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Questionnaire for WA Secretary of State candidates 2022
Answers Prepared by Julie Anderson
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1. What credentials and experiences prepare you for the position of Secretary of State?

- National and state certifications in election administration.
- Certified Washington Public Records Officer.
- 12+years as Pierce County Auditor, managing award-winning election operations, document recording, and licensing services.

Please see my [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/in/julieanderson169) profile for additional information. [linkedin.com/in/julieanderson169](https://www.linkedin.com/in/julieanderson169)

2. What are the cybersecurity dangers faced in WA State? What is your cybersecurity plan to provide election security for voters and results?

This question is far too large. This response is a simplified summary.

Our state's cybersecurity dangers are not unique. We have:

1. Criminals trying to exploit IT systems for ransomware.
2. Political adversaries (domestic and foreign) that seek to disrupt elections through attempts to gain access to election systems.
3. Political adversaries (domestic and foreign) that seek to undermine democracy and destabilize our county through disinformation and malformation.

I would continue to take commonsense cybersecurity measures:

- Maintain statewide Albert Sensor coverage.
- Conduct penetration testing / intrusion analysis.
- Develop and practice cybersecurity *incident response* plans.
- Partner with CISA to conduct tabletop exercises with election officials throughout the state and nation.
- Actively participate in EI-ISAC - Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center.
- Contract with Air Force and Army national guard units that specialize in cyberwarfare (defense, as well as proactive detection of misinformation / malinformation campaigns).
- Practice routine IT hygiene:
 - Software and patch management.
 - Log management to support triage and remediation of cybersecurity events.
 - Network segmentation.
 - Air-gapped tabulation and results reporting.
 - Use dedicated servers and workstations for elections-related tasks.
 - Block suspicious activity.
 - Prevent malware and malicious traffic.
 - Credential management and multi-factor authentication.

A very strong communication program is essential. I would provide materials to county election officials and coordinate outreach activities with each county auditor. The communication provides information to citizens to help THEM be cybersecure, understand VoteWA security features and the public nature of voter records, and rapidly address rumors, bad facts, and misinformation.

3. What policies and practices will you initiate to expand voter registration and participation in WA?

NOTE: Registration and participation rates throughout Washington are high (top 10 in the nation). Residual gains will be in:

- “Hard to reach” populations, that generally share these indicators: poor health outcomes, poverty, low education attainment, etc.
- Voters and potential voters who move frequently (transience), such as active duty military, students, and households migrating in search of affordable housing.

NOTE: The following list is not comprehensive or exclusive.

- A. Develop outreach tactics in partnership with institutions and businesses which also focus on (*and track*) these hard to reach and transient households:
 - K-12 institutions.
 - Landlords and rental property associations (especially those that have participated in rental assistance programs and dispute resolutions programs).
 - Disability and aging services.
- B. Work with the state legislature to create a community grant program administered by the Secretary of State (contracting, fiscal management and reporting, outcome evaluation), but managed in cooperation with county auditors (outreach, partnership with community organization, technical support). Community organizations would be invited to propose hyper-local, culturally appropriate, nonpartisan outreach programs tailored to unique local conditions.
- C. Work with the state legislature to make a permanent, INTERNAL student outreach program within higher education and community & technical college systems. Efforts need to be sustained throughout the academic year and are best led by student leaders. Election officials are the least likely to appeal to student populations. Young leaders, supervised by academic administrations, and supported by election officials, will be most effective.
- D. Work with the disability community to reach isolated voters and provide effective, compelling outreach. Voters living with disabilities require specialized communication which is intensive and tailored.
- E. Work with county auditors and the state legislature to move the in-person registration deadline closer to election day (if not eliminate the in-person require entirely).
- F. Work with county auditors and the state legislature to reform vote center law and expand the array of vote center opportunities based on data-driven standards. Use as a model Pierce County’s system of public libraries as “points of assistance” on election day. Even if in-person registration requirements are adjusted, voters still need in-person assistance for information, printing, and ballot deposit. Reducing travel and access burdens will help everyone.
- G. Work with county auditors and the state legislature to expand language access beyond federal section 203 requirements. A centralized phone assistance system, based on Pierce County’s successful model, and consideration for languages that aren’t currently authorized by Congress (for example, neither Russian nor Ukrainian are federal-designated languages).

4. Over 300,000 voters were removed from the rolls in WA State over the last several years. Do you support giving voters every opportunity to remain on the rolls – only removing them if/when it is clear they have moved or are no longer eligible? How will you ensure that voters are not removed unnecessarily?

I fully support:

- Only inactivating a registration when there is no known mailing address for the voter. Be aware, placing a registration in “inactive” status does not cancel or purge the voter.
- Only cancelling registrations when voter ineligibility can be *verified* by election administrators or when there is no known mailing address for the voter AND the voter has not contacted the election center in four years (two federal election cycles).

NOTE: We have Same Day Registration in Washington State. This significantly mitigates impacts of registration cancellations. A voter who has been removed from the registration system simply needs to r-register (at any time) or present themselves in person during the week prior to the election. They can be issued a ballot and vote on the same day, and the ballot will not be provisional.

5. Many states have recently installed various voter suppression policies under the guise of fraud protection. Even some WA legislators introduced HB1377 to eliminate mail-in voting thus requiring people to vote in person. Further, it has been reported that substantially more ballots from people of color have been rejected than other populations.

A. What leadership will you provide to prevent these or other voter suppression policies from being adopted in WA State?

- Develop relationships with party leaders and legislators to *prevent* this legislation from being introduced.
- Just because a destructive bill is filed, doesn’t mean that it merits a reaction. In fact, you may unwittingly create attention and “give it oxygen.”
- If destructive legislation appears to be advancing, I would provide public testimony, editorials, and media interviews to describe impacts and consequences.

B. How will you address the discrepancy in ballot rejections based on matching signatures?

- Explore alternative(s) to signatures.
- Make it easier to “cure” a challenged ballot.
- Improve notification to voters, alerting them that their ballot has been challenged.
- Create tailored outreach to communities experiencing disparate impacts (primary languages other than English, Black males, very young voters, and very old voters).

C. Please identify any other voter suppression policies that still exist in WA State and what can be done to ameliorate or eradicate such policies.

6. Given the pressure, harassment, and threats experienced by Secretaries of State and election workers across the United States from extremist factions, how will you support and protect your own staff, and election workers and officials at every level?

- Training in de-escalation, self-care, and personal protection.
- Regularly rotating employees “off the front line” for periods of restoration.
- Elected leaders working alongside employees.
- Create policies that allow employees to set and enforce limits to abusive behavior.

- Have plans established for how to balance the need for civil behavior with voter rights.
- Plan for emergencies and drill for them.

It must be recognized that counties are run by independent elected officials and their facilities and security protocol are under the control of county government. The Secretary of State can offer supports such as urging county commissioners to “target harden” facilities and contract with appropriate levels of security during election periods. The Secretary of State can also make an statewide assessment of election facilities, identify weaknesses, and make appeals to the legislature and congress to appropriate grants to harden targets and make workplaces as safe and welcoming as possible.

7. False narratives about elections being untrustworthy have been fostered by disinformation and conspiracy theories about election fraud, especially about the 2020 Presidential and swing state elections but also about elections everywhere. How will you reassure voters that our elections are secure? How do you propose to effectively prevent or counter false messages:

- A. on social media? B. from political candidates themselves?
C. from officials (hired, appointed, or elected) who are not candidates?**

This question is far too large in scope. This response is a simplified summary.

Public reassurance:

- A comprehensive communication plan linked to and amplified by county communications.
- Advertise, promote, and celebrate election audits, recounts, and certifications.
- Investigate additional types of audits that are publicly observable or involve members of the public.

Countering false messages:

- A comprehensive communication plan linked to and amplified by county communications.
- Ensure that the public knows where to turn for accurate information.
- Inoculate the public in advance, so they are less susceptible to false messages.
- Host a “myth buster” page that posts and responds to rumors and false information. Ensure that the page is distributed / displayed across all 39 counties.
- Partner with public and private institutions that can monitor the internet and detect misinformation and disinformation (universities, military, CISA and ISAC).
- Establish outstanding media relationships and provide media advisories in a quick and reliable fashion. Make myself, civic leaders, and county auditors available for on camera / on radio interviews.

8. How will you seek to assure that election officials themselves will not be able to take actions that jeopardize the safety and security of the elections under their administration (as happened elsewhere)?

Revise RCW 29A. 12.020 (Inspection and test by secretary of state) and WAC 434-335 (Voting Systems) to explicitly prohibit third party access to voting systems after installation.

It must be acknowledged that county auditors are independently elected officials, and it is extremely difficult to remove the elected official’s authority. The Secretary of State would need to go to court to restrain another election official. I would be willing to do so, but my priority is to prevent this from happening.

9. With regard to any voting machines still used in WA State:

A. Will you require that all voting machines have a *handmarked* paper ballot backup (or other verified paper backup for people with disabilities)?

No. A hand marked paper ballot defeats the purpose of an Accessible Voting Unit (AVU), which offers a much-needed *alternative* to a hand marked ballot. This is critically important to voters living with disabilities, as well as military and overseas voters.

NOTE: A voting machine is a machine used to record votes without paper. In Washington State, there are no voting machines in use. We are a paper-based Vote-By-Mail state. Every vote is counted via a paper ballot.

To assist voters living with disabilities, we all deploy “Accessible Voting Units” (AVU) at our vote centers. Think of an AVU as a fancy pen. It simply helps people living with disabilities to mark a paper ballot using a computer, rather than a pen. They indicate their choices using a mouse or finger or sip-puff device. This allows the voter to vote with privacy and independence and prevents them from having to ask for assistance. An AVU does not store votes or tally results. It simply helps the voter to mark a paper ballot and print it. It’s the same ballot that you would return via Vote by Mail.

No counties in Washington State use “Direct Recording Electronic” voting machines.

B. Will you replace any proprietary voting machines with machines using open source software which is available for inspection and verification?

NOTE: A voting machine is a machine used to record votes without paper. In Washington State, there are no voting machines in use. We are a paper-based Vote-By-Mail state. Every vote is counted via a paper ballot.

Therefore, I assume you are asking about central count tabulation equipment.

No. I will not replace certified equipment that is county property. The Secretary of State doesn’t have the authority to remove and replace county equipment. The Secretary’s authority is limited to certification of equipment and ensuring that equipment and procedures comply with state law. In line with this authority, the Secretary of State could decertify compromised equipment or equipment that fails to meet standards or audits.

Regarding central count tabulation equipment, I would continue to enforce existing laws, rules, and procedures.

- Certified voting machines must be tested by Voting System Test Labs (VSTLs) that hold a valid accreditation from NIST’s National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP).
- Verification that software versions are remain unchanged from federal and state certified versions.
- Logic and accuracy testing occurs prior to each election.
- Post-election audits immediately after election day, prior to certification.

NOTE: All the above rules include public observation opportunities, advertised in legal notices and held in open public meetings. Documents are publicly available as well.

As an additional measure, I’ll propose these additional requirements:

- Regularly verify that executable files have not been altered (hash documentation).

- Regularly have each tabulation system's "air gap" independently verified.
- Expand audits to include a risk-limiting audit for a general election statewide race chosen randomly.
- Periodically conduct Homeland Security penetration testing at counties. Note: This service has a long waiting list.

While it is technically possible for a vendor to develop open-source tabulation software and to get it certified, I am not aware of any vendor that has done so. I'm certain that the four vendors in Washington State don't have open source certified software. Proprietary software is how they make money. And this business model incentivizes innovation.

If certified, open source tabulation software were available for purchase, I wouldn't be opposed to a county purchasing the system, if they maintained high security standards. But this product does not exist for Washington's system of elections.

NOTE: I would strenuously resist any attempts to open a certified, secured system to public inspection once it is installed. Rather, we would depend on the testing and audits to verify that the software is functioning as intended and votes are being accurately counted.

10. Even if 1630 passes, how will you assure the public that armed people will not intimidate voters at voter registration, ballot boxes, election sites, etc.?

HB 1630 (possession of weapons in certain locations) did pass. There are other laws already on the books that relate to intimidation and interfering with someone's ability to vote. I'd advise counties to develop advance plans with law enforcement and anticipate a variety of scenarios and responses.

The Secretary of State can't impose security measures on a county. The county auditor and the county commissioners control their facilities and determine most operational details. The Secretary of State can provide training and recommend best practices for security.

11. Should the US Postal Service further deteriorate, what actions can the SOS take to assure that voters are not disenfranchised by delayed postal delivery?

- Work closely with members of Congress to establish mandatory delivery standards for all election mail.
- Develop communication campaigns to urge early voting and alert voters of any instances of mail disruption.
- Help counties develop emergency plans should there be an unexpected disruption to mail (natural disaster, USPS performance issues).

- 12. A. Do you pledge to certify the election results fairly and based on the popular vote? Yes.**
B. Do you pledge not to interfere with the selection of electors? Yes.