



Allegheny County Council

County of Allegheny
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Legislation Text

File #: 11159-19, Version: 1

Proclamation recognizing the *Blue Ribbon Commission on Pennsylvania's Election Security*.

WHEREAS, *The Blue Ribbon Commission on Pennsylvania's Election Security* was founded in May 2018 by David Hickton from the University of Pittsburgh's Institute for Cyber Law, Policy, and Security, and he has co-chaired *the Commission* alongside Paul McNulty. It was formed amongst growing concerns over security of the voting machines and the impossibility of election officials to audit the results of an election; and

WHEREAS, *The Blue Ribbon Commission on Pennsylvania's Election Security*, an independent, bipartisan civic leadership organization, has dedicated its efforts towards ensuring voter protection and security. It has advanced Pennsylvania government through citizen engagement and policy advocacy; and

WHEREAS, composed of 21 appointed Commissioners, *The Commission* strives to bring awareness to the cyber vulnerabilities that Pennsylvania's voting machines face; and

WHEREAS, voter fraud is a serious issue that has been heavily researched by *The Commission*. As the country's election infrastructure ages, it becomes more at-risk for election fraud and malfunctions. *The Commission* is taking steps to ensure that risk decreases; and

WHEREAS, *The Commission*, through research, has developed multiple suggestions on how to secure voter safety and determine the most effective ballot system for Pennsylvania voters such as: the better training of poll workers in the event of equipment failure, paper ballots in addition to electronic ones for auditing purposes, and requiring an audit to ensure that the votes were counted correctly; and

WHEREAS, *The Commission* researched the cybersecurity surrounding voter registration data and the ability of the state's system to survive and recover from an attack. This promotes cyber defense with strong and extensive contingency planning. *The Commission* asks that Pennsylvania's officials work together to reduce the potential for attacks and lessen the impact of an attack or other technological event; and

WHEREAS, *The Commission* has recognized that Pennsylvania is one of thirteen states that store votes electronically without printed ballots or backups. This encourages Pennsylvania to secure voter safety with the use of new machines that would store votes both electronically and on paper. This would require replacing an electronic system that was purchased in 2006; and

WHEREAS, the new voting machines would be put through strict tests such as security

tests, accessibility tests and auditability tests to ensure that they meet the standards set by the Pennsylvania Department of State and the Federal Election Assistance Commission; and

WHEREAS, *The Commission* is concerned about implementing the best available system that will meet the needs of hundreds of thousands of voters, especially those voters with disabilities, limited English proficiency, and seniors; and

WHEREAS, by providing the research, suggestions, and data, ***The Commission*** has dedicated their time to ensuring voter safety by requesting new voting machines that store electronic votes and paper votes. They also suggest audits to verify the votes and increasing cyber security to lessen the chances of an attack on the voting systems;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Allegheny County Council Member Paul Klein, do hereby commend ***The Blue Ribbon Commission on Pennsylvania's Election Security*** for researching and developing solutions to ensure the safety of Pennsylvanian votes. On behalf of Allegheny County Council, we congratulate the commission for constantly striving to improve the election process for Pennsylvania and looking out for the protection and well-being of our citizens.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto caused the Seal of the County of Allegheny to be affixed this 20th day of August 2019.