

"FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Wolf Administration Directs that New Voting Systems in the Commonwealth Provide Paper Record

Harrisburg, PA – The Wolf administration is taking steps to increase the security and auditability of all voting systems used in the commonwealth.

Secretary of State Robert Torres today issued a directive that all commonwealth voting systems purchased from February 9, 2018, forward must employ a voter-verifiable paper ballot or paper record of votes cast.

“This directive will ensure that the next generation of the commonwealth’s voting systems conforms to enhanced standards of resiliency, auditability and security,” Secretary Torres said. “The current voting equipment in counties works and can be audited. But new voting machines with paper ballots or voter-verifiable paper backup will improve auditability and augment security.”

Over the next few years, Pennsylvania’s counties will replace much of their aging voting equipment. This directive informs them of the specifications they must consider when purchasing new voting equipment. The department wants to be sure counties move to voting systems that meet their needs for accessibility and security and make audits easier.

A directive requiring a paper record of voting is necessary because:

- It is in line with modern equipment offered by voting system manufacturers;*
- It will allow counties to expand their auditing practices. Auditing of voting equipment is an essential part of guaranteeing a system’s integrity and accuracy.*
- It will enable compliance, if future legislation requiring a paper record is enacted at the state or federal level; and*
- It will ensure that Pennsylvania’s voting system can achieve resilience by enhancing its ability to withstand and recover more rapidly from disruptions.*

“We want to be proactive and replace older voting systems before their hardware and software become obsolete. This directive is a first step in that modernization effort. We will continue to work closely with the General Assembly and county officials to implement reforms that enhance the accessibility and integrity of Pennsylvania’s elections,” Secretary Torres said.

This directive does not preclude a county from purchasing equipment that supports and maintains a county’s current voting system for as long as that system is certified for use in the commonwealth.”