

# Verified Voting

## Field Report

June 2020

The global pandemic and renewed national anguish over racial discrimination in our communities have drastically changed the election landscape since our last update. But the urgency of our work has not abated. Disenfranchising Black voters is a historic tool for maintaining institutionalized racist patterns of governing. Failing to fix voting technology and failing to secure elections is a 21st century form of disenfranchisement that can be corrected. Bolstering public confidence in election outcomes has never been more critical to maintaining our democracy and we remain committed to our mission.

As always, our work is only possible because of allies like you, who share our dedication to strengthening democracy for all voters, and ensuring that every vote can be counted as cast. If you can, please consider a gift to help us keep the momentum going, and keep voters and elections safe and healthy this November.

## Education & Outreach



[Verified Voting released](#) recommendations in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the predicted increase in vote by mail, and continues to share it with election officials, the press, our coalition partners, funders, and various task forces.

Verified Voting partnered with Common Cause to publish [“Election Security and an Accessible Vote By Mail Option,”](#) noting that options that keep voters’ choices private and secure already exist and should be made available to voters with disabilities as states increase access to vote by mail.

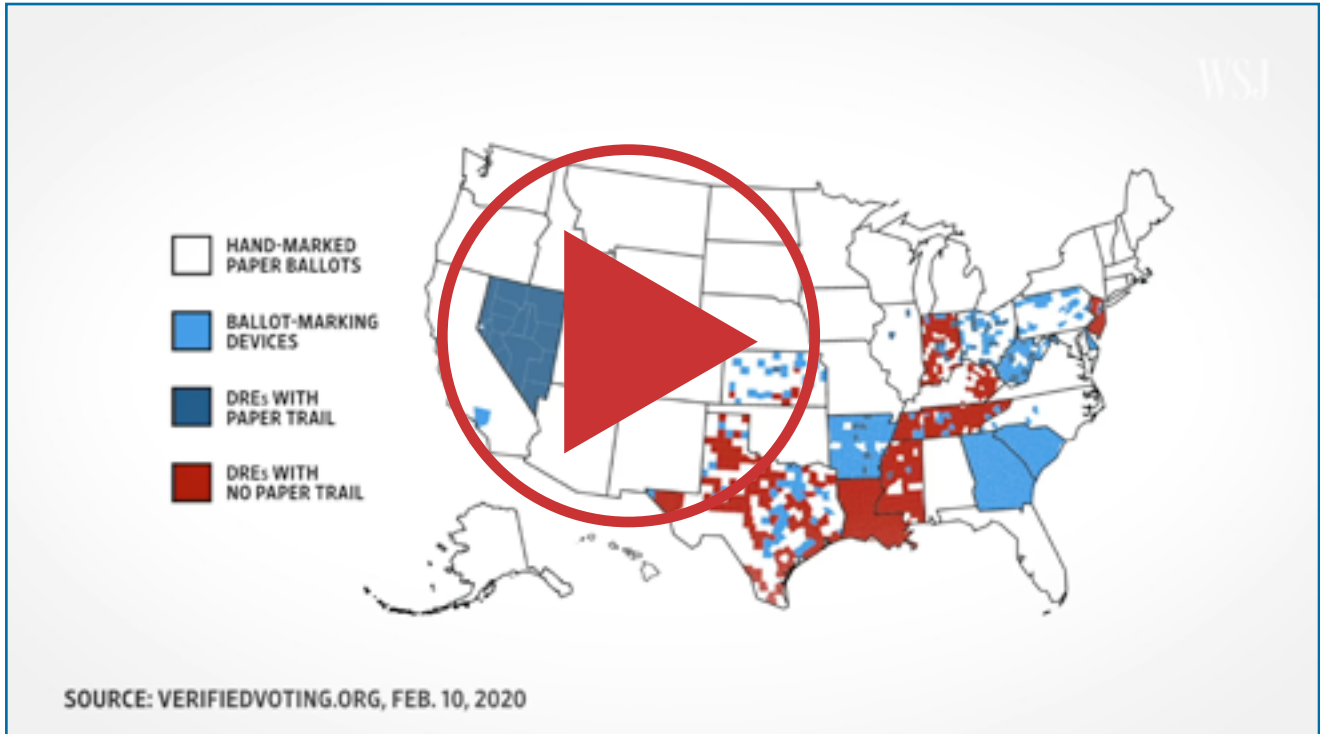
President Marian K. Schneider joined the [National Task Force on Election Crises](#), a bipartisan group of more than 40 experts whose goal is to ensure “a free and fair 2020 general election by recommending responses to a range of potential election crises.” The group’s releases include [COVID-19 guidance](#) and a white paper, [“Can the President Cancel or Postpone the General Election?”](#)

Verified Voting joined the **American Association for the Advancement of Science** & over 40 cyber and election security experts (including many from our Board of Directors and Board of Advisors) to urge state officials to refrain from the use of any internet or voting app system during this public health crisis. [Read the letter here.](#)

Marian was a guest speaker for [Secure Our Vote’s well-attended nonpartisan interactive town hall](#) alongside the National Vote at Home Institute and People for the American Way to discuss how to ensure that security best practices are front and center as states pivot to increase vote by mail during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In February, Mathematics Advisor Audrey Malagon represented Verified Voting as a panelist at the **Election Assistance Commission’s** “2020 Elections Accessibility, Disability and Security Forum.”

# Press Highlights



We partnered with the *Wall Street Journal* on the above [informational video](#) that uses our data from The Verifier. A big shoutout to Data Specialist Warren Stewart, for spearheading this project with our Communications Consultant, Aurora Matthews.



*The Washington Post's* "[Editorial: The Iowa Disaster Makes It Clear That We Should Stick to Doing Things the Old Fashioned Way](#)" and "[Editorial: Why Can't We Just Vote Online? Let Us Count the Ways](#)" reflect significant input from the Verified Voting team.



*Washington Post's* Cybersecurity 202 daily newsletter interviewed Marian about the dangers of [online and mobile voting](#) and the [predicted increase in voting by mail](#) in November, and included our [COVID-19 recommendations](#) in a subsequent newsletter.



Audrey wrote a letter, "[Bills Aim to Improve Absentee Voting Security](#)," to the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* on making it easier to vote without involving risky mobile apps.



Marian's [interview with WIRED](#) addressed the impact COVID-19 is having on our election landscape and the predicted increase in vote by mail.



Director of Science and Technology Policy Mark Lindeman was interviewed by *NBC News* in "Caucus Chaos Again? Experts Fear Vote-Counting Problems in Nevada."

# State & Territory Highlights



## California

Senior Advisor Pam Smith continues her work on **California's** COVID-19 election task force, which played a key role in ensuring that [all voters will be mailed a ballot](#) for the general election. Through the task force, we will continue addressing the problems experienced in the primary and provide recommendations on how to more effectively administer the November election. We also continue to support legislation for risk-limiting audit pilots in the state.

## Florida

We sent a letter to the governor encouraging measures to help election officials do their jobs safely, such as those outlined in the Florida Supervisors of Elections' [COVID-19-Related Requests for Executive Orders](#). Verified Voting's Florida Director Dan McCrea has also been coordinating [opposition](#) to legislation that will use an image audit system for recounts.

## New Jersey

We joined with our coalition partners at Common Cause and the Brennan Center in urging [New Jersey state officials](#) not to rely on internet voting options in local elections. As a result, e-voting was dropped for the primary.

## Ohio

Mark was in **Montgomery County** putting our best practices for conducting risk-limiting audits safely into action for an RLA of the primary contest in mid-May. [Check out photos here](#).

## Pennsylvania

We are collaborating with state and local election officials on plans for a statewide RLA pilot after the June 2 primary. It is an important step toward our goal of statewide audits in the general election. We are also working closely with advocacy groups on the ground assessing the June 2 primary and making recommendations for process changes for November.

## Puerto Rico

After letters, [social media campaigns](#), and a meeting with key staff, Verified Voting and national and local advocates convinced Governor Wanda Vázquez Garced to reject a [bill in Puerto Rico](#) that would move voters to all-internet voting. [Our letter](#) was signed by many members of our Board of Directors and Advisory Board. Recently, the legislature passed a bill that omitted all internet voting provisions.

## Rhode Island

We have been working with our partners in Rhode Island on their post-election RLA after the presidential primary concluded on June 2.

# Federal Advocacy



We continue to support increased federal funding and guidelines for jurisdictions to shore up their equipment and systems before November. We [issued a statement](#) supporting the election funding and security measures included in the [HEROES Act](#) and are monitoring legislation that will make our elections more secure. We also [lifted up the important guidance](#) issued by Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, the Election Assistance Commission, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology, warning states about security concerns with any voting system that uses the internet.

## Organization



### Website Redesign

Our website redesign project is nearing completion. The entire Verified Voting team is pitching in to update existing resources and create fresh content. We can't wait to share the new user-friendly website with you soon, especially the redesigned Verifier and our new State Profiles pages!

### Verified Voting Team

The Verified Voting [team](#) continues to grow to meet the needs of these extraordinary times, even under work from home orders:

- **Cris Landa** joined us as our Programs Director in February. Among her many assignments, she is managing our program team of staff and consultants and working with our coalition partners to strategically align for the 2020 election.
- **Chrissa LaPorte** is our Program Associate for Data Science and Election Audits. Chrissa is assisting in state and local risk-limiting audit work.
- **Megan Maier** is our Research Assistant. Megan is helping us gather and update information for The Verifier, along with data for other ongoing projects.
- **Maria Solomidou** is a part-time consultant and newly-minted lawyer. She is assisting us in legal-based policy work and is updating our state audit law database.

## A Look Ahead



**By our next field report, the 2020 general election will be almost upon us.** We are 100% dedicated to helping election officials make the most of these few remaining months to implement security best practices that establish a trustworthy voting record, including preparing for robust post-election audits. We will also make sure the public knows where to turn for accurate information on election security and implementation of election technology.

This year has proven we can't anticipate every threat to our elections, but our team is taking steps **now** to make our elections resilient and keep our democracy healthy. **We can't do it without you.** Again, we encourage you to reach out to us with any questions, share this work with your friends and colleagues, and [consider helping us with a donation](#) to keep the momentum going.