



TACIR

The Tennessee Advisory Commission
on Intergovernmental Relations



4

226 Anne Dallas Dudley Blvd., Suite 508
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0760
Phone: (615) 741-3012
Fax: (615) 532-2443
www.tn.gov/tacir

MEMORANDUM

TO: Commission Members

FROM: Cliff Lippard *Cliff*
Executive Director

DATE: 12 December 2018

SUBJECT: Election Study Update—Information Presentation

In an April 2018 letter to the Commission, Senator Frank Niceley expressed concern about new threats to Tennessee's voting system and requested that the Commission revisit and update its 2007 staff report *Trust but Verify: Increasing Voter Confidence in Election Results*, which examined election security in Tennessee and included several findings and recommendations. He asked the Commission to address two specific topics:

1. The most cost-effective and efficient voter-verified paper audit trail (VVPAT) options for Tennessee counties
2. Opportunities to offset VVPAT costs with the use of secure electronic transfer, a system used by 35 states to ensure that data from all agencies is available to verify the accuracy of voter rolls

Although none of the recommendations in the 2007 TACIR staff report addressed secure electronic transfer, three addressed the use of VVPAT. At that time, staff recommended that Tennessee

- implement voter-verified paper audit trails statewide within a reasonable time frame;
- adopt VVPAT that can be counted by hand, as well as by machine—machine tallies to support prompt reporting of results with hand counting for audit and recount purposes; and
- adopt a standard for VVPAT that would meet federal guidelines then under consideration.

TACIR staff continues to support these recommendations. Further, staff would encourage county election officials not wanting to replace their current non-VVPAT machines to consider adding printers, when they are available, to those machines to make them VVPAT capable. And rather than relying on paper voter registration applications, although the cost savings are not clear, staff encourages the state to continue implementing electronic voter registration processes, making it easier to register, improving accuracy of voter rolls, and potentially saving money.

At the September 2018 Commission meeting, staff updated Commission members with preliminary information addressing Senator Niceley's request. This final staff update provides additional information in response to members' questions.