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Gov. Wolf: PA had a Fair and Secure Election, Congressional GOP Efforts to Overturn the Results are Disgraceful

Harrisburg, PA – With Congress preparing to count Electoral College votes today, Governor Tom Wolf was joined by Secretary of State Kathy Boockvar and Philadelphia City Commissioner Al Schmidt to emphasize that Pennsylvania had a free, fair and secure election. All efforts by Congressional Republicans to overthrow the election results and subvert the will of the voters are disgraceful and must be rejected.

“Republican members of the Pennsylvania Congressional delegation plan to object to the counting of Pennsylvania’s electoral votes by claiming the election was compromised, and that our electoral votes are suspect,” said Gov. Wolf. “This is an outrageous lie, and they are undermining our democracy by recklessly repeating that lie to deceive the American people.”

“Today, these Republican Congressman have a choice. They can stand with our country and uphold our constitution, or they can stand by a single defeated politician pushing baseless claims in an attempt to overturn an election.”

Allegations of fraud and illegal activity in the 2020 election have been repeatedly dismissed by the courts, often with blistering rulings against the Trump campaign, and debunked by independent fact-checkers. These baseless attacks are nothing more than disinformation intended to undermine our democracy and our faith in our elections.

Many leading Republicans, including Sen. Pat Toomey, have said the evidence is overwhelming that Joe Biden won the election. Within President Trump’s Administration, former Attorney General Bill Barr said there was no widespread fraud and Chris Krebs, who oversaw election cybersecurity for the Trump Administration and frequently worked with the Pennsylvania Department of State, said the nation’s election was the most secure in history.

“Pennsylvania held a free, fair, and secure election, with extraordinary transparency at every stage,” said Secretary of State Boockvar. “We are so thankful to the election officials and poll workers, Republican and Democrat, who worked tirelessly amidst the global pandemic so that eligible voters could exercise their fundamental right to vote. Thanks to these dedicated workers, millions of Pennsylvanians of every political party participated in record numbers and had their voices heard.”

Philadelphia City Commissioner Al Schmidt added, “All Pennsylvania voters should have confidence in the election results in Philadelphia. Our dedicated county employees worked under incredibly stressful circumstances to provide a fair and accurate election. Pennsylvanians can be proud that Philadelphia had the most transparent and secure election in the history of our city.”

Pennsylvania’s 67 county boards of elections worked incredibly hard with the Department of State, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, the offices of Homeland Security, Information Technology, the Pennsylvania National Guard, and other local, state and federal partners, to ensure the highest standards of security and integrity of Pennsylvania's election process. A layered defense protects the commonwealth’s election processes, including cyber security protections, extensive eligibility-checking procedures, and state-of-the-art voting systems that meet federal and state standards for security and accessibility and provide an auditable paper ballot that voters can verify before casting their ballot.

The counties are also required by law to conduct a statistical recount of a random sample of at least two percent of their ballots before certifying their results. Additionally, the Department of State and counties are conducting a risk-limiting audit (RLA) pilot of the 2020 presidential election. In late 2020, the counties created their ballot manifests, a random seed number was generated, and the audit software selected the random list of ballots to be retrieved by each county. The counties will retrieve the ballots in January, indicating the vote cast for the Presidential contest on each ballot, then the system will tally and analyze the results.

Pennsylvania is one of the first states to pioneer pilots of the RLA, a scientifically designed procedure using statistical methods to provide a high level of confidence and statistical verification that the outcome of an election is accurate and detect possible interference.

“Republican lawmakers can’t change the facts just because they don’t like them,” Gov. Wolf said. “And attempting to do so undermines our democracy by disenfranchising millions of Pennsylvanians.

“By perpetuating disinformation about the election, these Republican lawmakers disregard the oaths they took to serve their constituents and protect their rights under the constitution. It is disrespectful to the American people who exercised their right to vote in this election and to the patriots who fought and died for our democracy.”

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