%40sos.texas.gov%7C4c8721e1e5ec448b739c08d9b429437a%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637738911587583109%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=ZdLk%2FRO%2BR1vCUNCbn2f0FI0xCMoAqyFMvAROebo1kwE%3D&reserved=0>

2. Testing and Certification Manual Version 2.0 (page 1, 19)

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fassets%2F1%2F28%2F&data=04%7C01%7Csmtaylor%40sos.texas.gov%7C4c8721e1e5ec448b739c08d9b429437a%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637738911587583109%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=HnuTC59WdAIXSVL8Pkh5pay%2BjYMeZxI0EsI0YUgZAYM%3D&reserved=0>  
Cert%20Manual%207%208%2015%20FINAL.pdf

3. State Requirements Manual (page 51)

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2FtestingCerti&data=04%7C01%7Csmtaylor%40sos.texas.gov%7C4c8721e1e5ec448b739c08d9b429437a%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637738911587583109%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=KQmRvsMmeUY55nkyhmhscmyHWh2Htkv4XckSojCUr%2FQ8%3D&reserved=0>  
fication/State\_Requirements\_for\_Certification09042020.pdf

4. Voting System Test Laboratory Program Manual Version 2.0 (p 38- 39)

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fassets%2F1&data=04%7C01%7Csmtaylor%40sos.texas.gov%7C4c8721e1e5ec448b739c08d9b429437a%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637738911587583109%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=a5D%2FP4I7pQMPhsV6hYEUQBWDxewLZs%2FrUHq7TSRij0U%3D&reserved=0>  
/28/VSTLManual%207%208%2015%20FINAL.pdf

5. VSTL Definition <https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fvoting-equipment%2Fvoting-system-test>

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fvoting-equipment%2Fvoting-system-test&data=04%7C01%7Csmtaylor%40sos.texas.gov%7C4c8721e1e5ec448b739c08d9b429437a%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637738911587583109%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=37o4NUptXbyDTE3ANUU2FQFI E7qlyH%2BAb%2FVGDk4NrQ%3D&reserved=0> laboratories-vstl

6. Collin county used ES&S EVS 6.1.0.0 during the Nov 3, 2020 election.

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fvoting-equipment%2Fevs-&data=04%7C01%7Csmtaylor%40sos.texas.gov%7C4c8721e1e5ec448b739c08d9b429437a%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637738911587583109%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=QvL%2B1%2FM2MBC9sHkzvBc QY8q2GqoffSNxFM6%2Fiy1jUyI%3D&reserved=0> 6100

7. Pro V&V Certificate of Accreditation 2015- 2017

[https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fvoting\\_syst&data=04%7C01%7Csmtaylor%40sos.texas.gov%7C4c8721e1e5ec448b739c08d9b429437a%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637738911587583109%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=jlt8J3p%2F2mXs9dkWo zRaBdfXegnJlfa%2FHleeLKaOBi%3D&reserved=0](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fvoting_syst&data=04%7C01%7Csmtaylor%40sos.texas.gov%7C4c8721e1e5ec448b739c08d9b429437a%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637738911587583109%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=jlt8J3p%2F2mXs9dkWo zRaBdfXegnJlfa%2FHleeLKaOBi%3D&reserved=0)  
em\_test\_lab/files/Pro\_VandV\_accreditation\_certificate\_2015.pdf

8. Jerome Lovato Memo

[https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fvoting\\_syst&data=04%7C01%7Csmtaylor%40sos.texas.gov%7C4c8721e1e5ec448b739c08d9b429437a%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637738911587583109%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=jlt8J3p%2F2mXs9dkWo](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fvoting_syst&data=04%7C01%7Csmtaylor%40sos.texas.gov%7C4c8721e1e5ec448b739c08d9b429437a%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637738911587583109%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=jlt8J3p%2F2mXs9dkWo)



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**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 6:37 PM  
**To:** 'Randy Samuelson'  
**Cc:** Joe Esparza  
**Subject:** RE: INETMAIL: Voting Machines -lack of certification ES&S

Hi Randy,

Thanks so much for passing this along. The EAC certified the voting system in question before it was brought for certification before our office - and the Attorney General's office, which also certified the system. Texas requires the EAC certification number before they can even apply for Texas certification. The EAC has publicly clarified that Pro V&V was an accredited lab the whole time, including through the years 2017-2021:

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fvoting-equipment%2Fvoting-system-test-laboratories-vstl%2Fpro-vv&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=dHcW5s8NU51ykw%2BXDgo8%2BUSP9nW3NuOCLiNa7mSJAhU%3D&reserved=0>

Furthermore, the EAC made clear that Pro V&V completed all requirements to remain in good standing with the EAC's Testing & Certification program:

[https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fvoting\\_system\\_test\\_lab%2Ffiles%2FPro\\_VandV\\_Accreditation\\_Renewal\\_delay\\_memo012721.pdf&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=SI11y1U5df12K%2FuZjqGR19ACWYOc9%2Fk6doH6q%2F%2BV3zs%3D&reserved=0](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fvoting_system_test_lab%2Ffiles%2FPro_VandV_Accreditation_Renewal_delay_memo012721.pdf&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=SI11y1U5df12K%2FuZjqGR19ACWYOc9%2Fk6doH6q%2F%2BV3zs%3D&reserved=0)

In other news - Collin County has responded to our initial audit survey (the first one to do so), as has Tarrant -- both counties are being extremely transparent and cooperative:

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ftwitter.com%2FTXsecofstate%2Fstatus%2F1473405167068397579&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=RRWSyV3zCt1VEFG1pLURPC2t0bgs26TUvZUSczTmulw%3D&reserved=0>

Should the issue of ES&S machines or any issues relating to them arise in our on-site document examinations in Phase 2, that will certainly be included in the final report.

Best,

Sam Taylor  
Assistant Secretary of State for Communications  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
smtaylor@sos.texas.gov  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293

-----Original Message-----

From: Randy Samuelson <Randy.Samuelson@senate.texas.gov>  
Sent: Tuesday, December 21, 2021 4:03 PM  
To: Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
Subject: RE: INETMAIL: Voting Machines -lack of certification ES&S

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Sam,

Mr. and Mrs. Lindstrom provided me some additional information on the ES&S certification. Here are portions of what they would like to have verified and reviewed in the audit of the certification of the ES&S vendor and equipment.

"From 2017 to 2021, the VSTL (Pro V&V) for ES&S (the vendor of Collin county's election machines) was not accredited. There has been no evidence of certification other than a note on the latest certificate with a note that says that the certificate of accreditation was not revoked and therefore it is still valid. The problem is that the HAVA Act is a Congressional Law that requires that the EAC follows certain procedures including expiration dates every two years and a process to renew the accreditation that was not followed. In addition, the State of Texas has laws that require Federal certification from an accredited VSTL.

Not only is there a federal requirement, but the state of Texas also has its own process for certification. The Texas Secretary of State (SoS) office went through its certification of ES&S 6.1.0.0, and in April of 2020, it "certified" the machines. But for an unknown reason, they missed the critical fact that Pro V&V (the certifying lab) was not accredited. They apparently took the EAC at its word, without verification, and certified the election systems for the state of Texas. This may have been intentional or just negligence - but the result is that Texas was violated by the EAC. Did the SOS miss this critical step in the certification or is the documentation available for the public to review?

The SOS then communicated to Collin County that our machines were certified for use."

--

Randy A. Samuelson  
Chief of Staff, Senator Angela Paxton  
512-463-0108

-----Original Message-----

From: Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
Sent: Tuesday, November 30, 2021 12:32 PM  
To: Randy Samuelson <Randy.Samuelson@senate.texas.gov>  
Subject: RE: INETMAIL: Voting Machines -lack of certification ES&S

Thanks for passing along, Randy. These are the types of certifications (along with cybersecurity assessment) we'll be including in the Phase 1 progress report, which we're hoping to have ready for release before the holidays.

In order to be used in Texas elections, voting systems have to be both EAC certified and certified by the state -- for the EVS 6.1.0.0 system that Mrs. Lindstrom references in citation #6 below, that system was certified by the State of Texas on April 24, 2020, with the report available here:  
<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sos.texas.gov%2Felections%2Fforms%2Fsysexam%2FEVS-6100-certification-order.pdf&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=XKG0kX15Ax1xdo9K6M5TJR%2F8RSHaGVEcQIMvJNH2gio%3D&reserved=0>

You can also feel free to point constituents to our certification page, with all of the reports and findings for each round of certification, on our web site here:

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sos.texas.gov%2Felections%2Flaws%2Fcertinfobyvendor.shtml&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoic4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=BO4hMFnb6D9Br9b2ObLPgl30iTSvRbPeqyYrzvwAg5o%3D&reserved=0>

Note that Dominion systems are no longer in use in any Texas counties, and have been denied certification by the State of Texas:

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sos.texas.gov%2Felections%2Flaws%2Fdominion.shtml&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoic4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=a9GdhBj5ZWf8sM9JkPmyGqKK0bGZAa8LEnY1PN8admU%3D&reserved=0>

Hope this is helpful, and thanks again to you and the Senator for having the Secretary on for the town hall -- very positive feedback on the conversation from those who have seen it.

Best,

Sam Taylor

Assistant Secretary of State for Communications Office of the Texas Secretary of State [smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293

-----Original Message-----

From: Randy Samuelson <[Randy.Samuelson@senate.texas.gov](mailto:Randy.Samuelson@senate.texas.gov)>

Sent: Tuesday, November 30, 2021 11:46 AM

To: Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

Subject: FW: INETMAIL: Voting Machines -lack of certification ES&S

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Sam,

I hope you had a good Thanksgiving.

I am passing along a summary of an email from Mrs. Debbie Lindstrom who contacted our office by phone and followed up with an email this morning regarding the certification of the voting machines in Collin County. This has been an ongoing question/concern from some Collin County residents this year.

I let Mrs. Lindstrom know that the certification of the voting systems and machines, the cybersecurity of the machines, and accuracy of the voting machines is all going to be reviewed in phase 1 of the forensic audit in Collin County. Once we have audit findings, appropriate actions can then be taken by the Secretary of State and Collin County. If there is information I can update her (and other interested residents on), I'll be happy to pass it along.

--  
Randy A. Samuelson  
Chief of Staff, Senator Angela Paxton  
512-463-0108

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Tuesday, November 30, 2021 10:22 AM  
To: District8 Paxton <District8.Paxton@senate.texas.gov>  
Subject: INETMAIL: Voting Machines -lack of certification ES&S

First Name: Debbie  
Middle Name:  
Last Name: Lindstrom  
Suffix:  
Title:  
Business:

Address line 1: 14055 RED WOOD CIR N  
Address line 2:  
City: MCKINNEY  
State: TX  
Zipcode: 75071-6138  
Phone: 469-387-5560  
E-mail: [REDACTED]

Subject:  
Voting Machines -lack of certification ES&S

Summary of Message:

I called this morning and left a message about the issue of a lack of certification of the ES&S voting machines used in Collin County and throughout the state of Texas.

The EAC machines have not been certified since 2017 and excuses were made for "critical failures."

Citations from Mrs. Lindstrom:

Link from the above video.

1. EAC website:

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2F&data=04%7C01%7CJEsp arza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0 %7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6 Ik1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=zQDXhObTxg3RMTTL8AwnJFP1f%2FZOxoJL%2BE4DSIDV5 To%3D&reserved=0>

2. Testing and Certification Manual Version 2.0 (page 1, 19)

[https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2F eac\\_assets%2F1%2F28%2F&data=04%7C01%7CJEsp arza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336 dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2F eac_assets%2F1%2F28%2F&data=04%7C01%7CJEsp arza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336 dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8)

eyJWlJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=B8S0BFVJoQ1WTwSzSiejdxIzAaaln2hStIMv65UuD%2BU%3D&reserved=0  
Cert%20Manual%207%208%2015%20FINAL.pdf

### 3. State Requirements Manual (page 51)

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2FTestingCerti&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWlJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=Now9Jl0X6s4Lve%2FWzM08Ov9jeZ0ukhxDDeR5E5%2FTLY%3D&reserved=0>  
fication/State\_Requirements\_for\_Certification09042020.pdf

### 4. Voting System Test Laboratory Program Manual Version 2.0 (p 38- 39)

[https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2FFeatures\\_assets%2F1&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWlJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=iisqT3KncPiBB7XiWA%2FyN9X%2FpZaxqrsBul1XiTUhQV%3D&reserved=0](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2FFeatures_assets%2F1&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWlJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=iisqT3KncPiBB7XiWA%2FyN9X%2FpZaxqrsBul1XiTUhQV%3D&reserved=0) /28/VSTLManual%207%208%2015%20FINAL.pdf

### 5. VSTL Definition <https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fvoting-equipment%2Fvoting-system-test->

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fvoting-equipment%2Fvoting-system-test->  
&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWlJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=ZuM%2FwQ34VtvqbcOYJC%2FWlhmRf4bsiRB7nuxxD2ogfQ%3D&reserved=0 laboratories-vstl

### 6. Collin county used ES&S EVS 6.1.0.0 during the Nov 3, 2020 election.

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fvoting-equipment%2Fevs->  
&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWlJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=98IGU9MH79NLEvTnQueeccBumNr97qo5yVUeIijt%2BN4%3D&reserved=0 6100

### 7. Pro V&V Certificate of Accreditation 2015- 2017

[https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fvoting\\_syst&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWlJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=F5qjUB%2BnAeA5%2F7mMg6FjVVT5EVmrJlxeOU%2FFASwwGk%3D&reserved=0](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fvoting_syst&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWlJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=F5qjUB%2BnAeA5%2F7mMg6FjVVT5EVmrJlxeOU%2FFASwwGk%3D&reserved=0)  
em\_test\_lab/files/Pro\_VandV\_accreditation\_certificate\_2015.pdf

### 8. Jerome Lovato Memo

[https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fvoting\\_syst&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWlJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=F5qjUB%2BnAeA5%2F7mMg6FjVVT5EVmrJlxeOU%2FFASwwGk%3D&reserved=0](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fvoting_syst&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWlJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=F5qjUB%2BnAeA5%2F7mMg6FjVVT5EVmrJlxeOU%2FFASwwGk%3D&reserved=0)  
em\_test\_lab/files/Pro\_VandV\_Accreditation\_Renewal\_delay\_memo012721.pdf

### 9. Pro V&V Certificate of Accreditation Feb 1, 2021

[https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fvoting\\_syst&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWlJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=F5qjUB%2BnAeA5%2F7mMg6FjVVT5EVmrJlxeOU%2FFASwwGk%3D&reserved=0](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fvoting_syst&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWlJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=F5qjUB%2BnAeA5%2F7mMg6FjVVT5EVmrJlxeOU%2FFASwwGk%3D&reserved=0)  
em\_test\_lab/files/Pro%20V%26V%20Accreditation%20Certificate.pdf

10. 52 USC § 20971

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.law.cornell.edu%2Fuscode%2Ftext%2F52%2F20971&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=SrNo6mw6ce%2BaSiETmJlZqR7nZnvruJqWNi2A76MjKs8%3D&reserved=0>

11. EAC Letter - Unsigned

[https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fvoiting\\_%amp;data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=AIH3bxYm1pciIXJ%2FgK%2FdEZTgMRa%2BqEkou%2BEbXUAXj1k%3D&reserved=0](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fvoiting_%amp;data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=AIH3bxYm1pciIXJ%2FgK%2FdEZTgMRa%2BqEkou%2BEbXUAXj1k%3D&reserved=0)  
system\_test\_lab/files/VSTL%20Certificates%20and%20Accreditation.pdf

12. Texas Election Code § 122.001

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fstatutes.capitol.texas.gov%2FDocs%2FEL%2Fhtm%2FE&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=RPOWklVPdB65yK5MaqGCw6a2jUeUpceK1zocqcJQIgo%3D&reserved=0> L.122.htm

13. Texas Administration Code §81.60

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.law.cornell.edu%2Fregulations%2Ftexas%2F1-Tex-&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=G5J%2FTLrQzHETQCp2%2FkJDyz0AjQZ2Qkxn%2FG8HHfiRp7E%3D&reserved=0> Admin-Code-81-60

14. Texas Constitution Article 6 § 2(c) and Article 6 § 4

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fstatutes.capitol.texas.gov%2FDocs%2FCN%2Fhtm%2FCN.6.ht&data=04%7C01%7CJEsparza%40sos.texas.gov%7C96182583be404f25a32f08d9c4e336dd%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C0%7C637757302445187876%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=Amhke0uGhGx4KwdbSv2VoJRr%2Bc7hofWfBZdqL4eZfM%3D&reserved=0> m

ComputerIP: 172.58.109.1

---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 8, 2021 5:47 PM  
**To:** 'Riccardi, Nicholas'  
**Subject:** RE: Interview request

Hi Nick,

We're still evaluating that and looking through those specific records to determine how many had voting history in recent elections. That number will be included in our forthcoming phase 1 progress report of the [full forensic audit of the 2020 General Election](#).

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Riccardi, Nicholas [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 8, 2021 10:58 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Interview request

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Another question – do you know if any of the 278 confirmed noncitizens voted in any recent elections/

Thanks.

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 7, 2021 4:54 PM  
**To:** Riccardi, Nicholas [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: Interview request

[EXTERNAL]

Correct - that's statewide.

---

**From:** Riccardi, Nicholas <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 7, 2021 5:45 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** RE: Interview request

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Just to clarify, the 11,737 records are the number of voters that have to date been flagged?

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 7, 2021 4:27 PM  
**To:** Riccardi, Nicholas <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** RE: Interview request

[EXTERNAL]

Hi Nicholas,

This process was initiated on September 9, 2021 in accordance with the parties' [settlement agreement in LULAC v Whitley from 2019](#). Sounds like you've already seen this advisory, but just passing along a link to it here: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/laws/advisory2021-11.shtml>

Per the settlement agreement, county voter registrars are authorized to send a notice of examination to any registered voter who registered to vote before the date on which the voter indicated he or she was a non-U.S. citizen to the Texas Department of Public Safety.

To date, our office has provided **11,737** records to all 254 counties statewide.

Voters who do not provide proof of citizenship to their county voter registrar within 30 days of receiving the notice of examination will have their registration cancelled, with the opportunity to be reinstated if the voter later provides proof of citizenship, including at the polling place.

A voter can prove U.S. citizenship in several ways, including by presenting a copy of:

- U.S. birth certificate;
- Consular Report of Birth Abroad of a Citizen of the United States issued by the United States Department of State;
- U.S. passport;
- Certificate of naturalization of the voter;
- Certificate of naturalization of the voter's parent (along with the voter's foreign birth certificate) that allowed the voter to become a U.S. citizen while he or she was a minor; or
- Any other form prescribed by the Secretary of State.

To date, **2,327** voter registration records have been cancelled through this process, **278** of which are cases in which voter registrars were able to verify that the registered voters were not U.S. citizens. The rest were cancelled because they did not respond to the notice of examination within the 30-day window.

Here's a statement attributable to me/the Texas Secretary of State's office, if needed:

"In accordance with the terms of the 2019 settlement agreement, the Texas Secretary of State's office is undertaking its constitutional duty to maintain an accurate list of qualified registered voters in the State of Texas. This process, agreed upon by all parties and stakeholders, will ensure that only qualified U.S. citizens remain on the voter rolls in Texas' 254 counties."

Let me know if you have any additional questions.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Riccardi, Nicholas <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Tuesday, December 7, 2021 3:36 PM

**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** Interview request

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I'm trying to get more information about list maintenance involving potential non-citizens. I saw the directive your office sent in September on this issue and wanted to know how many potential non-citizens have been identified, how many removed from the rolls and how many turned out to be citizens.

Happy to talk or correspond by email. I'm at 720 470-4319.

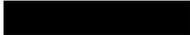
Thanks,



**ASSOCIATED PRESS**

**Nicholas Riccardi**  
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**From:** Bludau, Janelle [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 1:56 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** RE: KHOU Request

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Thanks for the response.  
Any word on how much the audit will cost or who will pay for it?

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 12:32 PM  
**To:** Bludau, Janelle [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: KHOU Request

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Send suspicious email to [infosec@tegn.com](mailto:infosec@tegn.com).

Hi Janelle,

Election audits have been underway for several months to identify and remove illegally registered voters, and we refer these cases to the Attorney General's office.

Texas counties receive lists of potentially illegally registered voters for their voter registrars to investigate and cancel their registration if they do not present proof of eligibility. This is required by both federal and state law and the counties are familiar with this process.

That is the part of the audit that is already underway. More details to come on additional elements of the audit in the near future.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Bludau, Janelle <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 11:51 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** KHOU Request

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Hi Sam,

Janelle Bludau here with KHOU 11 News in Houston. Working on a story today about the forensic audit announcement. Is there anyone with the Secretary of State's Office available for a Zoom interview to discuss how this will all work?

We'd specifically like to get answers to these questions for our viewers -

What prompted this audit now? Has it been going on for months? If so, what has been discovered?

Why these 4 counties?

How much will this cost and who will foot the bill?

Thanks so much,

**Janelle Bludau**  
Reporter



A **TEGNA** Company | 5718 Westheimer, Houston, TX 77097  
[REDACTED] | P. 713.521.4388 | C. 281.995.6595 | [khou.com](http://khou.com)

---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 23, 2021 9:49 PM  
**To:** Molinero Sample, Joanna (NBCUniversal)  
**Cc:** Randolph, Patrick (NBCUniversal); Peritz, Donald (NBCUniversal); Carter, Tyler (Contractor-NBCUniversal)  
**Subject:** Re: KXAS NBC5 Statement Request

<https://www.sos.texas.gov/about/newsreleases/2021/092321.shtml>

Sam Taylor  
Texas Secretary of State's Office  
512-538-5293

---

**From:** Molinero Sample, Joanna (NBCUniversal) [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 23, 2021 8:19:45 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Cc:** Randolph, Patrick (NBCUniversal) [REDACTED]; Peritz, Donald (NBCUniversal) [REDACTED]; Carter, Tyler (Contractor-NBCUniversal) [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** KXAS NBC5 Statement Request

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Good evening,

I am reaching out to The Texas Secretary of State to obtain the Press Release regarding the full forensic audit of the 2020 election in four Texas counties.

Much obliged,  
Joanna Molinero Sample  
Fort Worth, Texas  
817-654-6300



---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 16, 2021 2:10 PM  
**To:** 'Morris, Allison'  
**Subject:** RE: Media request: The Dallas Morning News

Hi Allie,

To your second question – under federal law, yes -- county election officials are *permitted* to destroy those materials after 22 months. If any of the four counties randomly selected for the audit under [Sec. 127.351](#) destroy their materials at that time, we would be limited to conducting the audit of those counties with the remaining materials.

To your first question – the language of the bill does not specify what type of audit, and we are currently in the process of determining the scope of the audit that we will conduct for that section. We will have more information in the coming months. Bear in mind we are not responsible for conducting this audit until November 2022 at the earliest.

I'd refer you to 7:36:29 of the floor debate on the amendment adding the random audit provision to SB 1 during the second special session: [https://tlchouse.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=47&clip\\_id=22343](https://tlchouse.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=47&clip_id=22343)

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

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Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Morris, Allison [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 16, 2021 9:05 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Media request: The Dallas Morning News

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Thanks, Sam. Just to be clear, what specific type of election audit is the SOS planning to do? Also, my understanding is that election materials are kept for 22 months and then destroyed. So does that mean the 2020 election will not be part of the audit or any others within that 2 month window?

On Wed, Sep 15, 2021 at 5:30 PM Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)> wrote:

Hi Allie,

Thanks for reaching out on this. As I mentioned yesterday, our office is still early in the process of developing the detailed guidance for counties regarding the various new provisions in SB 1. What's not totally 'new,' however, is the non-citizen voter list maintenance process. As you're aware, that process was agreed upon in the 2019 settlement in *LULAC v. Whitley*, and can be undertaken independent of SB 1's effective date. The plaintiffs in that litigation have already been notified that this process has re-started under the terms of the settlement, and have raised no objections to moving forward with the review of potential non-citizens registered to vote.

Below in bold are official responses to your inquiry that you can attribute to me/the agency. Included some additional background on the non-citizen voter list maintenance process as well. Let me know if any questions and I'll do my best to clarify tomorrow morning when I'm back in the office.

**With any changes to Texas Election Code passed by the Legislature and signed into law by the Governor, the Texas Secretary of State's office is obligated to undertake its constitutional duty to advise and assist Texas counties on the implementation of new election provisions. SB 1 is no exception. Our office cannot pick and choose which sections of the law to implement, regardless of whether a permanent Secretary of State has been appointed to fill the current vacancy. Absent an order from a court directing our office otherwise, SB 1 will go into effect on December 2, 2021, and we are currently in the process of developing comprehensive guidance for county election officials ahead of the effective date.**

**After the November 2022 General Election, our office plans to conduct the audits of four counties as required by SB 1. This means conducting audits of all elections conducted by that county from 2020-2022, from federal offices all the way down to the local level. These audits will ensure that voters can have confidence in the accuracy of the outcome of those elections.**

**In accordance with the terms of the 2019 settlement agreement, the Texas Secretary of State's office is undertaking its constitutional duty to maintain an accurate list of qualified registered voters in the State of Texas. This process, agreed upon by all parties and stakeholders, will ensure that only qualified U.S. citizens remain on the voter rolls in Texas' 254 counties. This list maintenance activity has already begun, the plaintiffs have been notified, and county voter registrars have already received lists of potential non-U.S. citizens who registered to vote in their respective counties. County voter registrars will continue to receive these lists on a weekly basis going forward, pursuant to the terms of the settlement agreement.**

[Background on Non-Citizen List Maintenance Process:](#)

- Per the 2019 settlement agreement, county voter registrars are authorized to send a notice of examination to any registered voter who registered to vote *before* the date on which the voter indicated he or she was a non-U.S. citizen to the Texas Department of Public Safety.
  
- Voters who do not provide proof of citizenship to their county voter registrar within 30 days of receiving the notice of examination will have their registration cancelled, with the opportunity to be reinstated if the voter later provides proof of citizenship, including at the polling place.
  
- A voter can prove U.S. citizenship in several ways, including by presenting a copy of:
  - U.S. birth certificate;
  
  - Consular Report of Birth Abroad of a Citizen of the United States issued by the United States Department of State;
  
  - U.S. passport;
  
  - Certificate of naturalization of the voter;
  
  - Certificate of naturalization of the voter’s parent (along with the voter’s foreign birth certificate) that allowed the voter to become a U.S. citizen while he or she was a minor; or
  
  - Any other form prescribed by the Secretary of State.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Morris, Allison <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 14, 2021 5:31 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Media request: The Dallas Morning News

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Hey,

Hope the week is going well. I'm working on a story about how the new elections law shifts a lot of new power to the secretary of state, including overseeing randomized audits of election results after midterm and presidential elections, implementing a new voter purge process for noncitizens, developing poll watcher training, fining counties that don't properly maintain their voter registration list and the ability to sue or seek court orders when it believes poll watchers are obstructed, among other things.

I was wondering if the office has already begun implementing some of these or is waiting for a permanent secretary of state to do so. If not, why? If so, which is the office working on?

More specifically, when it comes to the election audit, what type of audit does the office intend to pursue and what happens if any discrepancies are uncovered? The language says that "immediately after the uniform election date in November of an even-numbered year, the secretary of state shall conduct an audit of the elections held in four counties during the previous two years." Would that mean that after the 2022 election, the SOS must audit every election within the past two years, including contests for school board or the 2020 general election?

Regarding the new voter purge process, when does the SOS expect that to take effect?

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

--

Allie Morris  
[Austin Bureau Correspondent](#)  
*The Dallas Morning News*

@MorrisReports  
[She/her](#)

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--  
Allie Morris  
[Austin Bureau Correspondent](#)  
*The Dallas Morning News*

@MorrisReports  
[She/her](#)

**Know now.**  
**The Dallas Morning News**

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**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 9:21 AM  
**To:** 'Celine Castronuovo'  
**Subject:** RE: Media request for comment- Texas not hiring private contractor for election audit

Hi Celine,

Yes, I can confirm that Texas will not be hiring an outside contractor to conduct our audit of the 2020 General Election in 4 Texas Counties. I will forward you the e-mail with additional details, which are available on our web site here as well: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/about/forms/9-28-21-forensic-audit-summary.pdf>

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Celine Castronuovo [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 9:02 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** Media request for comment- Texas not hiring private contractor for election audit

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Good morning,

This is Celine Castronuovo, breaking news reporter at The Hill. I am reaching out for confirmation that the state will not be hiring a private contractor for the 2020 election audit of four Texas counties.

I would need to file this story ASAP, so would appreciate any details on the matter you can share at your earliest convenience.

Thank you,

**Celine Castronuovo**

Breaking News Reporter, The Hill

561-568-1879  
@cecelou18

---

**From:** Allison Harris [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 7, 2021 4:14 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: News Nation request — latest on election audit

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Thank you for this thorough response, Sam!

Allison Harris  
White House Correspondent  
News Nation  
214-384-5999

Sent from my iPhone

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 7, 2021 5:11:34 PM  
**To:** Allison Harris <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** RE: News Nation request — latest on election audit

Hi Allison,

Thanks for reaching out on this. For starters, I'd refer you to the press release our office sent on September 23<sup>rd</sup> announcing the four-county forensic election audit, available here:  
<https://www.sos.texas.gov/about/newsreleases/2021/092321.shtml>

Within that release, you'll find a 2-page memo outlining all the parameters of the audit, which is being conducted in 2 phases: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/about/forms/9-28-21-forensic-audit-summary.pdf>

Yes, the audit is still ongoing and will be moving forward to phase 2 (the comprehensive records examination) in the Spring of 2022. Yes, it will be conducted in just those four counties.

If you have any more questions let me know, and I'll do my best to answer them before your deadline.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**  
*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



**From:** Allison Harris <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 7, 2021 3:22 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** News Nation request — latest on election audit

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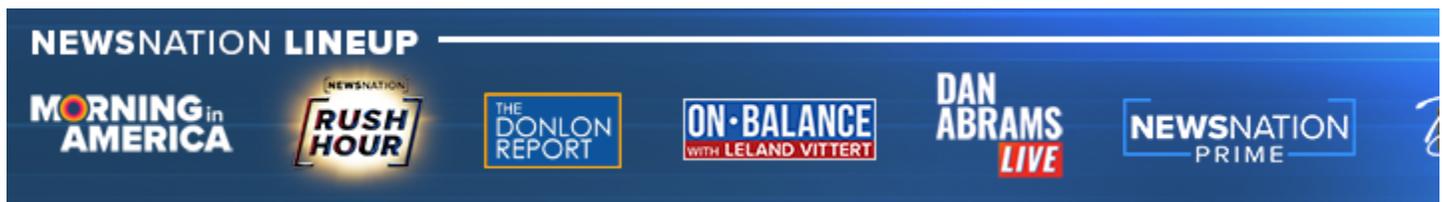
Sam,

I am a White House correspondent for a new startup cable network, News Nation. I was previously a reporter for the Fox affiliate in Dallas and am from Texas.

I'm looking for the latest on Texas' audit of the 2020 presidential results in Harris, Dallas, Tarrant and Collin. Is the audit ongoing and is it still adhering to just those four counties?

Thank you,

Allison Harris  
White House Correspondent  
NewsNation  
214-384-5999



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---

**From:** Hanson, Blake <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 30, 2021 2:37 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: Phase 1

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Great, thanks so much.

Blake Hanson  
Reporter & Anchor, KDFW/Fox 4  
469.818.9105  
[REDACTED]

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 30, 2021 2:09:34 PM  
**To:** Hanson, Blake <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** RE: Phase 1

Hi Blake,

Should be releasing the summary before COB tomorrow. The Secretary of State's office technically closes at noon, so likely tomorrow morning, if not early afternoon. I've added you to our press release list so you'll receive it when it's released.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Hanson, Blake <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 30, 2021 1:16 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Phase 1

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Hi Sam,

I wanted to check in and see when we can expect to get the summary of findings from Phase 1 of the election audit?

Blake Hanson  
Reporter & Anchor, KDFW/Fox 4  
469.818.9105  
[REDACTED]

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---

**From:** whit kennedy <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 3, 2022 10:21 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: Phase one audit

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Super. Thanks, Sam

On Mon, Jan 3, 2022 at 11:20 AM Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)> wrote:

Good Morning Whit,

Thanks for reaching out. A full and comprehensive list of what Phase 2 of our agency's full forensic audit of the 2020 General Election in Texas can be found here: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/forms/forensic-audit-phase-2.pdf>

Phase 2 is the final phase. We are currently working with each of the four counties being audited to schedule in-person visits by our Forensic Audit Division and will aim to complete these examinations this Spring.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** whit kennedy <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 3, 2022 7:52 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Phase one audit

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Sam,

I'm covering voter integrity issues for a group of conservative online papers out of Chicago.

Can you give me an idea of what phase 2 will cover (is that the final phase?) and when results are due?

Best,

Whit Kennedy

717 265 4634

---

**From:** Corse, Alexa [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 10:33 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: Question from Wall Street Journal / hiring for election audit

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Thanks Sam. I have one other Q - How much in funding is the SOS requesting from the state legislature for the audit?

On Wed, Sep 29, 2021 at 11:33 AM Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)> wrote:

Hi Alexa,

Yes. We will not be hiring an outside firm to conduct the audit. It will be conducted by our Elections Division in the Texas Secretary of State's office.

The parameters of the audit can be found on our web site here: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/about/forms/9-28-21-forensic-audit-summary.pdf>

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Corse, Alexa [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 10:28 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Question from Wall Street Journal / hiring for election audit

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Hi Sam,

Alexa Corse with WSJ here. I cover voting issues nationally and I'll be covering the recently announced audit in Texas. Could you confirm [this story](#) that Texas won't hire a private firm to conduct the audit and could you share the statement? Thanks so much.

--

Alexa Corse

**ELECTIONS REPORTER**

**THE WALL STREET JOURNAL**

**M:** 202 568 1427

**E:** [REDACTED] | **T:** @AlexaCorse

**A:** 1025 Connecticut Ave. NW Suite 800, Washington, D.C., 20036

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Alexa Corse  
**ELECTIONS REPORTER**

## THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

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**E:** [REDACTED] | **T:** @AlexaCorse

**A:** 1025 Connecticut Ave. NW Suite 800, Washington, D.C., 20036



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**From:** [Sam Taylor](#)  
**To:** "Richard Rickel"  
**Subject:** RE: Questions concerning Full Forensic 2020 Audit  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 5:21:22 PM

---

<https://www.sos.texas.gov/about/newsreleases/2021/092321.shtml>

---

**From:** Richard Rickel <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 5:20 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** Questions concerning Full Forensic 2020 Audit

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Hi S.O.S,

I am a constituent of *Williamson* county Texas. I am emailing you to ask for answers to the following questions.

1. When did the forensic audit start?
2. What company is performing the forensic audit?
3. What protocols are being followed?
4. Will the entirety of the audit be recorded and streamed live to the public?

I look forward to your attention to the matter and your timely reply.

Regards

Richard Rickel

**From:** Kimberly Reeves [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Friday, September 24, 2021 10:42 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: Question

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Thanks. For some reason, that didn't pop up the first time, but it did eventually.

On Thu, Sep 23, 2021 at 9:48 PM Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)> wrote:  
<https://www.sos.texas.gov/about/newsreleases/2021/092321.shtml>

Sam Taylor  
Texas Secretary of State's Office  
512-538-5293

---

**From:** Kimberly Reeves [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 23, 2021 8:23:09 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Question

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I'm hearing rumors that there is a SOS audit of the 2020 election returns. Any truth to this?

--



**Kimberly Reeves**  
Freelance Reporter

512-781-1455 | [REDACTED]  
<http://www.kimberlyreeves.com>  
PO Box 41004 Austin, TX 78704



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**Kimberly Reeves**  
Freelance Reporter

512-781-1455 [REDACTED]  
<http://www.kimberlyreeves.com>  
PO Box 41004 Austin, TX 78704



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---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 18, 2021 1:04 PM  
**To:** Randy Samuelson  
**Cc:** Joe Esparza  
**Subject:** Re: Sen Paxton's townhall meeting - Nov 17

Thanks so much, Randy! I think that is a perfect response and you are clear from our end to provide it. Appreciate it so much and thanks again for making sure everything went smoothly last night, it was a great event and feel free to let me know if any additional follow ups.

Best,

-Sam

---

**From:** Randy Samuelson <Randy.Samuelson@senate.texas.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 18, 2021 12:54 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** RE: Sen Paxton's townhall meeting - Nov 17

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Sam,

Thanks for being on the town hall last night with your boss. I now can put a name with a (virtual) face and I realize I see you nearly every day in the Capitol.

One of the individuals on the call last night sent us a question that he asked in the chat window and he sent a follow up email early this morning. I'm only pulling the question and not the rest of his comments as they are simply supporting information for his question.

His question: "Will the Collin county forensic audit include kinematic artifact detection, forensic computer analysis of the voting machines including any routers, servers, software, canvassing of voter rolls, and a complete hand count. Just like what was done in Maricopa County Arizona?"

My proposed response is to echo what Secretary Scott said in the phase 1 rollout. Phase 1 includes a cybersecurity review of the election equipment in the 4 counties, so yes, the audit does cover the forensic analysis of the software and hardware systems. The Secretary of State's office has also performed cybersecurity reviews of all 254 counties in the last two years and has identified needs to improve information technology security. The specifics of the vulnerabilities cannot be shared publicly as others may use that information to exploit any known vulnerabilities and increase future cyber threats.

--

Randy A. Samuelson

Chief of Staff, Senator Angela Paxton  
512-463-0108

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 17, 2021 1:36 PM  
**To:** Randy Samuelson <[Randy.Samuelson@senate.texas.gov](mailto:Randy.Samuelson@senate.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Sen Paxton's townhall meeting - Nov 17

Got it – thanks for the head's up!

Best,

-Sam

---

**From:** Randy Samuelson <[Randy.Samuelson@senate.texas.gov](mailto:Randy.Samuelson@senate.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 17, 2021 1:35 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Sen Paxton's townhall meeting - Nov 17

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We are now at 90 RSVP's for tonight. Erin Anderson from Texas Scorecard is a constituent in Allen and is registered.

--  
Randy A. Samuelson  
Chief of Staff, Senator Angela Paxton  
512-463-0108

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 16, 2021 8:43 AM  
**To:** Randy Samuelson <[Randy.Samuelson@senate.texas.gov](mailto:Randy.Samuelson@senate.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Sen Paxton's townhall meeting - Nov 17

Thanks so much, Randy! Will review and let you know if we have any questions/concerns. Feel free to send along additional questions/topics as they come up today. Appreciate it!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**  
*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Randy Samuelson <[Randy.Samuelson@senate.texas.gov](mailto:Randy.Samuelson@senate.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 16, 2021 6:42 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Sen Paxton's townhall meeting - Nov 17

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Sam,

I went through the format with Senator Paxton last night and she sent me her questions late last night.

Format wise:

- Virtual meeting
- Segment 1: Introduction (10 minutes)
- Segment 2: Election Audit (20 minutes)
- Segment 3: Senate Bill 1 and election integrity (20 minutes)
- Concluding questions from audience: (10 minutes)

Here are the specific questions that Senator Paxton will pose to Secretary Scott.

Election Audit topic:

- What is a forensic audit and could you provide information about the forensic audit process that your office has developed?
- 
- Does the SOS have a similar process as Arizona? What are the findings in Arizona going to be used for?
- Where are we in the timeline of the audit?
- Will the audit findings be used to craft future legislation to continue to improve election integrity while also making it easier to have access to the ballot?
- How can individuals get involved in the process? How can we help in Collin and Dallas Counties?
- Why didn't the legislature pass legislation to demand a full forensic audit of the election? Why isn't there a new law? (We anticipate an audience member asking this of Senator Paxton)

Senate Bill 1 and Election Integrity:

- Secretary Scott, do you have any comments on the implementation of Senate Bill 1? Will the new law be in effect prior to the 2022 primary election?
- 
- The legislature decreased penalties for illegal voting? Why did you do this and what efforts are being made to restore these criminal penalties? (We anticipate an audience member asking this of Senator Paxton)
- What did the legislature do to prevent fraud in the mail-in ballots for a person claiming a disability when they are not in fact disabled? (We anticipate an audience member asking this question)
- What are you doing to ensure that it remains easy to vote? Are voters disenfranchised under this new law? (We anticipate an audience member asking this question)

I've attached the complete script as it stands this morning. Senator Paxton is spontaneous with these, so she may throw in additional things for me to research and compile today or tomorrow as late as 5pm. She also throws audience questions to me to answer with constituents the next day at the office.

--

Randy Samuelson  
Chief of Staff, State Senator Angela Paxton  
512-463-0108

---

**From:** Pool, Michael E <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 21, 2021 11:42 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** RE: Spectrum News 1 Inquiry: Forensic Audit

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Thank you very much.  
mpool

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 21, 2021 11:12 AM  
**To:** Pool, Michael E <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] RE: Spectrum News 1 Inquiry: Forensic Audit

**CAUTION:** The e-mail below is from an external source. Please exercise caution before opening attachments, clicking links, or following guidance.

Hi Michael,

Yes, the audits have already started – Phase 1 is currently underway and Phase 2, which is the comprehensive document examination portion of the forensic audit, is set to begin in the Spring. For now, I'd refer you to our agency's memo to the four counties' elections administrators as to what the full forensic audit will entail:

<https://www.sos.texas.gov/about/forms/9-28-21-forensic-audit-summary.pdf>

Will have more information at a later date.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Pool, Michael E <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 21, 2021 10:43 AM

To: Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

Subject: Spectrum News 1 Inquiry: Forensic Audit

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Good morning Sam,

What is the latest full forensic audits in Collin, Dallas, Harris and Tarrant Counties? Have the audits started? If so, what has been discovered? Any changes in the tally? If the audits haven't started, when are the audits expected to begin?

Thank you very much,



Mike Pool | Sr. Producer, Spectrum News 1 | 214-208-6527

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**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 6, 2022 11:55 AM  
**To:** 'Darlenesanchez'  
**Subject:** RE: Tarrant County/ Epoch Times

Hi Darlene,

We've said from the beginning of this process that we plan to have our auditors conduct the in-person examinations this Spring: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/about/forms/9-28-21-forensic-audit-summary.pdf>

With our state's primary election coming up on March 1st, we are in the process of scheduling the on-site visits with each of the four counties at a mutually convenient time and location that will not disrupt voting in the primary elections.

With respect to the Temporary Restraining Order, you'd have to ask Tarrant County or search local court records to confirm who filed the original motion.

Best,

Sam Taylor  
Assistant Secretary of State for Communications  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293

-----Original Message-----

From: Darlenesanchez [REDACTED]  
Sent: Wednesday, January 5, 2022 8:12 PM  
To: Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
Subject: Tarrant County/ Epoch Times

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Hi Sam,

Just wanted to check in to see when you will be visiting counties in audit yet.

Also, I meant to ask if you know who filed restraining order/injunction about servers and hard drives used in 2020 election mentioned In Tarrant County response to audit - and do you have any documentation on what happened?

Thanks,  
Darlene McCormick Sanchez

Sent from my iPhone

---

**From:** Darlenesanchez <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 6, 2022 2:32 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: Tarrant County/ Epoch Times

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Hi Sam,

Thanks, just checking.

—Darlene

Sent from my iPhone

> On Jan 6, 2022, at 11:54 AM, Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov> wrote:

>

> Hi Darlene,

>

> We've said from the beginning of this process that we plan to have our auditors conduct the in-person examinations this Spring:

> <https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sos.texas.gov%2Fabout%2Fforms%2F9-28-21-forensic-audit-summary.pdf&data=04%7C01%7Csmtaylor%40sos.texas.gov%7C1c3a06c715b447bc7d8108d9d1538f1b%7C760188c0f63443a096dfec1b8eca6719%7C0%7C1%7C637770979091226070%7CUnknown%7CTWfpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C2000&data=xwS7kS7wWZy7wUbfVFPNI7vyrU3ISyrCPbs13QonuA%3D&reserved=0>

>

> With our state's primary election coming up on March 1st, we are in the process of scheduling the on-site visits with each of the four counties at a mutually convenient time and location that will not disrupt voting in the primary elections.

>

> With respect to the Temporary Restraining Order, you'd have to ask Tarrant County or search local court records to confirm who filed the original motion.

>

> Best,

>

> Sam Taylor

> Assistant Secretary of State for Communications

> Office of the Texas Secretary of State

> [smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

> Office: 512-463-6116

> Cell: 512-538-5293

>

>

>

>

>  
> -----Original Message-----  
> From: Darlenesanchez [REDACTED]  
> Sent: Wednesday, January 5, 2022 8:12 PM  
> To: Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
> Subject: Tarrant County/ Epoch Times  
>  
> CAUTION: This email originated from OUTSIDE of the SOS organization. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you are expecting the email and know that the content is safe. If you believe this to be a malicious or phishing email, please send this email as an attachment to Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov.  
>  
> Hi Sam,  
>  
> Just wanted to check in to see when you will be visiting counties in audit yet.  
>  
> Also, I meant to ask if you know who filed restraining order/injunction about servers and hard drives used in 2020 election mentioned In Tarrant County response to audit - and do you have any documentation on what happened?  
>  
> Thanks,  
> Darlene McCormick Sanchez  
>  
>  
>  
>  
>  
>  
>  
>  
> Sent from my iPhone

---

**From:** Audrey Henvey <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 10:05 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details

**Sensitivity:** Personal

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Hello, Sam,

Not a problem. I appreciate your help.

Best regards,

**Audrey Henvey**  
The Frisco Enterprise  
The McKinney Courier-Gazette  
The Celina Record  
[starlocalmedia.com](http://starlocalmedia.com)

**STAR LOCAL MEDIA**

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 10:03 AM  
**To:** Audrey Henvey <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** FW: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details

Hi Audrey,

Apologies for not including you on this – I sent as a one-off e-mail to a list of folks who had inquired about the audit details over the past several days, but forgot to include your e-mail. I'm so sorry about that, please let me know if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**  
*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 6:38 PM  
**Subject:** Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Evening, All –

Many of you have inquired about additional details relating to the full forensic election audit announced last week. Attached, below, and on our web site ([link here](#)), please find an outline of the parameters of the audit and relevant sections of the Texas Election Code. This information has already been provided to the Election Administrators in Dallas, Harris, Collin and Tarrant counties.

**I want to be absolutely crystal clear about one thing: no, we will not be hiring or contracting with an outside firm to conduct these audits.**

Best,

**Sam Taylor**  
*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



---

## **Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election**

The Texas Secretary of State's office has announced a full forensic audit of the 2020 General Election in Dallas, Harris, Tarrant and Collin counties. The full forensic audit is being conducted in two phases, the first of which is already underway. The purpose of this audit is to ensure all Texas voters can have confidence in the elections systems in our state, and to address any outstanding issues county election officials may face that undermines the integrity of our elections.

## **Phase 1: Testing Voting Machine Accuracy, Cybersecurity Assessments, and Identifying and Removing Ineligible Voters Who Cast Ballots in 2020 (Already Completed or Underway)**

- After every single Texas election, counties are required to conduct a partial manual count of electronic voting system ballots within 72 hours of the polls closing to ensure the accuracy of the tabulation of electronic voting systems results ([Sec. 127.201](#)).
- All counties are required to undergo an Election Security Assessment (ESA) of the county's election system ([Sec. 279.003](#)). All 254 counties have completed these assessments.
- Under both state and federal law, the Texas Secretary of State's office is empowered to maintain the accuracy of the statewide voter registration list to ensure that ineligible voters – including deceased individuals, individuals registered in multiple states or counties, and non-U.S. citizens – do not remain on the voter rolls ([Secs. 18.061 – 18.0681](#)).
- As part of the audit process, the office has received reports from the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) regarding voters who may have voted twice in state and across state lines. We have also received a report of persons who may have been deceased when a vote was cast in their name. Finally, we have identified potential non-U.S. citizen voters and have directed county voter registrars to take action to verify the eligibility of registered voters and cancel their registration if they do not present proof of eligibility. Once that action has been taken, our office evaluates the persons cancelled and refers any instances of possible illegal voting to the Office of the Texas Attorney General for investigation ([Sec. 31.006](#)).

## **Phase 2: Comprehensive Election Records Examination (Spring 2022)**

- As part of the Texas Secretary of State's duty to assist and advise all election authorities with regard to the application, operation, and interpretation of the Texas Election Code ([Sec. 31.004](#)) and to obtain and maintain uniformity in the application of the Code ([Sec. 31.003](#)), the office will conduct a comprehensive election records examination over the next several months to ensure election administration procedures were properly followed during the 2020 General Election.
- The records examined from each county will include – but are not limited to – the following types of documents:
  - Logic & Accuracy Testing Records for Voting Machines, including:
    - All test ballots voted
    - Test Deck Records
    - Testing Media
  - Early Voting and Election Day Materials, including:
    - List of registered voters used in the 2020 General Election
    - Daily Early Voting Rosters for in-person voting
    - Chain of Custody forms that document the seals on the ballot boxes
    - Chain of Custody delivery and pickup of equipment at voting sites
    - Statements of Residence
    - Reasonable Impediment Declarations
    - Limited Ballot Applications

- Audit Logs from applicable Voting System Devices
- List of Rejected Provisional Ballots and reason for rejection
- Ballot and Seal Certificates
- Hand Delivery of a Ballot by Mail Roster and Forms
- Receipts of Sealed Early Voting Ballot Boxes
- Signature Verification Committee Materials
- Early Voting Ballot Board Materials, including:
  - Receipt of Sealed Early Voting Ballot Boxes
  - Poll List of Mail Voters
  - Notice of Rejected Carriers and reasons
- Central Counting Station Plan
- Training Materials
- County election officials must retain these records for 22 months under both federal law ([52 USC 20701](#)) and state law ([Texas Election Code Sec. 66.058](#)).
- All of this information is available to the general public ([Sec. 1.012](#)).
- After a thorough examination of the abovementioned records and materials in each county, irregularities or deviations from election administration procedures that may have affected the accuracy of the electronic voting system ballot count could trigger a full manual recount of ballots in the affected precincts or polling locations, pursuant to the Secretary of State's authority to ensure the accuracy of the tabulation of electronic voting system results ([Sec. 127.202](#)).

**From:** [Sam Taylor](#)  
**To:** [Morris, Allison](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 7:15:46 PM  
**Attachments:** image001.png

---

Our Elections Division staff is conducting the audit. Spring '22 is the start date for phase 2, which will complete before September '22 when the records can be discarded.

-Sam

---

**From:** Morris, Allison <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 7:08 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details

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Thanks, Sam. When it says Spring 2022, is that the estimated completion date?  
Who in the office is conducting the audit?

On Tue, Sep 28, 2021 at 6:38 PM Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)> wrote:

Good Evening, All –

Many of you have inquired about additional details relating to the full forensic election audit announced last week. Attached, below, and on our web site ([link here](#)), please find an outline of the parameters of the audit and relevant sections of the Texas Election Code. This information has already been provided to the Election Administrators in Dallas, Harris, Collin and Tarrant counties.

**I want to be absolutely crystal clear about one thing: no, we will not be hiring or contracting with an outside firm to conduct these audits.**

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



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## **Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election**

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ensure that ineligible voters – including deceased individuals, individuals registered in multiple states or counties, and non-U.S. citizens – do not remain on the voter rolls ([Secs. 18.061 – 18.0681](#)).

- As part of the audit process, the office has received reports from the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) regarding voters who may have voted twice in state and across state lines. We have also received a report of persons who may have been deceased when a vote was cast in their name. Finally, we have identified potential non-U.S. citizen voters and have directed county voter registrars to take action to verify the eligibility of registered voters and cancel their registration if they do not present proof of eligibility. Once that action has been taken, our office evaluates the persons cancelled and refers any instances of possible illegal voting to the Office of the Texas Attorney General for investigation ([Sec. 31.006](#)).

## **Phase 2: Comprehensive Election Records Examination (Spring 2022)**

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- The records examined from each county will include – but are not limited to – the following types of documents:

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  - Chain of Custody delivery and pickup of equipment at voting sites
  - Statements of Residence
  - Reasonable Impediment Declarations
  - Limited Ballot Applications
  - Audit Logs from applicable Voting System Devices
  - List of Rejected Provisional Ballots and reason for rejection

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- Hand Delivery of a Ballot by Mail Roster and Forms
- Receipts of Sealed Early Voting Ballot Boxes
- Signature Verification Committee Materials
- Early Voting Ballot Board Materials, including:
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  - Poll List of Mail Voters
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--

Allie Morris

[Austin Bureau Correspondent](#)

*The Dallas Morning News*

@MorrisReports

[She/her](#)

**Know now.**

*The Dallas Morning News*

---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Friday, December 31, 2021 3:28 PM  
**To:** Allyson Waller  
**Subject:** Re: Texas Tribune - Follow Up Questions Phase 1 Election Audit

Hi Allyson,

You asked if I had anything to add, this would be it: <https://twitter.com/samuelmtaylor/status/1477027939963359233?s=21>

Feel free to reach out to Mr. Slattery.

Best and Happy New Year,

-Sam

---

**From:** Allyson Waller [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, December 31, 2021 2:29:14 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** Texas Tribune - Follow Up Questions Phase 1 Election Audit

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Hello,

My name is Allyson Waller, and I'm a reporter with The Texas Tribune.

I have some follow up questions related to the phase 1 results [in a forensic audit from the Texas Secretary of State into the 2020 general election.](#)

Here are my questions:

- Are cross-state duplicate votes rare? Is more than 500 duplicate votes a large number compared to what has been detected in previous elections? What are some reasons votes might be duplicated in several states for the same election? Is this indicative of fraud?
- Is more than 224,000 deceased voters removed from voting rolls a large number compared to what has been detected in previous elections? What about the 67 votes investigated for being possibly cast by deceased people? How high is that number compared to previous elections? Is it indicative of voter fraud?
- Are there reasons there might be discrepancies between ballots counted electronically vs. ballots counted by hand?

If I could hear from someone as soon as possible related to this, that would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

--



**Allyson Waller**  
General Assignment Reporter

[919 Congress Ave.](#) Sixth Floor  
Austin, TX 78701  
[www.texastribune.org](http://www.texastribune.org)

**M** (281)-825-1973  
Twitter: [@allyson\\_renee7](#)

---

**From:** Cassandra Pollock <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 3:20 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: Texas Tribune inquiry

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Thank you! Appreciate the quick response.

On Fri, Nov 19, 2021 at 3:19 PM Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)> wrote:

Hi Cassi,

Yes – you can attribute the following statement to me/the Texas Secretary of State’s office:

**“We thank Governor Abbott, Lieutenant Governor Patrick, Speaker Phelan, Senator Nelson and Representative Bonnen for approving critical funds to support the Texas Secretary of State’s Forensic Audit Division. In order to complete our ongoing full forensic audit of the 2020 General Election and conduct subsequent audits as required by SB 1, our agency will be using these funds to dedicate additional staff to oversee audit activities, including: verifying counties’ removal of ineligible voters from the rolls, meticulously reviewing each county’s election materials for our comprehensive document examination, and ensuring compliance with state and federal election laws. These resources are essential for maintaining the integrity of Texas elections and identifying issues that must be fixed in order to restore voters’ confidence in our state’s election systems.”**

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Cassandra Pollock <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 3:18 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Texas Tribune inquiry

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Hi Sam, it's Cassi with the Texas Tribune. Hope you're doing great.

Wanted to see if there was a statement from the SOS we could include about the emergency transfer of funds to the agency, announced this afternoon by Gov. Greg Abbott and other GOP leaders.

Please call anytime with questions: 972-358-8659.

Thanks,

Cassi

--

--

 THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

AMERICAN  
OVERSIGHT

TX-SOS-22-0148-F-000164

**Cassi Pollock**  
Reporter

919 Congress Avenue  
Sixth Floor  
Austin, TX 78701  
[www.texastribune.org](http://www.texastribune.org)

**M** (972) 358-8659

@cassi\_pollock

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**Cassi Pollock**  
Reporter

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Austin, TX 78701  
[www.texastribune.org](http://www.texastribune.org)

**M** (972) 358-8659

@cassi\_pollock

---

**From:** Souder, Elizabeth [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 17, 2021 10:21 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: FW: Opinion/Commentary Submission: Texas Secretary of State John B. Scott: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

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Thank you, Sam, I'll decline this time.

**Elizabeth Souder**  
Commentary and Sunday Opinion Editor  
*The Dallas Morning News*

Twitter: @esouder  
1954 Commerce St. Dallas TX 75201

Send a letter to the editor:  
[dallasnews.com/sendletters](https://dallasnews.com/sendletters)

**Real. *local.* Journalism.**  
*The Dallas Morning News*

On Tue, Nov 16, 2021 at 4:35 PM Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)> wrote:

Hi Elizabeth,

I send the below and attached op-ed submission from Texas Secretary of State John Scott to the viewpoints inbox, however wanted to be sure to bring it to your personal attention as well. I hope you and your team would consider reviewing this submission from the current Secretary regarding the full forensic audit of the 2020 election.

Thanks for your consideration and feel free to give me a call if you have any questions.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, November 16, 2021 4:27 PM

**To:** '[viewpoints@dallasnews.com](mailto:viewpoints@dallasnews.com)' <[viewpoints@dallasnews.com](mailto:viewpoints@dallasnews.com)>

**Cc:** '[editorialboard@dallasnews.com](mailto:editorialboard@dallasnews.com)' <[editorialboard@dallasnews.com](mailto:editorialboard@dallasnews.com)>

**Subject:** Opinion/Commentary Submission: Texas Secretary of State John B. Scott: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Afternoon,

On behalf of Texas Secretary of State John Scott, I am submitting the attached op-ed (also included below) on Texas' full forensic election audit, which is being conducted in four major Texas counties, including in your readership area of Dallas, Collin and Tarrant counties.

Please confirm receipt and let me know if you are interested in publishing the piece from Secretary Scott, and I'm happy to answer any questions you may have in the meantime.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

## **Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections**

John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State

Word Count: **653**

For the past several election cycles, voters have faced a crisis of confidence in the very system that underpins our representative form of government. Whether it was the specter of foreign interference in our elections or allegations of widespread mail ballot fraud during the pandemic, voters have been hit with a barrage of reasons to not trust the system.

And, unsurprisingly, it's starting to take its toll on their faith in the integrity of our elections.

According to a Pew poll released earlier this year, large shares of Americans of both parties believe there is cheating in elections, with [79% indicating illegal activity swings elections](#).

This is why, in order to restore voters' confidence in the strength and resilience of our election systems, Texas is conducting the largest and most comprehensive forensic audit of the 2020 General Election.

Over the next several months, the Texas Secretary of State's office will complete a top-to-bottom examination of election records in four of Texas' largest counties – Harris, Dallas, Tarrant and Collin – accounting for 35% of all votes cast in the historically high-turnout election in Texas last year.

While manual recounts, election security assessments, and verification of voters' eligibility has already been conducted, the Texas Forensic Audit goes well beyond any other legislative election audit proposals or models in other states. Our audit examines, among other items: chain of custody records of voted ballots and voting equipment, audit logs from electronic voting systems, and materials from Early Voting Ballot Boards and Signature Verification Committees to ensure that mail ballots were not subjected to tampering and match the list of voters who requested them.

Importantly, this will be the only truly 'forensic' audit of the 2020 election, using analytical tools to examine the literal nuts and bolts of election administration to determine if any illegal activity may have occurred. Using the authority given to our agency by the Texas Legislature, we will conduct a manual recount of any and all precincts affected by election irregularities.

We will follow the facts, follow the evidence, and ensure any cases of illegal voting or election crimes are investigated by the proper law enforcement authorities, including the Texas Attorney General's office.

Texans should be encouraged by the dedicated county election officials who work cycle after cycle to conduct elections with the integrity and professionalism that voters deserve.

But voters also need peace of mind – they need assurances that Texas election law and federal laws protecting the rights of legal, eligible voters are being followed at every step in the process. When irregularities occur, no matter how inconsequential they may seem, it takes a concerted effort to restore faith in elections among voters.

For example, when [a box of uncounted ballots was found in a Midland ISD bond election in 2019](#), our office moved swiftly to retrace the paths of those ballots to find out exactly how they were

misplaced, determine if any illegal activity had occurred, and identify and fix any deficiencies that led to the [election-changing irregularity](#).

Using those same methods and techniques, the Texas Secretary of State's office will endeavor to deliver the same peace of mind to Texas voters and ensure that any irregularities that compromise the integrity of our elections are uncovered, fixed, and not repeated in future elections.

Most importantly, we are conducting this forensic election audit without any preconceived notions about what we are going to find. We will separate evidence from hearsay, facts from rumors, and empirical data from unverifiable theories.

Ultimately, we want to make sure every single eligible Texas voter – regardless of political affiliation – knows that voting in our state is fair and secure, and that only legal votes are cast and counted in Texas elections.

Any crack in the confidence of our elections is a crack in the foundation of our democracy. We must restore confidence in the integrity of our elections before the entire structure crumbles under the weight of mistrust.

*John B. Scott is the 114<sup>th</sup> Texas Secretary of State.*

---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 5:16 PM  
**To:** 'Mankad, Raj'  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Thank you, have a great weekend!

Best,

-Sam

---

**From:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 5:11 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

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Thanks. We're good to go.

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 5:09 PM  
**To:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Raj,

No problem! See below in bold for references requested. Let me know if this works, and feel free to give me a call if needed and I'll be here to chat through any additional changes needed!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**  
*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



**From:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 4:29 PM

**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

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Sam,

Sorry to send these edits so late before the weekend. The yellow underlining represents cuts or notes. The blue represents added language. When do you think you can get back to me?

Raj

## Full forensic audit will restore faith in Texas elections

By John B. Scott

For the past several election cycles, voters have faced a crisis of confidence in the very system that underpins our representative form of government. Whether it was the specter of foreign interference in our elections or allegations of widespread mail ballot fraud during the pandemic, voters have been hit with a barrage of reasons to **doubt not trust** the system.

And, unsurprisingly, it's starting to take its toll on their faith in the integrity of our elections.

According to a Pew **Research Center** poll released earlier this year, large shares of Americans of both parties believe there is cheating in elections, with **79 percent indicating candidates engage in illegal activity at least sometimes during swings elections.** **[NOTE: "36% of Americans say candidates often do illegal things...43% say this happens sometimes"]**

This is why, in order to restore voters' confidence in the strength and resilience of our election systems, Texas is conducting the largest and most comprehensive forensic audit of the 2020 General Election.

Over the next several months, the Texas Secretary of State's office will complete a top-to-bottom examination of election records in the two largest counties with Democratic Commissioners Courts — Harris and Dallas — as well as the two largest counties with Republican Commissioners Courts — Tarrant and Collin — accounting for [NOTE: Please share math on 35 percent?][The overall turnout statewide in 2020 was 11,315,056. The vote totals for the four counties being audited were as follows: Harris – 1,640,818, Dallas – 919,504, Tarrant – 834,697, Collin – 490,856. Those four counties combined had 3,885,875 votes cast, which is 34.3% of the 11.3 million statewide turnout figure. These are all available on our election results portal here: <https://results.texas-election.com/county> ] 35 percent of all votes cast in the historically high-turnout election in Texas last year. Commissioners Courts oversee each county's elections administrators, with whom our office will be working closely to obtain the materials and information we need to complete the full forensic audit.

While counties [NOTE: Just to clarify, who has already conducted these three things?] [the county election officials conduct partial manual counts of all races in at least 1% of election precincts within 72 hours after the polls close in order to ensure the accuracy of the tabulation of electronic voting machines, per [Sec. 127.201 of the Texas Election Code](#). Have added a word to distinguish between these partial manual counts and the full manual recounts referenced below] partial manual recounts, election security assessments and verification of voters' voter eligibility verification have already been conducted, the Texas Forensic Audit goes well beyond any other legislative election audit proposals or models in other states. Our audit examines, among other items: chain of custody records of voted ballots and voting equipment, audit logs from electronic voting systems, and materials from Early Voting Ballot Boards and Signature Verification Committees to ensure that mail ballots were not subjected to tampering and match the list of voters who requested them.

Importantly, this will be the only truly [NOTE: Pennsylvania says it is conducting a forensic audit. How is that not a true one?][[Pennsylvania's forensic audit only involves a subpoena of voter registration records as well as e-mails between county election officials and the PA Secretary of State between November 2020 and May 2021](#) – it does not examine actual election records, voting machines, logic and accuracy tests of those machines, etc. and therefore does not go as far in detecting potential illegal activity as [Texas' forensic audit](#)] “forensic” audit of the 2020 election, using analytical tools to examine the literal nuts and bolts of election administration to determine if any illegal activity may have occurred. Using the authority given to our agency by the Texas Legislature, we will conduct additional a full manual recounts of any and all precincts affected by election irregularities [NOTE: The previous paragraph states that manual recounts have already been done.]. [As noted above, the manual recounts conducted automatically after each election only represent 1% of all precincts, whereas our office's authority to conduct a full manual recount of any number of votes in any

number of precincts allows us to cover 100% of all ballots cast in those affected precincts. [Texas Election Code Sec. 127.202](#)]

We will follow the facts, follow the evidence, and ensure any cases of illegal voting or election crimes are investigated by the proper law enforcement authorities, including the Texas Attorney General's Office.

Texans should be encouraged by the dedicated county election officials who work cycle after cycle to conduct elections with the integrity and professionalism that voters deserve.

But voters also need peace of mind — they need assurances that Texas election law and federal laws protecting the rights of legal, eligible voters are being followed at every step in the process. When irregularities occur, no matter how inconsequential they may seem, it takes a concerted effort to restore voters' faith in elections among voters.

For example, after when a recount in a 2019 Midland ISD bond election flipped the results, showed that more than 800 ballots were unaccounted for, our office worked meticulously to retrace the steps of local election officials and a box of 836 uncounted ballots was discovered that ended up flipping the election again. Our office worked meticulously to retrace the steps of local election officials. We were able to determine exactly how they were misplaced and implement targeted training to fix any deficiencies that led to the election-changing irregularity.

Using those same methods and techniques, the Texas Secretary of State's Office will endeavor to deliver the same peace of mind to Texas voters and ensure that any irregularities that compromise the integrity of our elections are uncovered, fixed and not repeated in future elections.

We will work to investigate claims of irregularities in Harris County, such as the allegation that the county initially reported 1,884 more votes than voters who checked in across several drive-thru locations during the 2020 General Election.

Most importantly, we are conducting this forensic election audit without any preconceived notions about what we are going to find. We will separate evidence from hearsay, facts from rumors, and empirical data from unverifiable theories.

Ultimately, we want to make sure every single eligible Texas voter — regardless of political affiliation — knows that voting in our state is fair and secure, and that only legal votes are cast and counted in Texas elections.

Any crack in the confidence of our elections is a crack in the foundation of our democracy. We must restore confidence in the integrity of our elections before the entire structure crumbles under the weight of mistrust.

*John B. Scott is the 114th Texas secretary of state.*

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 3:27 PM  
**To:** Mankad, Raj <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Of course! Just wanted to make sure we were still set for publication this weekend and resolve any additional edits needed to the piece. Appreciate it!

Best,

-Sam

---

**From:** Mankad, Raj <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 3:25 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

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Thanks for that update. Can you give me about 30 more minutes?

Raj

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 3:06 PM  
**To:** Mankad, Raj <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Raj,

Just wanted to flag that the [legislature has approved \\$4M in additional funds for our agency to conduct the election audit](#), both for the 2020 General Election and for election audits as required under SB 1. This makes the piece all the more timely for Sunday's opinion section. Let me know if any additional changes are needed or if there's additional feedback from your editorial team.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 11:34 AM

**To:** 'Mankad, Raj' <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Raj,

That's exactly the type of claim that our audit will investigate and, if not true, debunk and, if true, provide a full detailed report of what happened. We haven't been given access to the documents yet. And, as HC has reported, the [Harris County Commissioners court has openly opposed complying with the audit or our request for documents](#), so we're weighing our options on how to obtain these documents in order to verify/debunk this claim in our audit findings.

To be fair, can we characterize it as a claim? Such as:

**"We will work to investigate claims of irregularities in Harris County, such as [the allegation that the county initially reported 1,884 more votes than voters who checked in across several drive-thru locations during the 2020 General Election.](#)"**

Let me know if that works better. Don't want to get ahead of our audit findings and provide a possible explanation or theory of how that number came to be, because we haven't been provided the documents yet, which include the sign-in sheets for those drive-thru voting locations in Harris County.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 11:22 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

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Hello Sam,

I'm still expecting one more editor to read the piece.

I do have one concern with the added claim on Harris County: "We will work to determine why, for example, Harris County recorded 1,884 more votes than voters who checked in across several drive-thru locations during the 2020 General Election."

The only source for that 1,884 number is Bettencourt. The Chronicle article that notes that claim from Bettencourt doesn't provide any detail. I would either like to cut that sentence or for the secretary of state's office to provide some explanation of how that number came to be. Are there official tallies that you can point me to that show that discrepancy?

Best wishes,  
Raj

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 11:07 AM  
**To:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Morning Raj,

Just wanted to check back in to see if there were any additional edits on the Secretary's op-ed that we need to review. As long as they are not too substantive, we can probably sign off very quickly. Let me know and I'll make sure to give them a look today. Thanks!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**  
*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 18, 2021 9:13 AM  
**To:** 'Mankad, Raj' [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Sure, no problem! Let me know when you have additional changes to review and we'll be happy to sign off when ready. Thank you for your time!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 18, 2021 9:11 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

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Hello Sam,

I think it's a stronger piece with the changes. I'm planning on publishing it Sunday. I will likely have some additional edits for you to review, hopefully before the end of the day.

Thanks for your patience and persistence as well. We're pulled in a lot of directions and I wish I could get back to everyone more efficiently.

Best wishes,  
Raj

Raj Mankad  
Op-Ed Editor  
Houston Chronicle

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 17, 2021 4:04 PM  
**To:** Mankad, Raj <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] FW: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Afternoon Raj,

Let me know if y'all are interested in publishing the updated version of the piece (attached here). This is still being offered as an exclusive to the Chronicle if you choose to publish it. Thanks again for your time, feedback, and consideration.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 17, 2021 11:22 AM  
**To:** 'Mankad, Raj' <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Thank you for the feedback, Raj. Attached, please find an updated version of the piece addressing your comments.

To answer your first question, the theme of the piece is restoring confidence among a voting public that has voiced diminished faith in our election systems. Nevertheless, we added a notable example in Harris county that specifically

involves a discrepancy in the number of votes cast vs. the number of voters who checked in at drive-thru locations in Harris County in 2020. This is an example of the type of irregularity that, while maybe not nefarious in nature, does diminish voters' confidence in the integrity of elections if it is not resolved and explained by an objective third party – which is the role our agency is taking on through this election audit.

To your second question about 'why these four counties?' – as noted in the updated piece, these are the two largest counties with Democratic and Republican Commissioners Courts, who oversee the elections offices in each county. It is only fair that we examine the two largest Democratic and two largest Republican counties, rather than choosing the four largest counties by population, which would undoubtedly be panned as a partisan 'witch hunt' against Democratic-leaning counties only. If you'd like that clarified more in the piece, we're happy to make adjustments as needed.

Thanks again for your time to carefully review and consider the piece, and please let me know ASAP if you'd like to publish the attached version.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 17, 2021 9:15 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

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Hello Sam,

I'm open to publishing this piece but there are a couple of counter arguments that I'd like the op-ed to anticipate.

One is that there haven't been specific allegations of irregularities in Texas. The Texas AG devoted considerable resources to look for fraud and found almost nothing, and nothing that would impact the integrity of the elections. Why should there be an audit here? The previous secretary of state said that the election in Texas was secure.

And why just those four counties? I think our readers will be quick to point out that the one example of an election-changing irregularity cited in the piece took place in a county that's not being audited.

Best wishes,  
Raj

Raj Mankad  
Op-Ed Editor  
Houston Chronicle

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 16, 2021 10:05 AM  
**To:** Mankad, Raj <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Raj,

Just checking back in on this submission. Feel free to give me a call on my direct line if any questions – 512-463-6116.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Monday, November 15, 2021 3:12 PM  
**To:** 'Mankad, Raj' <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Got it – let me know if any questions in the meantime. Thanks!

Best,

-Sam

---

**From:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Monday, November 15, 2021 2:58 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

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Hello Sam,

I need a little more time to finish reviewing it.

Best wishes,  
Raj

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 15, 2021 12:10 PM  
**To:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Raj,

Circling back on the Secretary's op-ed submission. Have you/your team had an opportunity to review it yet? Let me know, thank you!

Best,

Sam Taylor  
Texas Secretary of State's office  
512-463-6116

---

**From:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, November 12, 2021 9:01 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

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Good morning,

I've received the op-ed and will be back in touch early next week.

Best wishes,  
Raj

Raj Mankad  
Op-Ed Editor  
Houston Chronicle

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Friday, November 12, 2021 8:45 AM

**To:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED] >

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] FW: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Morning Raj,

Passing this along to you because I received an out-of-office reply from Lisa.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Friday, November 12, 2021 8:42 AM

**To:** 'viewpoints@chron.com' <[viewpoints@chron.com](mailto:viewpoints@chron.com)>; 'outlook@chron.com' <[outlook@chron.com](mailto:outlook@chron.com)>

**Cc:** [REDACTED] >

**Subject:** Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of

Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Morning,

On behalf of Texas Secretary of State John B. Scott, I am submitting the attached op-ed on our agency's full forensic audit of the 2020 Election. In the op-ed, Secretary Scott makes clear that the purpose of the audit is to restore voters' confidence in the integrity of our election system – which has been brought into question by critics on both sides of the political aisle since 2016. Contrary to narratives [published in the Chronicle](#) and elsewhere that Secretary Scott's previous representation of former President Trump disqualifies him to run an independent and objective audit, the piece makes clear that our agency approaches this election audit with no preconceived notions regarding what the results and conclusions will be. Secretary Scott's legal career has been defined by following the evidence and the facts, which is exactly what the Texas Secretary of State's office is doing in undertaking the full forensic election audit in Harris, Dallas, Tarrant and Collin counties.

We'd like to submit this piece **exclusively** to the Houston Chronicle for publication. Please let me know if you are interested in publishing this piece early next week, as I understand we may have missed the deadline for a Sunday opinion publication.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 17, 2021 11:22 AM  
**To:** 'Mankad, Raj'  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Attachments:** John B. Scott\_OpEd Submission\_Houston Chronicle\_11.17.21.docx  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Thank you for the feedback, Raj. Attached, please find an updated version of the piece addressing your comments.

To answer your first question, the theme of the piece is restoring confidence among a voting public that has voiced diminished faith in our election systems. Nevertheless, we added a notable example in Harris county that specifically involves a discrepancy in the number of votes cast vs. the number of voters who checked in at drive-thru locations in Harris County in 2020. This is an example of the type of irregularity that, while maybe not nefarious in nature, does diminish voters' confidence in the integrity of elections if it is not resolved and explained by an objective third party – which is the role our agency is taking on through this election audit.

To your second question about 'why these four counties?' – as noted in the updated piece, these are the two largest counties with Democratic and Republican Commissioners Courts, who oversee the elections offices in each county. It is only fair that we examine the two largest Democratic and two largest Republican counties, rather than choosing the four largest counties by population, which would undoubtedly be panned as a partisan 'witch hunt' against Democratic-leaning counties only. If you'd like that clarified more in the piece, we're happy to make adjustments as needed.

Thanks again for your time to carefully review and consider the piece, and please let me know ASAP if you'd like to publish the attached version.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 17, 2021 9:15 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity

of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

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Hello Sam,

I'm open to publishing this piece but there are a couple of counter arguments that I'd like the op-ed to anticipate.

One is that there haven't been specific allegations of irregularities in Texas. The Texas AG devoted considerable resources to look for fraud and found almost nothing, and nothing that would impact the integrity of the elections. Why should there be an audit here? The previous secretary of state said that the election in Texas was secure.

And why just those four counties? I think our readers will be quick to point out that the one example of an election-changing irregularity cited in the piece took place in a county that's not being audited.

Best wishes,

Raj

Raj Mankad  
Op-Ed Editor  
Houston Chronicle

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, November 16, 2021 10:05 AM

**To:** Mankad, Raj <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Raj,

Just checking back in on this submission. Feel free to give me a call on my direct line if any questions – 512-463-6116.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Monday, November 15, 2021 3:12 PM  
**To:** 'Mankad, Raj' <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Got it – let me know if any questions in the meantime. Thanks!

Best,

-Sam

---

**From:** Mankad, Raj <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 15, 2021 2:58 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

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Hello Sam,

I need a little more time to finish reviewing it.

Best wishes,  
Raj

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 15, 2021 12:10 PM  
**To:** Mankad, Raj <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Raj,

Circling back on the Secretary's op-ed submission. Have you/your team had an opportunity to review it yet? Let me know, thank you!

Best,

Sam Taylor  
Texas Secretary of State's office  
512-463-6116

---

**From:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, November 12, 2021 9:01 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

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Good morning,

I've received the op-ed and will be back in touch early next week.

Best wishes,  
Raj

Raj Mankad  
Op-Ed Editor  
Houston Chronicle

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 12, 2021 8:45 AM  
**To:** Mankad, Raj [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] FW: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Morning Raj,

Passing this along to you because I received an out-of-office reply from Lisa.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**  
*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Friday, November 12, 2021 8:42 AM

**To:** 'viewpoints@chron.com' <[viewpoints@chron.com](mailto:viewpoints@chron.com)>; 'outlook@chron.com' <[outlook@chron.com](mailto:outlook@chron.com)>

**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Morning,

On behalf of Texas Secretary of State John B. Scott, I am submitting the attached op-ed on our agency's full forensic audit of the 2020 Election. In the op-ed, Secretary Scott makes clear that the purpose of the audit is to restore voters' confidence in the integrity of our election system – which has been brought into question by critics on both sides of the political aisle since 2016. Contrary to narratives [published in the Chronicle](#) and elsewhere that Secretary Scott's previous representation of former President Trump disqualifies him to run an independent and objective audit, the piece makes clear that our agency approaches this election audit with no preconceived notions regarding what the results and conclusions will be. Secretary Scott's legal career has been defined by following the evidence and the facts, which is exactly what the Texas Secretary of State's office is doing in undertaking the full forensic election audit in Harris, Dallas, Tarrant and Collin counties.

We'd like to submit this piece **exclusively** to the Houston Chronicle for publication. Please let me know if you are interested in publishing this piece early next week, as I understand we may have missed the deadline for a Sunday opinion publication.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



## Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State

Word Count: **733**

For the past several election cycles, voters have faced a crisis of confidence in the very system that underpins our representative form of government. Whether it was the specter of foreign interference in our elections or allegations of widespread mail ballot fraud during the pandemic, voters have been hit with a barrage of reasons to not trust the system.

And, unsurprisingly, it's starting to take its toll on their faith in the integrity of our elections.

According to a Pew poll released earlier this year, large shares of Americans of both parties believe there is cheating in elections, with [79% indicating illegal activity swings elections](#).

This is why, in order to restore voters' confidence in the strength and resilience of our election systems, Texas is conducting the largest and most comprehensive forensic audit of the 2020 General Election.

Over the next several months, the Texas Secretary of State's office will complete a top-to-bottom examination of election records in the **two largest counties with Democratic Commissioners Courts – Harris and Dallas – as well as the two largest counties with Republican Commissioners Courts – Tarrant and Collin – accounting for 35% of all votes cast in the historically high-turnout election in Texas last year. Commissioners Courts oversee each county's Elections Administrators, with whom our office will be working closely to obtain the materials and information we need to complete the full forensic audit.**

While manual recounts, election security assessments, and verification of voters' eligibility has already been conducted, the Texas Forensic Audit goes well beyond any other legislative election audit proposals or models in other states. Our audit examines, among other items: chain of custody records of voted ballots and voting equipment, audit logs from electronic voting systems, and materials from Early Voting Ballot Boards and Signature Verification Committees to ensure that mail ballots were not subjected to tampering and match the list of voters who requested them.

Importantly, this will be the only truly 'forensic' audit of the 2020 election, using analytical tools to examine the literal nuts and bolts of election administration to determine if any illegal activity may have occurred. Using the authority given to our agency by the Texas Legislature, we will conduct a manual recount of any and all precincts affected by election irregularities.

We will follow the facts, follow the evidence, and ensure any cases of illegal voting or election crimes are investigated by the proper law enforcement authorities, including the Texas Attorney General's office.

Texans should be encouraged by the dedicated county election officials who work cycle after cycle to conduct elections with the integrity and professionalism that voters deserve.

But voters also need peace of mind – they need assurances that Texas election law and federal laws protecting the rights of legal, eligible voters are being followed at every step in the process. When irregularities occur, no matter how inconsequential they may seem, it takes a concerted effort to restore faith in elections among voters.

For example, when a recount in a 2019 Midland ISD bond election showed that more than 800 ballots were unaccounted for, our office worked meticulously to retrace the steps of local election officials and [discovered a box of uncounted ballots](#). We were able to determine exactly how they were misplaced and implement targeted training to fix any deficiencies that led to the [election-changing irregularity](#).

Using those same methods and techniques, the Texas Secretary of State's office will endeavor to deliver the same peace of mind to Texas voters and ensure that any irregularities that compromise the integrity of our elections are uncovered, fixed, and not repeated in future elections.

We will work to determine why, for example, Harris County [recorded 1,884 more votes than voters who checked in across several drive-thru locations during the 2020 General Election](#).

Most importantly, we are conducting this forensic election audit without any preconceived notions about what we are going to find. We will separate evidence from hearsay, facts from rumors, and empirical data from unverifiable theories.

Ultimately, we want to make sure every single eligible Texas voter – regardless of political affiliation – knows that voting in our state is fair and secure, and that only legal votes are cast and counted in Texas elections.

Any crack in the confidence of our elections is a crack in the foundation of our democracy. We must restore confidence in the integrity of our elections before the entire structure crumbles under the weight of mistrust.

*John B. Scott is the 114<sup>th</sup> Texas Secretary of State.*

---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 16, 2021 1:28 PM  
**To:** 'Mankad, Raj'  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Raj,

Wanted to circle back on this to see if you could provide me a general timeline for when you and your team expect to complete your review of the submission. If you don't expect to finish the review before mid-day tomorrow, I may have to take the Secretary's op-ed submission to another publication, although we would *strongly* prefer to seek publication in the Chronicle. Please let me know so that I can plan accordingly. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 16, 2021 10:05 AM  
**To:** 'Mankad, Raj' <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Raj,

Just checking back in on this submission. Feel free to give me a call on my direct line if any questions – 512-463-6116.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor

**Sent:** Monday, November 15, 2021 3:12 PM

**To:** 'Mankad, Raj' <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Got it – let me know if any questions in the meantime. Thanks!

Best,

-Sam

---

**From:** Mankad, Raj <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Monday, November 15, 2021 2:58 PM

**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

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Hello Sam,

I need a little more time to finish reviewing it.

Best wishes,

Raj

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Monday, November 15, 2021 12:10 PM

**To:** Mankad, Raj <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith

in Integrity of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Raj,

Circling back on the Secretary's op-ed submission. Have you/your team had an opportunity to review it yet? Let me know, thank you!

Best,

Sam Taylor  
Texas Secretary of State's office  
512-463-6116

---

**From:** Mankad, Raj <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Friday, November 12, 2021 9:01 AM

**To:** Sam Taylor

**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

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Good morning,

I've received the op-ed and will be back in touch early next week.

Best wishes,  
Raj

Raj Mankad  
Op-Ed Editor  
Houston Chronicle

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Friday, November 12, 2021 8:45 AM

**To:** Mankad, Raj <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] FW: Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Morning Raj,

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Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Friday, November 12, 2021 8:42 AM

**To:** 'viewpoints@chron.com' <[viewpoints@chron.com](mailto:viewpoints@chron.com)>; 'outlook@chron.com' <[outlook@chron.com](mailto:outlook@chron.com)>

**Cc:** [REDACTED] >

**Subject:** Op-Ed Submission: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State: Full Forensic Audit Will Restore Faith in Integrity of Texas Elections

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Morning,

On behalf of Texas Secretary of State John B. Scott, I am submitting the attached op-ed on our agency's full forensic audit of the 2020 Election. In the op-ed, Secretary Scott makes clear that the purpose of the audit is to restore voters' confidence in the integrity of our election system – which has been brought into question by critics on both sides of the political aisle since 2016. Contrary to narratives [published in the Chronicle](#) and elsewhere that Secretary Scott's previous representation of former President Trump disqualifies him to run an independent and objective audit, the piece makes clear that our agency approaches this election audit with no preconceived notions regarding what the results and conclusions will be. Secretary Scott's legal career has been defined by following the evidence and the facts, which is exactly what the Texas Secretary of State's office is doing in undertaking the full forensic election audit in Harris, Dallas, Tarrant and Collin counties.

We'd like to submit this piece **exclusively** to the Houston Chronicle for publication. Please let me know if you are interested in publishing this piece early next week, as I understand we may have missed the deadline for a Sunday opinion publication.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Sam Taylor](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Date:** Thursday, October 7, 2021 10:39:46 AM  
**Attachments:** [image002.jpg](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.jpg](#)  
[Taylor\(audit\)93021.mp3](#)  
[Taylor\(Dominion\)93021.mp3](#)  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

---

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Hey Sam,

I apologize for not sending the audio earlier. This email got lost in the mix.

Your files are attached!



## Kami Logan

98.3 KXDJ Radio  
Business Manager/Traffic Director  
2402 S. Main  
PO Box 830  
Perryton, TX 79070  
Phone: 806.648.2650  
Cell: 806.202.0192  
Fax: 806.648.2652

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 30, 2021 11:52 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** RE: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Kami,

Yes! You've been added to our press release list and will receive all official communications from our office going forward. If you have any questions or need any additional information in the meantime, please feel free to reach out to me directly.

Can you send me a link to the audio files once they are posted live? Thanks so much!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 30, 2021 10:40 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

**CAUTION:** This email originated from OUTSIDE of the SOS organization. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you are expecting the email and know that the content is safe. If you believe this to be a malicious or phishing email, please send this email as an attachment to [informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov](mailto:informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov).

Thanks for all this, Sam! I will definitely add these links to the story when I post them later with pieces of your audio files. This is extremely helpful!

We really appreciate you being available to us.

Have you added me to the list for when you will send out updates on all this?



**Kami Logan**

98.3 KXDJ Radio

Business Manager/Traffic Director

2402 S. Main

PO Box 830

Perryton, TX 79070

Phone: 806.648.2650

Cell: 806.202.0192

Fax: 806.648.2652

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Thursday, September 30, 2021 10:10 AM

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Kami!

Thanks for having me on this morning and please tell Chris thanks for his excellent questions and the conversation!

Here's the Dominion reports from our office:

<https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/laws/dominion.shtml>

As you can see, they were denied certification in 2013, 2018, and most recently, 2020. Here's a direct link to the 2020 report: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/forms/sysexam/dominion-d-suite-5.5-a.pdf>

Here was our conclusion:

*"Specifically, the examiner reports raise concerns about whether the Democracy Suite 5.5-A system is suitable for its intended purpose; operates efficiently and accurately; and is safe from fraudulent or unauthorized manipulation. Therefore, the Democracy Suite 5.5-A system and corresponding hardware devices do not meet the standards for certification prescribed by Section 122.001 of the Texas Election Code."*

Let me know if this is something y'all would be willing to post to your website alongside a story with the interview. Happy to help in any way I can!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 12:17 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** RE: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Great! Here's the full memo so you can pass along to him:

<https://www.sos.texas.gov/about/forms/9-28-21-forensic-audit-summary.pdf>

Let me know if any questions in the meantime. Otherwise, we'll chat tomorrow morning!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 12:08 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

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Thanks Sam! I think Chris will just go off what you send as far as his questions are concerned.



# Kami Logan

98.3 KXDJ Radio  
Business Manager/Traffic Director  
2402 S. Main  
PO Box 830  
Perryton, TX 79070  
Phone: 806.648.2650  
Cell: 806.202.0192  
Fax: 806.648.2652

---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 10:22 AM

**To:** [REDACTED] >

**Subject:** FW: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Kami,

Thanks for reaching out on this! As I mentioned, we released additional details of the full scope of the audit – Phase 1 of which is already underway and Phase 2 of which is set to begin next Spring in Dallas, Harris, Tarrant and Collin Counties (see attached and below).

Happy to block off 9:45 – 10:15 tomorrow for the interview, in case it runs long. Please let me know if there's any particular topics or questions Chris wants to cover and I'll make sure I'm prepared to address them.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 6:38 PM  
**Subject:** Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Evening, All –

Many of you have inquired about additional details relating to the full forensic election audit announced last week. Attached, below, and on our web site ([link here](#)), please find an outline of the parameters of the audit and relevant sections of the Texas Election Code. This information has already been provided to the Election Administrators in Dallas, Harris, Collin and Tarrant counties.

**I want to be absolutely crystal clear about one thing: no, we will not be hiring or contracting with an outside firm to conduct these audits.**

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



---

## **Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election**

The Texas Secretary of State's office has announced a full forensic audit of the 2020 General Election in Dallas, Harris, Tarrant and Collin counties. The full forensic audit is being conducted in two phases, the first of which is already underway. The purpose of this audit is to ensure all Texas voters can have confidence in the elections systems in our state, and to address any outstanding issues county election officials may face that undermines the integrity of our elections.

### **Phase 1: Testing Voting Machine Accuracy, Cybersecurity Assessments, and Identifying and Removing Ineligible Voters Who Cast Ballots in 2020 (Already Completed or Underway)**

- After every single Texas election, counties are required to conduct a partial manual count of electronic voting system ballots within 72 hours of the polls closing to ensure the accuracy of the tabulation of electronic voting systems

results ([Sec. 127.201](#)).

- All counties are required to undergo an Election Security Assessment (ESA) of the county's election system ([Sec. 279.003](#)). All 254 counties have completed these assessments.
- Under both state and federal law, the Texas Secretary of State's office is empowered to maintain the accuracy of the statewide voter registration list to ensure that ineligible voters – including deceased individuals, individuals registered in multiple states or counties, and non-U.S. citizens – do not remain on the voter rolls ([Secs. 18.061 – 18.0681](#)).
- As part of the audit process, the office has received reports from the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) regarding voters who may have voted twice in state and across state lines. We have also received a report of persons who may have been deceased when a vote was cast in their name. Finally, we have identified potential non-U.S. citizen voters and have directed county voter registrars to take action to verify the eligibility of registered voters and cancel their registration if they do not present proof of eligibility. Once that action has been taken, our office evaluates the persons cancelled and refers any instances of possible illegal voting to the Office of the Texas Attorney General for investigation ([Sec. 31.006](#)).

### **Phase 2: Comprehensive Election Records Examination (Spring 2022)**

- As part of the Texas Secretary of State's duty to assist and advise all election authorities with regard to the application, operation, and interpretation of the Texas Election Code ([Sec. 31.004](#)) and to obtain and maintain uniformity in the application of the Code ([Sec. 31.003](#)), the office will conduct a comprehensive election records examination over the next several months to ensure election administration procedures were properly followed during the 2020 General Election.
- The records examined from each county will include – but are not limited to – the following types of documents:
  - Logic & Accuracy Testing Records for Voting Machines, including:
    - All test ballots voted
    - Test Deck Records
    - Testing Media
  - Early Voting and Election Day Materials, including:
    - List of registered voters used in the 2020 General Election
    - Daily Early Voting Rosters for in-person voting
    - Chain of Custody forms that document the seals on the ballot boxes
    - Chain of Custody delivery and pickup of equipment at voting sites
    - Statements of Residence
    - Reasonable Impediment Declarations
    - Limited Ballot Applications
    - Audit Logs from applicable Voting System Devices
    - List of Rejected Provisional Ballots and reason for rejection
    - Ballot and Seal Certificates
    - Hand Delivery of a Ballot by Mail Roster and Forms
    - Receipts of Sealed Early Voting Ballot Boxes
  - Signature Verification Committee Materials
  - Early Voting Ballot Board Materials, including:
    - Receipt of Sealed Early Voting Ballot Boxes
    - Poll List of Mail Voters
    - Notice of Rejected Carriers and reasons
  - Central Counting Station Plan
  - Training Materials

- County election officials must retain these records for 22 months under both federal law ([52 USC 20701](#)) and state law ([Texas Election Code Sec. 66.058](#)).
- All of this information is available to the general public ([Sec. 1.012](#)).
- After a thorough examination of the abovementioned records and materials in each county, irregularities or deviations from election administration procedures that may have affected the accuracy of the electronic voting system ballot count could trigger a full manual recount of ballots in the affected precincts or polling locations, pursuant to the Secretary of State's authority to ensure the accuracy of the tabulation of electronic voting system results ([Sec. 127.202](#)).

---

**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 7, 2021 11:34 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

No problem! Was probably just poor articulation on my part, apologies and thank you for correcting! Just want to make sure folks know we are going after *illegal*, not legal voters ;)

Appreciate it!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



---

**From:** [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 7, 2021 11:27 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

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I sure can. It really sounds like you say legal in the audio and that is what I got off of. I will change it right now! I'm sorry.



**Kami Logan**

98.3 KXDJ Radio  
Business Manager/Traffic Director  
2402 S. Main

PO Box 830  
Perryton, TX 79070  
Phone: 806.648.2650  
Cell: 806.202.0192  
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---

**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 7, 2021 11:26 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** RE: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Thanks so much Kami! Just saw the story online – only thing I would ask is that the quote should be fixed in the second paragraph:

Sam Taylor, Assistant Secretary of State for Communications, said the purpose of the audit is to determine whether any crimes were committed. "Part of that is using the existing authority we already have to look at the voter rolls and see if anybody who is not eligible to vote, voted in the 2020 election. We have already begun that process. We've identified potential **legal** voters and sent that information out to them. As soon as they send out those notices telling those people to show proof that they're eligible and they don't hear back, they cancel those people off the voter rolls," he explained.

That should read "...potential **illegal** voters.." – just want to be clear, we are not targeting legally registered voters, only those who potentially registered and voted illegally. Can you please update on the web site when you get a chance?

Thanks so much, appreciate it!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



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**From:** [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 7, 2021 10:39 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

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Hey Sam,

I apologize for not sending the audio earlier. This email got lost in the mix.

Your files are attached!



## Kami Logan

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Perryton, TX 79070  
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Fax: 806.648.2652

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**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 30, 2021 11:52 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** RE: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Kami,

Yes! You've been added to our press release list and will receive all official communications from our office going forward. If you have any questions or need any additional information in the meantime, please feel free to reach out to me directly.

Can you send me a link to the audio files once they are posted live? Thanks so much!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 30, 2021 10:40 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

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Thanks for all this, Sam! I will definitely add these links to the story when I post them later with pieces of your audio files. This is extremely helpful!

We really appreciate you being available to us.

Have you added me to the list for when you will send out updates on all this?



## Kami Logan

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Perryton, TX 79070  
Phone: 806.648.2650  
Cell: 806.202.0192  
Fax: 806.648.2652

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**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 30, 2021 10:10 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** RE: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Kami!

Thanks for having me on this morning and please tell Chris thanks for his excellent questions and the conversation!

Here's the Dominion reports from our office: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/laws/dominion.shtml>

As you can see, they were denied certification in 2013, 2018, and most recently, 2020. Here's a direct link to the 2020 report: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/forms/sysexam/dominion-d-suite-5.5-a.pdf>

Here was our conclusion:

*“Specifically, the examiner reports raise concerns about whether the Democracy Suite 5.5-A system is suitable for its intended purpose; operates efficiently and accurately; and is safe from fraudulent or unauthorized manipulation. Therefore, the Democracy Suite 5.5-A system and corresponding hardware devices do not meet the standards for certification prescribed by Section 122.001 of the Texas Election Code.”*

Let me know if this is something y’all would be willing to post to your website alongside a story with the interview. Happy to help in any way I can!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



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**From:** Sam Taylor

**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 12:17 PM

**To:** [REDACTED] >

**Subject:** RE: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details

**Sensitivity:** Personal

Great! Here’s the full memo so you can pass along to him: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/about/forms/9-28-21-forensic-audit-summary.pdf>

Let me know if any questions in the meantime. Otherwise, we’ll chat tomorrow morning!

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)

Office: 512-463-6116

Cell: 512-538-5293



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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 12:08 PM  
**To:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

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Thanks Sam! I think Chris will just go off what you send as far as his questions are concerned.



## Kami Logan

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**From:** Sam Taylor <[SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:SMTaylor@sos.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 10:22 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** FW: Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Hi Kami,

Thanks for reaching out on this! As I mentioned, we released additional details of the full scope of the audit – Phase 1 of which is already underway and Phase 2 of which is set to begin next Spring in Dallas, Harris, Tarrant and Collin Counties (see attached and below).

Happy to block off 9:45 – 10:15 tomorrow for the interview, in case it runs long. Please let me know if there's any particular topics or questions Chris wants to cover and I'll make sure I'm prepared to address them.

Best,

**Sam Taylor**  
*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
Cell: 512-538-5293



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**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 6:38 PM  
**Subject:** Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Evening, All –

Many of you have inquired about additional details relating to the full forensic election audit announced last week. Attached, below, and on our web site ([link here](#)), please find an outline of the parameters of the audit and relevant sections of the Texas Election Code. This information has already been provided to the Election Administrators in Dallas, Harris, Collin and Tarrant counties.

**I want to be absolutely crystal clear about one thing: no, we will not be hiring or contracting with an outside firm to conduct these audits.**

Best,

**Sam Taylor**  
*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*  
Office of the Texas Secretary of State  
[smtaylor@sos.texas.gov](mailto:smtaylor@sos.texas.gov)  
Office: 512-463-6116  
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## **Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election**

The Texas Secretary of State's office has announced a full forensic audit of the 2020 General Election in Dallas, Harris, Tarrant and Collin counties. The full forensic audit is being conducted in two phases, the first of which is already underway. The purpose of this audit is to ensure all Texas voters can have confidence in the elections systems in our state, and to address any outstanding issues county election officials may face that undermines the integrity of our elections.

**Phase 1: Testing Voting Machine Accuracy, Cybersecurity Assessments, and Identifying and Removing Ineligible Voters Who Cast Ballots in 2020 (Already Completed or Underway)**

- After every single Texas election, counties are required to conduct a partial manual count of electronic voting system ballots within 72 hours of the polls closing to ensure the accuracy of the tabulation of electronic voting systems results ([Sec. 127.201](#)).
- All counties are required to undergo an Election Security Assessment (ESA) of the county's election system ([Sec. 279.003](#)). All 254 counties have completed these assessments.
- Under both state and federal law, the Texas Secretary of State's office is empowered to maintain the accuracy of the statewide voter registration list to ensure that ineligible voters – including deceased individuals, individuals registered in multiple states or counties, and non-U.S. citizens – do not remain on the voter rolls ([Secs. 18.061 – 18.0681](#)).
- As part of the audit process, the office has received reports from the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) regarding voters who may have voted twice in state and across state lines. We have also received a report of persons who may have been deceased when a vote was cast in their name. Finally, we have identified potential non-U.S. citizen voters and have directed county voter registrars to take action to verify the eligibility of registered voters and cancel their registration if they do not present proof of eligibility. Once that action has been taken, our office evaluates the persons cancelled and refers any instances of possible illegal voting to the Office of the Texas Attorney General for investigation ([Sec. 31.006](#)).

### **Phase 2: Comprehensive Election Records Examination (Spring 2022)**

- As part of the Texas Secretary of State's duty to assist and advise all election authorities with regard to the application, operation, and interpretation of the Texas Election Code ([Sec. 31.004](#)) and to obtain and maintain uniformity in the application of the Code ([Sec. 31.003](#)), the office will conduct a comprehensive election records examination over the next several months to ensure election administration procedures were properly followed during the 2020 General Election.
- The records examined from each county will include – but are not limited to – the following types of documents:
  - Logic & Accuracy Testing Records for Voting Machines, including:
    - All test ballots voted
    - Test Deck Records
    - Testing Media
  - Early Voting and Election Day Materials, including:
    - List of registered voters used in the 2020 General Election
    - Daily Early Voting Rosters for in-person voting
    - Chain of Custody forms that document the seals on the ballot boxes
    - Chain of Custody delivery and pickup of equipment at voting sites
    - Statements of Residence
    - Reasonable Impediment Declarations
    - Limited Ballot Applications
    - Audit Logs from applicable Voting System Devices
    - List of Rejected Provisional Ballots and reason for rejection
    - Ballot and Seal Certificates
    - Hand Delivery of a Ballot by Mail Roster and Forms
    - Receipts of Sealed Early Voting Ballot Boxes
  - Signature Verification Committee Materials
  - Early Voting Ballot Board Materials, including:
    - Receipt of Sealed Early Voting Ballot Boxes
    - Poll List of Mail Voters
    - Notice of Rejected Carriers and reasons
  - Central Counting Station Plan

- Training Materials
- County election officials must retain these records for 22 months under both federal law ([52 USC 20701](#)) and state law ([Texas Election Code Sec. 66.058](#)).
- All of this information is available to the general public ([Sec. 1.012](#)).
- After a thorough examination of the abovementioned records and materials in each county, irregularities or deviations from election administration procedures that may have affected the accuracy of the electronic voting system ballot count could trigger a full manual recount of ballots in the affected precincts or polling locations, pursuant to the Secretary of State's authority to ensure the accuracy of the tabulation of electronic voting system results ([Sec. 127.202](#)).

---

**From:** Randy Samuelson <Randy.Samuelson@senate.texas.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 16, 2021 6:42 AM  
**To:** Sam Taylor  
**Subject:** Sen Paxton's townhall meeting - Nov 17  
**Attachments:** LLL - Notes (Nov 17) v.2.docx

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Sam,

I went through the format with Senator Paxton last night and she sent me her questions late last night.

Format wise:

- Virtual meeting
- Segment 1: Introduction (10 minutes)
- Segment 2: Election Audit (20 minutes)
- Segment 3: Senate Bill 1 and election integrity (20 minutes)
- Concluding questions from audience: (10 minutes)

Here are the specific questions that Senator Paxton will pose to Secretary Scott.

Election Audit topic:

- What is a forensic audit and could you provide information about the forensic audit process that your office has developed?
- 
- Does the SOS have a similar process as Arizona? What are the findings in Arizona going to be used for?
- Where are we in the timeline of the audit?
- Will the audit findings be used to craft future legislation to continue to improve election integrity while also making it easier to have access to the ballot?
- How can individuals get involved in the process? How can we help in Collin and Dallas Counties?
- Why didn't the legislature pass legislation to demand a full forensic audit of the election? Why isn't there a new law? (We anticipate an audience member asking this of Senator Paxton)

Senate Bill 1 and Election Integrity:

- Secretary Scott, do you have any comments on the implementation of Senate Bill 1? Will the new law be in effect prior to the 2022 primary election?
- 
- The legislature decreased penalties for illegal voting? Why did you do this and what efforts are being made to restore these criminal penalties? (We anticipate an audience member asking this of Senator Paxton)

- What did the legislature do to prevent fraud in the mail-in ballots for a person claiming a disability when they are not in fact disabled? (We anticipate an audience member asking this question)
- What are you doing to ensure that it remains easy to vote? Are voters disenfranchised under this new law? (We anticipate an audience member asking this question)

I've attached the complete script as it stands this morning. Senator Paxton is spontaneous with these, so she may throw in additional things for me to research and compile today or tomorrow as late as 5pm. She also throws audience questions to me to answer with constituents the next day at the office.

--

Randy Samuelson  
Chief of Staff, State Senator Angela Paxton  
512-463-0108

## Listen, Learn, Lead Townhall Future of Texas Elections

Staff Assigned:     Randy Samuelson                             512-663-3701  
                                Randan Steinhauser                             202-734-1432  
                                Brian Newman (Moderator)                     203-722-6881  
                                Julia Dvorak                                         512-730-9944

### Meeting Details and Format

**Date/Time:** November 17, 2021; 7pm - 8pm (Senator, Secretary, and select staff log on between 6:30 and 6:40 pm)

**Purpose:** Listen, Learn, Lead series on border security

**Location:** Virtual town hall

**Speakers:** Senator Paxton

**Format:** Virtual town hall meeting, taking questions from the audience.  
The Zoom meeting will be recorded.

7:00 pm	Start Brian Newman provide a brief intro and ground rules
7:03 pm	Senator Paxton provides a brief overview of Election Integrity  (Provide contact info for constituents)
7:10 pm	Part 1: Election Audit Senator and Secretary conversation Audience Q&A on audit  (Note: audience has 60 seconds to ask the question) (Senator Paxton is aiming for 2-3 minutes per answer)
7:30 pm	Part 2: Senate Bill 1 Senator overview and Secretary conversation Audience Q&A on SB 1
7:50 pm	Final audience questions

7:55 pm	Final comments from Senator Paxton
8:00 pm	Conclusion and stop recording

**Q&A:** Expect Q&A from audience participants

## Ground Rules and Introduction

Good evening, everyone. I am Brian Newman, Campaign Manager for Texas State Senator Angela Paxton, and welcome to this month's Listen, Learn, Lead series covering the future of Texas elections and election integrity. I want to let everyone know that this event is being recorded for a future podcast.

Senator Paxton represents Senate District 8 in Collin County and North Dallas County. A small business owner with a bachelors degree in math and computer science from Baylor University and a Masters degree in education from the University of Houston Clearlake, Senator Paxton was elected in 2018 after a 20+ year career in education as a teacher and school counselor. She serves as Vice-Chair of the Senate Nominations Committee, and serves on the Senate Education, Business & Commerce, Higher Education, Local Government, and Redistricting Committees as well as the Texas Sunset Advisory Commission.

Tonight, we also have the privilege of being joined by Texas Secretary of State **John Scott**. Secretary Scott was appointed by Governor Greg Abbott to serve as the 114th Texas Secretary of State last month on October 21, 2021. Secretary Scott has over 33 years of experience as an attorney, having successfully tried over 100 lawsuits and handled cases at the United States Supreme Court, Supreme Court of Texas, as well as state and federal appellate and district courts, winning historic courtroom victories. Prior to serving as Secretary of State, Scott served as Deputy Attorney General for Civil Litigation under then-Attorney General Greg Abbott and subsequently as the first Chief Operating Officer of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

Some Ground Rules for this virtual event:

1. Senator Paxton and Secretary Scott will be the primary speakers during the Listen, Learn, Lead Town Hall. Senator Paxton will have some questions for Secretary Scott that are frequently asked of the Senate office.

2. Questions should be submitted through the chat window. Guests will be recognized to ask questions on topics based on their submitted questions in the chat window.
3. The moderator will unmute the individuals who are recognized to ask a question. The moderator reserves the right to remove guests for improper comments.

With that, I will turn it over to you, Senator Paxton.

### Senator Paxton Introductory Comments/ Main Issues

Thank you, Brian, for the introduction and thank you, John for participating this week.

Last year we witnessed an unprecedented amount of government control and upheaval of traditional government processes due to COVID. One of the areas the public called into question the most was our election procedures.

In Texas:

- The Harris County elections administrator authorized drive-through voting in pop-up tents within the county
- In Tarrant County, the vote tabulation machines couldn't read the mail-in ballots properly due to a problem with the paper density, so the mail-in ballots were transposed by hand to the correct paper density
- The courts created an extra week of early voting for the November election.
- Mail-in ballots were utilized by many voters who requested mail-in ballots because of fear of getting sick instead of an actual documented disability. This was done at the urging of some county elections administrators.

Testimony was recorded in debate from election fraud cases of how mail-in ballots were stolen from voters by vote harvesters. Court records show that individuals who were there to help voters with the electronic voting machines in fact cast illegal votes on behalf of voters instead of recording their electoral decisions.

President Trump called for a full forensic audit of the election due to the number of errors, anomalies, and inconsistencies with the election results.

The Texas Legislature went to work under this pretext: the public must have confidence in the outcome of the election and must have confidence in the procedures, both in consistency and accuracy, to that confidence.

I'll start with asking Secretary John Scott some frequently asked questions that I have received from constituents so he can provide some information on the Secretary of State's role and work on election integrity since the 2020 election.

## Questions from Senator Paxton to Secretary Scott:

### Part 1: Election Audit (20 minutes)

Senator Paxton: One of the biggest overall comments that I have heard from constituents is the need and desire for a forensic audit of the 2020 election in Texas. There has been a steady drumbeat from many people this year demanding the Texas Legislature pass a new law to require a forensic audit.

Recently, the Governor and Secretary of State announced that an audit of the 2020 election would take place under the direction of the Secretary of State.

What is a forensic audit and could you provide information about the forensic audit process that your office has developed?

Secretary Scott response.

Moderator: Open up for any public questions from the chat window (or allow Senator to ask follow-up questions).

Follow-up questions, either from the Senator or the audience:

- Does the SOS have a similar process as Arizona? What are the findings in Arizona going to be used for?
- Where are we in the timeline of the audit?
- Will the audit findings be used to craft future legislation to continue to improve election integrity while also making it easier to have access to the ballot?
- How can individuals get involved in the process? How can we help in Collin and Dallas Counties?

- Why didn't the legislature pass legislation to demand a full forensic audit of the election? Why isn't there a new law?

## **Part 2: Senate Bill 1 (20 minutes)**

*Senator Paxton:* During the special session, the legislature passed the election integrity bill in Senate Bill 1 to address many of the election procedure irregularities that we heard about from constituents. Senate Bill 1 makes it easier to vote and harder to cheat.

Some of the highlights of Senate Bill 1:

- Expands early voting hours to require over 20 additional counties to provide a minimum of 12 hours of early voting each day instead of the 8 business hours that early voting locations are open.
- Allows voters that are in line when the polls close at early voting locations to be able to vote that day, just like on election day.
- Allows for employees to be granted time off to early vote, just like on election day.
- Requires a voter requesting a mail ballot to submit a driver's license, state ID, or state election ID certificate number on their mail-in ballot application to comply with the state Voter ID bill.
- Mail ballot defect curing process. If a mail-in ballot has information that is missing or cannot be read, the current process is to reject the ballot. Under SB 1, the elections administrator can contact the voter to ask them to fix problems or cancel the mail-in ballot and vote in-person.
- Prohibits voting from a motor vehicle except where the law already allows curbside voting for disability access to the polls.
- Ballots that are returned by hand rather than by mail must be received in-person by an election official, not placed in a drop-box.
- SB 1 mandates a warning to felons upon their conviction to make them aware that they cannot vote until the full sentence is served.
- The bill makes vote harvesting a crime.
- SB 1 prohibits an early voting clerk from 1) soliciting an application for ballot by mail, and 2) sending out applications that have not been requested.

Secretary Scott, do you have any comments on the implementation of Senate Bill 1? Will the new law be in effect prior to the 2022 primary election?

Secretary Scott response.

Moderator: Open up for any public questions from the chat window.

Follow-up Question Opportunities:

- The legislature decreased penalties for illegal voting? Why did you do this and what efforts are being made to restore these criminal penalties?
- What did the legislature do to prevent fraud in the mail-in ballots for a person claiming a disability when they are not in fact disabled?
- What are you doing to ensure that it remains easy to vote? Are voters disenfranchised under this new law?

### Election Integrity Bill Expanded Summary:

#### **Status:**

Senate Bill 1 was signed into law on September 7, 2021 and will be effective for the 2022 election cycle.

Senator Paxton co-authored the legislation.

#### **SB 1 Highlights to Expand and Standardize Elections<sup>1</sup>**

##### **1) Voting hours for early voting**

Senate Bill 1 expands voting hours by increasing the number of counties who are required to provide a minimum of 12 hours of voting each day instead of 8 hours. By lowering the population requirement from 100,000 to 55,000, SB 1 requires over 20 additional counties to extend early voting hours from “business hours” to at least 12 hours.

The bill also requires cities and other political subdivisions conducting elections to be open an extra hour during early voting. More populous cities and political subdivisions go from a minimum of 8 hours to 9 hours, and less populous cities and political subdivisions from 3 hours to 4 hours.

None of these changes limit counties to that minimum number. It is a floor, not a ceiling. Counties can still have 16 hours of voting from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. during

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<sup>1</sup> Provided by Sen. Hughes' office

early voting if they choose to. Overall, people will have more hours in more counties under this bill.

### **2) Standing in line when polls close**

Under current law, voters who are in line before the polls close on election day are guaranteed the opportunity to vote. SB 1 expands this protection from election day to the entire early voting period.

### **3) Employee time off**

On election day, current law requires employers to allow an employee who would not otherwise have time off to take time off to go vote. SB 1 expands this protection from election day to the entire early voting period.

### **4) Mail ballot voter ID**

SB 1 requires a voter requesting a mail ballot to submit a driver's license, state ID, or free election ID certificate number on their application. If they do not have one of these, they may submit the last four of their SSN with their application. If they do not have this, they must swear that they do not have any of these numbers. When the number they provide is compared with the same ID number provided on their voter registration, **a match creates a rebuttable presumption that their signatures match.** This makes it easier for a signature verification committee to accept a ballot with a signature that may be inconsistent due to disability or age.

### **5) Mail ballot defect curing process**

SB 1 creates a curing process for mail ballots and applications with certain defects. Currently, if something is missing from the mail ballot, it is automatically canceled. Many times the voter does not realize that their vote was not counted until after the election. **Under SB 1, a voter may even cure the defect through an new online system that tracks the location of the voter's ballot.**

SB 1 creates a process by which, if time permits, the ballot can be sent back to the voter to be fixed. Or, if there is not time for mail service, a voter can come to the early voting clerk and fix the ballot. Finally, it allows a voter to cancel that mail ballot and vote in person, either inside the polling location or using curbside.

## **SB 1 Highlights to Secure and Protect Elections**

### **1) Drive-through voting**

SB 1 prohibits voting from a motor vehicle, except as already provided for curbside voting under current law.

## **2) Drop-boxes**

Ballots that are returned by hand rather than by mail must be received in-person by an election official, not placed in a drop-box. This prevents tampering or theft from boxes and allows for clear record-keeping by the receiving official to make sure ballots are received and counted properly.

## **3) Felon admonishment**

SB 1 mandates a warning to felons upon their conviction to make them aware that they cannot vote until the full sentence is served. This will help prevent felons from mistakes or misunderstandings that might lead them to commit an additional crime by voting while out on parole or probation.

## **4) Vote harvesting**

The bill makes vote harvesting a crime. Vote harvesting is defined as an in-person interaction with a voter in the physical presence of a ballot that is intended to deliver votes for a specific candidate or measure. The bill also creates a civil penalty for several types of election fraud, including vote harvesting.

## **5) Solicitation or mass mailing of application to vote by mail**

SB 1 prohibits an early voting clerk from 1) soliciting an application for ballot by mail, and 2) sending out applications that have not been requested.

### **Some Frequently Asked Questions from Constituents:**

- *What is a "forensic audit"?*

A forensic audit is an analysis of financial records used to identify facts for a criminal court. These audits are used in financial audits of accounting firms and don't have a clearly defined purpose outside of financial audits. A forensic audit is more of an investigation than an audit, which is simply an independent investigation of records to verify the accuracy of a process or result.

President Trump first used the "forensic audit" term after the 2020 election to call for a complete review of all election activities for the purpose of identifying criminal fraud.

Arizona hired a 3rd party to conduct a forensic audit of the 2020 general election, through an action of the State Senate President. (Note: The Arizona

Secretary of State opposed the audit). There is much skepticism of the audit process and findings due to the partisan nature of the auditor hired.

Skepticism of an election cannot be corrected if there is skepticism of the ensuing audit; it simply breeds more skepticism.

- *Why didn't the legislature pass legislation to demand a full forensic audit of the election? Why isn't there a new law?*

State law already provides the latitude that the state and state agencies need to evaluate and examine election law processes and investigate criminal activity.

If criminal activity occurred during the 2020 election, Texas law is already sufficient for the Texas Secretary of State to request of the Office of the Attorney General criminal investigation of election practices.

State law also allows the Texas Secretary of State to examine voting systems, voting machines, and voting practices of local counties to ensure compliance with procedures. The state law says that these can be done at any time and not within a limited prescribed time of an election.

The legislature did pass Senate Bill 598 in the regular session which requires a risk-limiting audit for elections starting in 2022 with limited counties and 2024 with additional counties. Risk-limiting audits compare electronic ballot records with paper copies and manually comparing a statistical sample of paper ballots with electronic records for correct tallies. In areas with a small margin of victory, the sample size for comparison is larger than areas with a large margin of victory.

This bill also requires an auditable paper trail of votes cast from each machine.

The Senate, in the third special session, passed Senate Bill 47 to create a process for individuals to report anomalies and irregularities in election processes to respective county clerks and seek an answer to the questions. If the individual is not satisfied, they may seek an answer to the report on the election irregularity to the secretary of state. This bill also allows a county party chair or state party chair to request an election audit from the secretary of state's office and creates an audit committee to order an audit of the 2020 election.

- *What did the legislature do to prevent fraud in the mail-in ballots for a person claiming a disability when they are not in fact disabled?*

The legislature passed House Bill 3920 to confine disability to a sickness or disability that prevents a voter from appearing in person at a polling location during the voting period or confinement due to childbirth for purposes of a request for a mail-in ballot. A lack of transportation or a general sickness that does not confine a person to a disabled status is no longer recognized as an appropriate reason to request a mail-in ballot.

- *Are you favor of a forensic audit of the 2020 election in Texas?*

I do support an audit of the 2020 election. The Secretary of State's office has already begun this process in Collin and Dallas Counties (as well as Harris County and Tarrant County).

- *The legislature decreased criminal penalties for illegal voting in SB 1. Why did you do this and why didn't you fix this?*

Senate Bill 1 did decrease the penalty for a person casting an illegal vote from a felony (generally a sentence of between 180 days to 2 years plus up to a \$10,000 fine) to a Class A misdemeanor (generally up to 1 year of jail plus up to a \$4,000 fine). This is based on a House amendment to Senate Bill 1 that was adopted in the conference report.

In most criminal cases involving election fraud, the criminal investigation is focused on the leaders of organized crime involving ballot harvesting or theft of mail-in ballots and not on each single instance of a single illegal vote cast.

That said, the Senate did pass Senate Bill 10 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> special session to restore the penalty for illegal voting to a felony. The House did not consider this legislation during the 3<sup>rd</sup> special session, even though the Governor added it to the 3<sup>rd</sup> special session call.

In addition, the legislature also created criminal penalties for a person counting invalid votes or refusing to count valid votes as a second degree felony.

## Update on Court Cases and Litigation Involving Election Integrity Bills:

On November 4, 2021, the U.S. Department of Justice filed suit against Texas over Senate Bill 1.

- Challenges that Texas deny eligible voters meaningful assistance in the voting booth and require rejection of mail ballots for immaterial errors or omissions and that these violate the Voting Rights Act.
- Challenges that provisions of the law will disenfranchise eligible voters, largely from the elderly, disabled, and limited English proficiency, from the right to vote.

Suit was filed in US District Court in San Antonio. No trial date has been set. Secretary Scott cannot comment on ongoing litigation. We also do not have an update on the status of the lawsuit.

### Implementation of Election Audit Process at the Secretary of State's Office:

Four counties are selected for the forensic audit: Collin, Dallas, Harris, Tarrant.

The Secretary of State has a two-phased approach to the audit:

1. Phase I is underway currently.

Perform list maintenance to ensure that those on the voter rolls are eligible to vote (remove ineligible voters due to death, moving, felonies, or inaccurate voter registrations).

Test voting machine accuracies.

Perform cybersecurity assessments.

2. Phase II is scheduled for Spring 2022, but will likely begin shortly after the new year.

Comprehensive election records examination. This will be in-person examination of the thoroughness and accuracy of county election records performed by secretary of state election trainers, attorneys, and investigators. This will run the gambit of reviewing all required records that are required to prove election processes were run correctly and that the outcomes are correct.

Counties that do not have a well organized record keeping system will have audit findings.



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## Election Audit Bill Legislative Summary:

Three Main Bills for Audits to Ensure the Votes Counted Matched the Votes Cast:

1. Senate Bill 598 (Kolkhorst) - regular session
  - Requires a risk-limiting audit for elections starting in the 2022 election cycle with 5 counties participating in a pilot program.
  - Law is fully-implemented for all counties by 2026 election.
  - Requires an audit paper trail of each electronic voting machine to perform the risk-limiting audit.
  - Risk-limiting audits compare electronic ballot records with paper copies and manually comparing a statistical sample of paper ballots with electronic records for correct tallies. In areas with a small margin of victory, the sample size for comparison is larger than areas with a large margin of victory.
2. Senate Bill 1 (Hughes) - second special session
  - Will require randomized audits after future November uniform election dates to have the Texas Secretary of State select four counties each election cycle to audit.
3. Senate Bill 97 (87S2) and Senate Bill 47 (87S3) (Bettencourt) - did not pass House
  - Allows candidates, county party chairs, an election judge, an alternate election judge, or the head of a special purpose PAC (ballot proposition election) to make a written request to a county clerk for an explanation and supporting documentation regarding election irregularities who shall provide information within 10 days.
  - If a requestor is not satisfied by the information provided by the county clerk is insufficient, the requestor may submit a request to the secretary of state to conduct an audit.

- Secretary of State may assess a penalty on county clerks if an audit finding results in a violation.
- County elections clerks will appoint a 2020 general election review advisory committee to review the election processes and results of the 2020 election upon request in writing from a state or county chair of a political party.

### Special Session Timeline:

July:	July 8, 2021 July 12, 2021	First Special Session begins House Democrats break quorum, halting House legislative business
August:	August 6, 2021 August 7, 2021 August 19, 2021	First Special Session adjourns Second Special Session begins House establishes quorum, begins conducting legislative business
September:	Sept 2, 2021 Sept 7, 2021 Sept 20, 2021	Second Special Session adjourns Governor Abbott announces the 3rd special session will begin on Sept 20, 2021 Third Special Session begins
October:	Oct 19, 2021	Third Special Session ends

### What was on the 1st Special Session Agenda:

All Issues	Passed Senate Died in House	Unfinished Business
Election Integrity (SB 1)	✓	X
Youth Sports (SB 2)	✓	X
Critical Race Theory (SB 3)	✓	X
Abortion Inducing Drugs (SB 4)	✓	X
Social Media Censorship (SB 5)	✓	X
Bail Reform (SB 6; SJR 3)	✓	X
Retired Teacher 13th Check (SB 7)	✓	X

Appropriations - Property Tax Relief (SB 8; SB 12; SJR 4)	✓	X
Appropriations - Family Violence Prevention	✓	X
Appropriations - Legislature		X
Border Security		X
Federal COVID Relief Appropriations		X

**What was on the 2nd Special Session Agenda:**

<b>All Issues</b>	<b>Passed and Sent to Governor</b>	<b>Unfinished Business</b>
Election Integrity (SB 1)	✓	
Youth Sports (SB 2)		X
Critical Race Theory (SB 3)	✓	
Abortion Inducing Drugs (SB 4)	✓	
Bail Reform (SB 6)	✓	
Retired Teacher 13th Check (SB 7)	✓	
Appropriations - Property Tax Relief (SB 8; SB 12; SJR 2)	✓	
Family Violence Prevention (SB 9)	✓	
Modify Primary Election Date (SB 13)	✓	
Pre-empt Local Employment Ordinances (SB 14)		X
Education - Virtual Schools (SB 15)	✓	
Appropriations - Legislative; Foster Care; Cybersecurity (HB 5)	✓	
Prevent Radioactive Waste (HB 7)	✓	
Border Security Funding (HB 9)	✓	
Social Media Censorship (HB 20)	✓	
State Legislative Quorum Requirements (SJR 1)		X
Federal COVID Relief Appropriations		X
COVID-19 Vaccine Exemptions		X

What was on the 3rd Special Session Agenda:

All Issues	Passed and Sent to Governor	Unfinished Business
Property Tax Relief <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase homestead exemption from \$25,000 to \$40,000 annually (SJR 2 and SB 1)</li> </ul>	✓	
Redistricting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Congress (SB 6)</li> <li>State Senate (SB 4)</li> <li>State House (HB 1)</li> <li>State Board of Education (SB 7)</li> </ul>	✓	
Appropriation of American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) funds (SB 8)	✓	
Youth Sports (HB 25)	✓	
Preventing government entities from mandating a COVID-19 vaccine (SB 51 & HB 155)		X
Legislation preventing dog tethering (SB 5)	✓	
Illegal Voting Penalty Increase (SB 10) {Senate did pass this bill, House did not}		X
Bail Reform (SJR 1 - constitutional amendment to complete bail reform package) {Senate did pass this bill, House did not}		X
Preventing any entity from mandating a COVID-19 vaccine (SB 51 & HB 155)		X
Legislation to improve higher education (SB 52 - tuition revenue bonds)	✓	

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**From:** Sam Taylor  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 6:38 PM  
**Subject:** Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit Details  
**Attachments:** 9.28.2021\_Full Forensic Audit Summary\_Texas Secretary of State.pdf  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Good Evening, All –

Many of you have inquired about additional details relating to the full forensic election audit announced last week. Attached, below, and on our web site ([link here](#)), please find an outline of the parameters of the audit and relevant sections of the Texas Election Code. This information has already been provided to the Election Administrators in Dallas, Harris, Collin and Tarrant counties.

**I want to be absolutely crystal clear about one thing: no, we will not be hiring or contracting with an outside firm to conduct these audits.**

Best,

**Sam Taylor**

*Assistant Secretary of State for Communications*

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

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## **Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit of 2020 General Election**

The Texas Secretary of State's office has announced a full forensic audit of the 2020 General Election in Dallas, Harris, Tarrant and Collin counties. The full forensic audit is being conducted in two phases, the first of which is already underway. The purpose of this audit is to ensure all Texas voters can have confidence in the elections systems in our state, and to address any outstanding issues county election officials may face that undermines the integrity of our elections.

### **Phase 1: Testing Voting Machine Accuracy, Cybersecurity Assessments, and Identifying and Removing Ineligible Voters Who Cast Ballots in 2020 (Already Completed or Underway)**

- After every single Texas election, counties are required to conduct a partial manual count of electronic voting system ballots within 72 hours of the polls closing to ensure the accuracy of the tabulation of electronic voting systems results ([Sec. 127.201](#)).

- All counties are required to undergo an Election Security Assessment (ESA) of the county's election system ([Sec. 279.003](#)). All 254 counties have completed these assessments.
- Under both state and federal law, the Texas Secretary of State's office is empowered to maintain the accuracy of the statewide voter registration list to ensure that ineligible voters – including deceased individuals, individuals registered in multiple states or counties, and non-U.S. citizens – do not remain on the voter rolls ([Secs. 18.061 – 18.0681](#)).
- As part of the audit process, the office has received reports from the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) regarding voters who may have voted twice in state and across state lines. We have also received a report of persons who may have been deceased when a vote was cast in their name. Finally, we have identified potential non-U.S. citizen voters and have directed county voter registrars to take action to verify the eligibility of registered voters and cancel their registration if they do not present proof of eligibility. Once that action has been taken, our office evaluates the persons cancelled and refers any instances of possible illegal voting to the Office of the Texas Attorney General for investigation ([Sec. 31.006](#)).

## **Phase 2: Comprehensive Election Records Examination (Spring 2022)**

- As part of the Texas Secretary of State's duty to assist and advise all election authorities with regard to the application, operation, and interpretation of the Texas Election Code ([Sec. 31.004](#)) and to obtain and maintain uniformity in the application of the Code ([Sec. 31.003](#)), the office will conduct a comprehensive election records examination over the next several months to ensure election administration procedures were properly followed during the 2020 General Election.
- The records examined from each county will include – but are not limited to – the following types of documents:
  - Logic & Accuracy Testing Records for Voting Machines, including:
    - All test ballots voted
    - Test Deck Records
    - Testing Media
  - Early Voting and Election Day Materials, including:
    - List of registered voters used in the 2020 General Election
    - Daily Early Voting Rosters for in-person voting
    - Chain of Custody forms that document the seals on the ballot boxes
    - Chain of Custody delivery and pickup of equipment at voting sites
    - Statements of Residence
    - Reasonable Impediment Declarations
    - Limited Ballot Applications
    - Audit Logs from applicable Voting System Devices
    - List of Rejected Provisional Ballots and reason for rejection
    - Ballot and Seal Certificates
    - Hand Delivery of a Ballot by Mail Roster and Forms
    - Receipts of Sealed Early Voting Ballot Boxes
  - Signature Verification Committee Materials
  - Early Voting Ballot Board Materials, including:
    - Receipt of Sealed Early Voting Ballot Boxes
    - Poll List of Mail Voters
    - Notice of Rejected Carriers and reasons
  - Central Counting Station Plan
  - Training Materials

- County election officials must retain these records for 22 months under both federal law ([52 USC 20701](#)) and state law ([Texas Election Code Sec. 66.058](#)).
- All of this information is available to the general public ([Sec. 1.012](#)).
- After a thorough examination of the abovementioned records and materials in each county, irregularities or deviations from election administration procedures that may have affected the accuracy of the electronic voting system ballot count could trigger a full manual recount of ballots in the affected precincts or polling locations, pursuant to the Secretary of State's authority to ensure the accuracy of the tabulation of electronic voting system results ([Sec. 127.202](#)).

# **Texas Secretary of State Full Forensic Audit of 2020**

## **General Election**

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