

March 12, 2026

Connecticut Government Administration and Elections Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2200
Hartford, CT 06106
Via online portal

Dear Committee Members:

On behalf of Verified Voting, I write in support of S.B. No. 394 regarding risk-limiting audits and in support of the risk-limiting audit provisions in H.B. No. 5001. Please note that Verified Voting has submitted separate written testimony along with other coalition partners opposing Section 28 of H.B. No. 5001. Verified Voting is a nonpartisan nonprofit organization whose mission is to strengthen democracy for all voters by promoting the responsible use of technology in elections. Since its founding by computer scientists in 2004, Verified Voting has promoted voter-verified paper ballots and routine, rigorous post-election audits—especially risk-limiting audits—to check the accuracy of computerized voting systems.

Risk-limiting audits (RLAs) and other routine manual audits address two distinct challenges to U.S. elections: the chance that voting technology will misreport results, and the spread of baseless accusations that vote counts are rigged. Well-designed audits provide routine, efficient, and timely quality assurance. They take a “show, don’t tell” approach to confirming vote counts.

RLAs are robust tabulation audits designed to efficiently confirm that election outcomes match what a full hand count of those ballots would reveal by manually examining a representative random sample of the ballots. RLAs have been recommended by the American Statistical Association, Mathematical Association of America, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and many other experts as one element of a strong and resilient election infrastructure.

Connecticut would join a growing number of states conducting RLAs. Colorado, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, and Washington regularly conduct RLAs before election results are finalized, while Maine, Maryland, and Texas have recently been piloting RLAs in preparation for full implementation.

S.B. No. 394 and the RLA provisions in H.B. No. 5001 would allow for the successful implementation of RLAs in Connecticut, providing a strong basis for public confidence in election results. The RLA language in both bills gives the Secretary of State the authority to develop procedures and regulations related to RLAs, without overspecifying the details in legislation. The bills include a pilot program that would provide registrars additional experience with the RLA process and allow them to test their new voting equipment as part

of an RLA. Given its ongoing work on RLA methods, the University of Connecticut's Center for Voting Technology Research would prove an invaluable partner in RLA implementation in the state.

We also offer a few suggestions on how this legislation might be improved. One of the strengths of the RLA language is that it requires a range of contests to be audited, but the state may benefit from reducing the set of contests subject to an RLA, at least initially. The bill could instead only require state offices and the office of presidential elector, when applicable, to be audited to a risk limit. Other contests—one randomly selected office for U.S. representative in Congress and five percent of the offices of state senator and state representative—could also be audited but not necessarily to a risk limit. For instance, these contests could be audited as they appear on the ballots selected as part of the statewide RLA sample. Alternatively, the legislature could postpone the requirement to conduct RLAs of these legislative contests until 2030, once the state has more experience with RLAs. We also recommend exempting from the RLA contests that are “uncontested,” where a candidate runs unopposed for an office.

We also suggest reconsidering the requirement to audit U.S. House and General Assembly contests already subject to a recanvass, because of a close vote or a tie. If two candidates are separated by only a handful of votes, an RLA would likely result in a full hand count, which could prove challenging for registrars to complete prior to certification.

We also recommend clarifying whether the current manual or electronic audit would take place following state elections in addition to the RLA; the relevant language is found in Sec. 3, lines 139-148 of S.B. No. 394 and in Sec. 34, lines 1097-1106 of H.B. No. 5001. We also noticed that most sections of S.B. No. 394 are effective “from passage” and would require an RLA of the November 2026 election, prior to the pilot program or issuance of RLA procedures, both slated for 2027. We assume that this is an error. The RLA provisions in H.B. No. 5001 are, more logically, effective as of January 1, 2027.

Thank you for considering our comments and suggestions. RLAs are an important tool for verifying election outcomes, and we applaud your efforts to implement them in Connecticut. We would be happy to discuss further the RLA provisions of these two bills or any of the suggestions we have outlined.

Respectfully submitted,

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