

IN THIS TIME
AS IN THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE
FOR WHOM HE SAVED THE UNION
THE MEMORY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN
ENDURES FOREVER

Verified Voting

Field Report

October 2020

Every time we think the stakes for this election cannot be raised any higher, we are reminded why election security best practices emphasize resiliency and recovery over prevention. With the start of early and mail voting upon us, we are focused on voter education efforts to give voters practical tools no matter what obstacles they may encounter, pressing ahead with audits to provide a transparent means of checking whether the reported results match voting records, and working with election officials and coalition partners to prepare for any scenario.

Navigating the challenges of this election will require all of us working together. You are a vital part of that work, and we thank you for all you do to help us strengthen democracy. If you have not already done so, please consider a [gift](#) or share this report with others seeking to honor voters' trust in our elections, and ensure that the technology and systems integral to our voting process make their votes count.

Organization



Verified Voting Team Update

We're pleased to [announce](#) that **Mark Lindeman** and **Cris Landa** are leading the organization through the election as Interim Co-Directors. Mark Lindeman has spent over a decade working to make elections more secure and verifiable, advising legislators, election officials, and other decision makers on RLAs from their inception, along with other best practices. Cris Landa, who joined the team in early 2020 as Program Director, has worked in nearly all aspects of nonprofit management. Her leadership of the entire programs team, coupled with her management experience, have made an immediate impact on the organization in her relatively short tenure.

We also welcomed new team member **C.Jay Coles** as our State Audit Expansion Specialist. C.Jay is playing a key role in building relationships with decision makers within our expansion states of Arizona, Wisconsin, and North Carolina, including legislators, county clerks, chief election officials, local nonprofits and election integrity advocates. He is also assisting with educating and advocating for election security best practices like enhancing audit procedures for the 2020 presidential election.

[Read more about our entire team here.](#)

Education & Outreach



T-90 Days
Recommendations for Voting
During a Pandemic
Verified Voting

Verified Voting released [T-90 Days: Recommendations for Voting During a Pandemic](#) as an update to our [COVID-19 & Trustworthy Elections](#) recommendations. The updated recommendations highlight what can still happen now to ensure the security and verifiability of our elections before November.



THE
Verifier
Verified Voting

We added [electronic poll book data](#) in use throughout the country to the Verifier on the redesigned website and found that about three quarters of registered voters live in jurisdictions in which electronic poll books will be used in Election Day polling places this November. Visit the Verifier and read more about electronic poll books in our paper, "[Electronic Poll Book Use in the United States](#)."



COVID-19 and the Surge of
Mail Ballots
Verified Voting

The team completed an [analysis of mail ballot scanning systems](#) to better understand how many jurisdictions currently counting mail ballots on hand-fed scanners or by hand would manage 100% of their 2016 votes cast as mail ballots.



Verified Voting
**VOTE
VISUALIZER**
2020

We will be adding another tool to our website soon called the Vote Visualizer, an open source tool to aid in quick post-election consolidation and analysis of election results. For more information, watch Data Scientist Stephanie Singer's [virtual talk](#) at this year's **DEF CON Voting Village**.



#CheckYourReg
Verified Voting

Our [#CheckYourReg](#) campaign kicked off on National Voter Registration Day in coordination with the **Election Protection Coalition**. #CheckYourReg was created in 2016 to get the word out about checking to make sure your voter registration file is active, accurate, and hasn't been [tampered with](#). Because checking your voter registration file is just the first step in making sure your vote gets counted, we also launched the #makeyourplan campaign to encourage everyone to #makeyourplan to vote. We continue to work with our Election Protection Coalition partners on coordinated communications and messaging leading up to Election Day.

State Highlights



*Below is just a snapshot of our state work: in addition to the highlights featured here, we're in constant communication with officials and advocates in **Arizona, North Carolina, Wisconsin**, and other priority states ahead of November's election. We also remain vigilant in other key swing states by supporting our partners leading efforts in **Ohio, Michigan, Nevada, and Maine**.*

Arizona

We are connecting with Arizona election officials and local advocates to discuss audit best practices and plans for the November election. Our goals are to ensure each of the 15 counties in Arizona conduct a post-election audit, to encourage the largest counties to audit beyond the statutory minimum, and to bring public attention to the audit. We are also planning ahead to help create improvements in audits and other procedures in 2021.

North Carolina

We are advocating with the State Board of Elections to improve the state's post-election audit procedures -- especially to remove the current limitation of auditing just two precincts per county, no matter how large the county.

Wisconsin

In response to our advocacy efforts, Wisconsin Elections Commission staff are actively considering improvements to their post-election audit that would make the sample more representative and equitable, and strengthen assurance of the results in this battleground state. The fairer the sample, the better it can assess the accuracy of the vote count. We continue to encourage changes to provide confidence in the results in this battleground state.

Pennsylvania

Our audit team played a key role in implementing Pennsylvania's first statewide risk-limiting audit (RLA) pilot of the June 2 primary results in early August. The pilot laid the foundation for the state to conduct a full statewide RLA of November's presidential election. We are helping plan for November via our role on the state audit working group.

California

Senior Advisor Pam Smith continues to serve on the California Task Force on Elections and COVID-19, which was convened by the Secretary of State to address needs and practices for conducting the November 2020 election under pandemic conditions while preserving security and accessibility for all voters. Verified Voting also [joined a letter](#) with the California Voter Foundation commenting on the technological challenges that need to be addressed in the state before November's election.

Florida

We worked alongside Common Cause to share our [recommendations](#) on remote accessible vote by mail. The Department of State now has entered into a settlement agreement that implements the crucial security measure that voter selections can never be uploaded to a remote server.

Rhode Island

Rhode Island successfully conducted its first pre-certification statutorily required statewide RLA! Mark Lindeman and Chrissa LaPorte, Program Associate for Data Science and Election Audits, were on site with our partners assisting officials in the auditing process. [Check out some photos here.](#)

Virginia

We are reaching out to Virginia election officials, sharing Verified Voting's resources and recommendations for conducting elections during the COVID-19 pandemic. We're also continuing to attend and assist where needed with risk-limiting audit pilots and pilot training in Virginia.

Press Highlights



The New York Times

Mark Lindeman, along with Board of Directors member David Dill, contributed to a New York Times editorial piece, [“Is Your State at Risk of an Election Meltdown? Seven ways the election might get bungled.”](#) In addition to quoting Verified Voting, the article also sourced our data in an interactive infographic.

The Washington Post

Mark Lindeman was quoted in the Washington Post’s [Cybersecurity 202](#) doubling down on the security and validity of mail ballots, noting, “I haven’t seen anyone present a really plausible scenario about how you steal a lot of votes at scale with mail ballots.”

Verified Voting

Verified Voting released a statement following the first presidential debate calling attacks on mail voting unfounded and encouraging voters to make a plan to vote now.



The National Task Force on Election Crises, of which Verified Voting Senior Advisor and former president Pam Smith is a member, released a statement on the importance of a [“Peaceful Transition of Power.”](#)

Stateline

Stateline, run by Pew Charitable Trusts, published a story featuring Cris Landa, [“Election Experts Warn of November Disaster.”](#) The story was picked up by nearly 20 other news outlets and continued to run as recently as September 8.

The Economist

The Economist ran a longform article, [“Donald Trump is Very Likely to Challenge the Results of the U.S. Election,”](#) featuring several quotes from Verified Voting. The story appeared in both the print and online editions.

POLITICO

POLITICO highlighted Verified Voting’s electronic poll book usage data in [“The Election Security Hole Everyone Ignores.”](#) The piece also appeared in POLITICO Pro.

The Washington Post

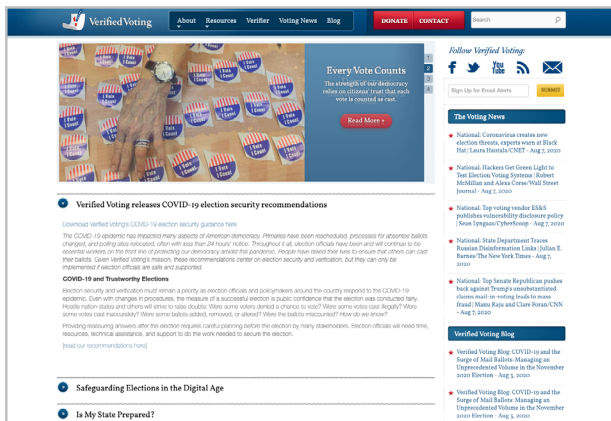
The Washington Post’s Cybersecurity 202 quoted Verified Voting in a story about why it is okay to not expect results on Election night ([“Mail Voting Could Delay Election Results. But That Doesn’t Mean It’s Suspect as Trump Claims”](#)). Verified Voting has included this message in nearly every interview in the past year, noting that “accuracy is more important than speed.”

salon

[Roll Call](#) and [Salon](#) wrote stories about a statement released by the National Task Force on Election Crises, on which Verified Voting is proud to serve, explaining why President Donald Trump does not have the authority to change the election date.



Our Board Chair Dr. Barbara Simons was recognized as a leading voice in election technology policy as the recipient of the [2019 Association for Computing Machinery \(ACM\) Policy Award](#). The award noted her “long-standing, high-impact leadership” and “making influential contributions to improve the reliability of and public confidence in election technology.” Barbara is a true pioneer in the election security space and we’re thrilled that she was chosen as this year’s recipient.



We hope you've had a chance to check out our new, improved website at www.verifiedvoting.org. Our data, resources, and tools are more accessible than ever. Here's just a snapshot of our enhancements:

- The redesigned [Verifier](#), which now includes electronic poll book data and enhanced data visualizations
- Our library of [resources](#), including our latest publications, papers, and press statements
- Our updated [five key issue areas](#) so you can easily delve into a topic, including our redesigned Audit and Internet Voting pages
- The new "[Who We Are](#)" page, so you can learn more about our mission and our team

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube for the latest updates from #TeamVerifiedVoting, including new website features that we will be rolling out before Election Day.

Federal Advocacy



We pushed alongside our coalition partners this summer for more funding that election officials desperately needed to conduct safe and secure elections amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. We were disappointed that the funding stalled over the summer in a hyper partisan Congress and have [released a response this week](#) supporting the updated proposed coronavirus response package, the [HEROES Act](#).

Other efforts included a [letter](#) to the U.S. House Administration Committee Subcommittee on Elections ahead of the [hearing](#), “The Impact of COVID-19 on Voting Rights and Election Administration: Ensuring Safe and Fair Elections.” Our communications team lifted up the Senate Rules Committee [hearing](#) on “2020 General Election Preparations” in a [blog post](#) and in a live “[tweetstorm](#)” with other advocacy groups. We will keep advocating for funding for safe and secure elections in 2021 and beyond.

We also continue to monitor any legislation that aims to make our elections more secure and are prepared to push back against any legislation that supports inherently insecure practices like [internet voting](#).

A Look Ahead



In many ways, our most important work begins when the polls close on November 3. Our Verified Voting team is concerned about the spread of [misinformation](#), particularly around the validity of the election results. We are doing everything we can to plan for scenarios and ensure messaging preparedness for what our country may face this November. We are also on the ground working with election officials on implementing audit practices that give the public confidence in the election results. No matter what the next weeks will bring, we'll continue ensuring that everyone - election officials, advocates, and the public alike - has the information and data they need to cut through any noise and misinformation.

Please reach out to us with any questions you have - and again, we hope you'll share this work with your friends and colleagues, or [consider helping us with a donation](#). What comes next will put the months of preparation we've put into preparing for this election to the test, and help point the way forward for what's ahead in 2021 and beyond.



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