State of Our State: Elections and Civic Life

Tennesseans are Eager for Action on State Election Modernization and Security

Tennesseans are proud of our rich civic history.

As the Volunteer State, we made history by answering our nation's call to service. And as the state that cast the deciding vote to ratify the 19th Amendment, we helped empower millions of women across the country.

Today, our state is taking steps to continue our civic legacy.

In 2017, we became the 37th state to implement online voter registration, embracing a technological advance to give citizens a new way to register to vote and helping to ensure the accuracy of voter rolls. And civic organizations throughout the state are doing their part to engage Tennesseans in our upcoming elections.

But Tennessee voters want our state to do more to protect our elections from outside threats.

Neighboring states have implemented innovative tools to upgrade and safeguard their election systems, and Tennesseans want the same to happen here.

A 2018 survey of likely Tennessee voters reveals concerns about the security and modernity of Tennesse's elections. (i)

56% are concerned about foreign countries or governments trying to influence elections

thinktennessee.org

69% are concerned about computer hacking of voting results

thinktennessee.org

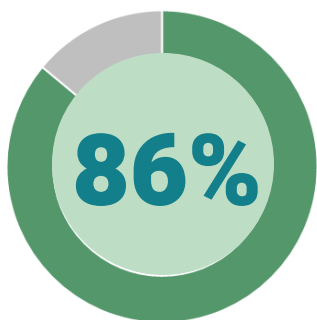*56% are concerned about outdated election infrastructure, like voting machines and databases*

thinktennessee.org

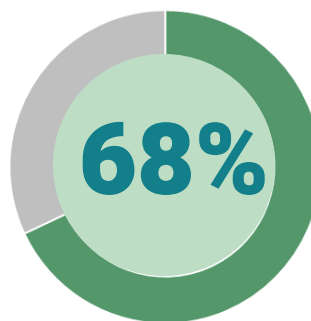*55% are concerned about the privacy of voter data*

thinktennessee.org

86% of Tennessee voters would support the state government modernizing its election system to prevent tampering and hacking.

thinktennessee.org

68% of Tennessee voters want the state to do more to ensure elections are modern, secure and free from fraud and tampering.

thinktennessee.org

Our Local and National Elections Face a Threat Unlike Anything Seen Before

The threat to U.S. elections is ongoing. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security informed 21 states that their 2016 elections were targeted by Russian hackers. CIA director Mike Pompeo said in early 2018 that he has "every expectation" that Russia will continue to try to interfere with the upcoming midterm elections.(ii)

> **" This threat is not going to go away. "**

CIA director Mike Pompeo
(Jan. 2018)

knox news.
PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Report: Global cyberassault caused Knox election night server crash

The threat to Tennessee elections is real. While Tennessee was not one of the 21 states targeted in the 2016 Russian cyberattack, the state has experienced election-related aggressions. In May 2018, for example, a "global cyberassault" of online traffic from 65 foreign countries crashed the Knox County Election Commission website on Election Day, delaying the reporting of election results.(iii)

Lessons from Other States: Voter-Verified Paper Audit Trails and Secure Electronic Transfer

Voter-Verified Paper Audit Trails

In 2016, 80% of Americans voted on machines that produced voter-verified paper audit trails (VVPAT)—a **permanent record of each vote** that the voter can check for accuracy before submitting.(iv) In the event of a potential hack or other threat, VVPAT allows states to **audit election results to confirm accuracy.**

Prompted by security concerns, other Southern states previously using machines without VVPAT have also chosen to upgrade their voting machines.

In 2017—with its high-profile gubernatorial election just weeks away—**Virginia** officials decertified paperless machines and directed all counties using them to immediately switch to VVPAT.(v)

thinktennessee.org

In March 2018, the **Kentucky** State Board of Elections voted to require all future election machines purchased to produce VVPAT.(vi)

thinktennessee.org

In March 2018, the **Louisiana** Secretary of State began the process to replace decade-old paperless machines with ones that produce VVPAT, using a combination of state and federal money.(vii)

thinktennessee.org

➡ **In Tennessee, however, just seven counties—fewer than one in ten voters—used machines capable of providing a paper record during the last statewide election.**(viii) Tennessee's use of paperless voting machines prevents it from carrying out audits that can confirm the accuracy of election outcomes.
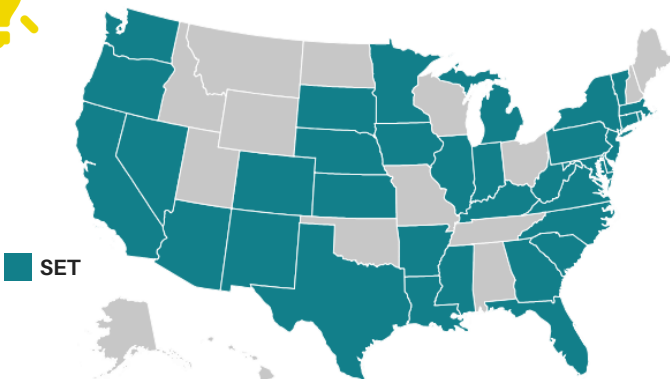
Secure Electronic Transfer

■ SET

thinktennessee.org

Used in 35 states, Secure Electronic Transfer (SET) **digitally transfers voter-registration information**, such as names and addresses, from DMVs and other state agencies to local election offices, ensuring more accurate, up-to-date voter-registration lists.

➡ **In Tennessee, this information is sent by mail or delivered in person.**

In states that have implemented SET, state and local governments are seeing **significant cost savings**. One Arizona county, for example, experienced a savings of $0.80 per registration— $370,000 in a single year—when it switched to an electronic-based registration system.(ix)

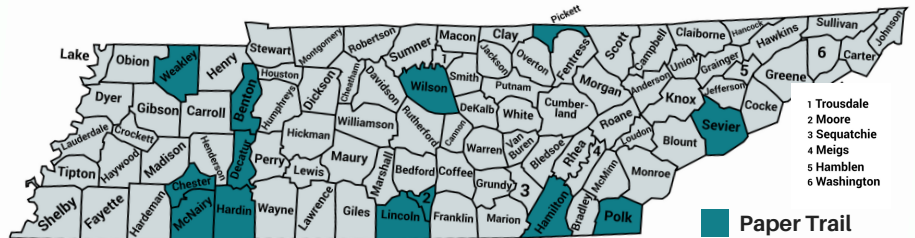# Tennessee Has Opportunities to Safeguard its Election Systems

Local Progress on Voter-Verified Paper Audit Trails

Since the 2016 presidential election, **six additional** Tennessee jurisdictions have upgraded to election machines that produce a paper trail.(x) Together with the seven counties that had VVPAT previously, these counties are **leading the way toward a more secure system**.

The idea of upgrading to election machines with VVPAT has received early **bipartisan support** from Tennessee state legislators. The 2018 General Assembly considered—but did not pass—a bipartisan bill (SB2090/HB2300) that would have required all future election machines purchased to produce a paper trail.

Tennessee Election Machines with Paper Trails

1 Trousdale
2 Moore
3 Sequatchie
4 Meigs
5 Hamblen
6 Washington

■ Paper Trail

thinktennessee.org

Federal Funding Available to Enhance Election Security

The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) provides federal funding to states for the purpose of modernizing and securing election systems. States have used this funding to purchase new voting machines, update their voter-registration databases and enhance cyber protections.
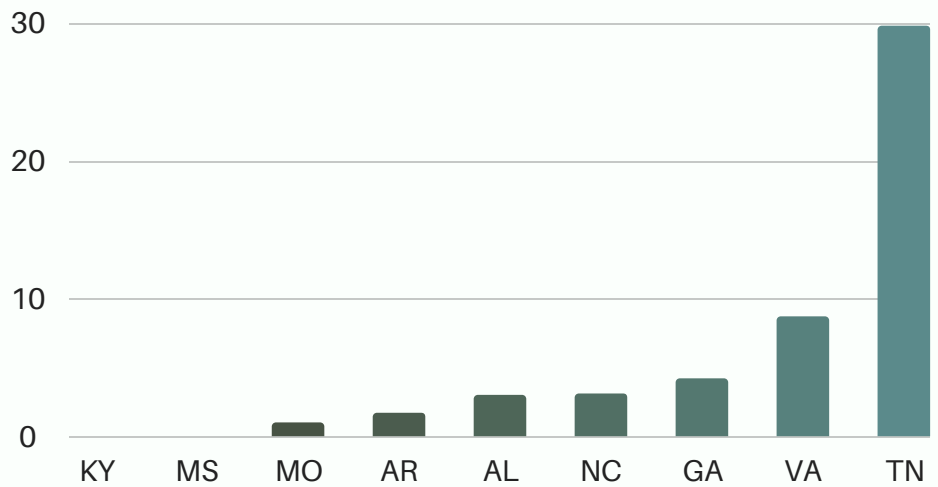
> **This money can have a tangible and immediate impact on the efficiency, security and accessibility of our nation's elections systems.**

Chairman Thomas Hicks, U.S. Election Assistance Commission (June 2018) (xi)

Up to $38 million of HAVA funds are available to enhance our state's election security. As of 2016, Tennessee had nearly $30 million remaining from a sum granted in 2003 – more than all but three other states, including each of our neighbors.(xii) An additional grant of nearly $8 million became available to the state in early 2018.(xiii)

To access this federal funding, **Tennessee must submit its timeline and budget request by July 16, 2018.** States then have five years (until March 22, 2023) to draw down funds, after which time the funds will automatically be returned to the US Treasury.(xiv)

Total 2003 HAVA Funds Remaining as of 2016 ($ Millions)

thinktennessee.org

Can Tennessee do more to ensure our elections are modern and secure?

NOTES AND REFERENCES

(i) Think*Tennessee*, "Voters Eager for Action on Election Security," *available at* http://thinktennessee.org/research/voters-eager-action-election-security/.

(ii) Graham Lanktree, "Russia Will Meddle in 2018 Midterm Elections, Says CIA Chief Mike Pompeo," *Newsweek* (January 30, 2018), *available at* http://www.newsweek.com/russia-will-meddle-2018-midterm-elections-says-cia-chief-mike-pompeo-trump-794863.

(iii) Matt Lakin, "Report: Global cyberassault caused Knox election night server crash," *Knoxville News Sentinel* (May 11, 2018), *available at* https://www.knoxnews.com/story/news/politics/2018/05/11/global-cyberassault-caused-knox-county-election-night-server-crash/602009002/.

(iv) Jacob Kipp, "When Voting, Most of Us Leave a Paper Trail," *Center for Election Innovation and Research* (May 9, 2018), *available at* https://electioninnovation.org/2018/05/09/when-voting-most-leave-paper-trail/.

(v) Eric Geller, "Virginia bars voting machines considered top hacking target," *Politico* (September 8, 2017), *available at* https://www.politico.com/story/2017/09/08/virginia-election-machines-hacking-target-242492.

(vi) Tom Latek, "Board of Elections votes to further strengthen voter security, to provide verifiable paper trail," *Northern Kentucky Tribune* (March 1, 2018), *available at* http://www.nkytribune.com/2018/03/board-of-elections-votes-to-further-strengthen-voter-security-to-provide-verifiable-paper-trail/.

(vii) "Louisiana to receive millions for voting machines," *KALB-TV News Channel 5* (April 2, 2018)*, available at* http://www.kalb.com/content/news/Louisiana-to-receive-millions-for-voting-machines-478545863.html.

(viii) Verified Voting, "The Verifier- Polling Place Equipment in Tennessee- November 2016," *available at* https://www.verifiedvoting.org/verifier/#year/2016/state/47.

(ix) Maricopa County election officials in a 2010 interview with Brennan Center for Justice, See "Voter Registration In A Digital Age: Arizona," *available at* https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/legacy/Democracy/Paperless%20Report%20Appendix_Final%20(Arizona).pdf.

(x) Election Systems & Software (ES&S), "The ES&S Power Couple," (March 6, 2018), *available at* https://www.essvote.com/blog/116/.

(xi) U.S. Election Assistance Commission, "EAC Announces 55 Percent of HAVA Funds Requested by 26 States." (June 5, 2018), available at https://www.eac.gov/news/2018/06/05/eac-announces-55-percent-of-hava-funds-requested-by-26-states/.

(xii) U.S. Election Assistance Commission, "FY 2016 HAVA Grant Expenditure Report," (August 16, 2017)*, available at* https://www.eac.gov/documents/2017/08/16/fy-2016-hava-grant-expenditure-report-payments-state-expenditures-report/.

(xiii) U.S. Election Assistance Commission, "2018 HAVA Election Security Funds," *available at* https://www.eac.gov/2018-hava-election-security-funds/#tabs-2.

(xiv) U.S. Election Assistance Commission, "2018 Help America Vote Act Election Security Grants Award Packet," (April 17, 2018), *available at* https://www.eac.gov/assets/1/6/HAVA_Election_Security_Final_Award_Packet_041718.pdf.