



OFFICE OF THE IOWA SECRETARY OF STATE

August 11, 2017

Rebecca Stonawski
Deputy Commissioner of Elections
935 Second Street SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52304-2100

Dear Deputy Commissioner Stonawski:

I am writing to follow up on yesterday's conversation I had with you and the phone messages I left with Auditor Miller. I am also writing to provide a written response to your August 8 letter to Secretary Pate regarding Linn County election staff's unintentional release of Linn County voters' confidential data.

As you know, the state voter registration database was designed to prevent incidents like this from occurring. The security measures have been successful; no one in the Secretary's office, including long-term employees, have any awareness of a previous occurrence of accidental release of confidential information. Our office wants Iowa voters to be assured that their confidential information remains secure. Specifically, the default settings for creating voter registration lists automatically exclude confidential data.

Moving forward, we are taking the following steps:

1. As we discussed and as you requested, we are working with our IVoters vendor to explore whether the statewide voter registration system should be modified to further minimize the occurrence of human error resulting in an unintended transmission of confidential information. As this would affect all 99 counties and 500 users, any changes would have to be vetted with additional county auditors.

2. As we have already agreed, my staff is handling all voter list requests for Linn County for the time being. Once you have new policies in place regarding the management of confidential data, we will return this function back to your office.

3. We are working with the State Chief Information Officer to re-offer Linn County "Securing the Human" IT security training. My entire staff takes this training every year. Two Linn County employees did sign up for this training, but I hope it can be made available to your entire staff, so that they'll have additional instruction on cybersecurity and steps to avoid breach of confidential information. Please contact Eric Gookin (eric.gookin@sos.iowa.gov) to sign up additional employees for this training.

4. We recommend that future transfer of any voter data should be done over a secure File Transfer Protocol (FTP) site, accessed through a temporary link. This is how voter list requests are now handled in my office. This process enables you to modify the content of the files or remove the link to the files, if necessary.

Additionally, our office appreciates your transparency about the incident. As always, if you need anything from the Secretary of State's office, we are always available.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol Olson".

Carol Olson
Deputy Secretary of State

CC: Linn County Auditor Joel Miller
Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate