



Special Review Report

TO: Whatcom County Canvassing Board

FROM: Sheryl Moss
Elections Certification and Training Program Manager
Office of the Secretary of State

RE: Special Election Review – Legislative District 42, Pos. 2 Recount

DATE: January 1, 2011

Pursuant to Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 29A.04.570, the Office of the Secretary of State Elections Certification and Training Program conducted a special review of Whatcom County's post-election procedures for the November 2010 General Election. The closeness of the race for Legislative District 42, Position 2, required a mandatory machine recount.

The review consisted of an interview with Shirley Forslof, Whatcom County Auditor; Debbie Adelstein, Chief Deputy; Pete Griffin, Elections Manager; and examination of supporting documents.

The reviewer met with Ms. Forslof and her staff on November 22, 2010. The rules, addressing recounts as prescribed by Washington Administrative Code Chapter 434-264, were discussed and Mr. Griffin demonstrated the various security measures in place. Additionally, the processes used in the 2010 General Election regarding accountability and reconciliation of ballots, manual inspection of ballots, and ballot security were discussed.

The following documents specific to the 2010 General Election were provided: certification and recount procedures, notifications required by RCW 29A.64.030; recount rules for observers and visitors, office procedures used by Whatcom County Elections, ballot duplication documents, security documents, ballot reconciliation forms, and DRE audit procedures.

Based on the information provided, ballot security was maintained throughout the entire election by the utilization of sealed cabinets and containers and limited access to the facility through a security system. All ballot processing rooms were secured with key cards. Procedures require unsecured ballots to be accompanied by two election staff members. The same security measures were applied to duplicating ballots and post-tabulation storage.

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Whatcom County Elections is a well run organization with exceptional staff and leadership. The staff is knowledgeable and dedicated to preserving the integrity of elections. In all cases, the security requirements were met or exceeded. Other than a few written procedures that need to be updated to reflect current practice, the reviewer did not find any recommendations or suggestions to make in this report.

**WHATCOM COUNTY
AUDITOR'S OFFICE**

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SHIRLEY FORSLOF
COUNTY AUDITOR

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December 16, 2010

Sam Reed, Secretary of State
Sheryl Moss, Elections Certification and Training Program Manager
Office of the Secretary of State
P O Box 40229
Olympia WA 98504-0229

Re: Special Election Review – Legislative District 42, Pos. 2 Recount

I acknowledge receipt of the Special Review Report of the Legislative District 42, Position 2 Recount dated December 13, 2010.

I and my staff want to thank you for the professional manner in which you reviewed our election policies and procedures. It is always helpful to have a knowledgeable outside agency review the manner in which we conduct elections.

The Whatcom County Auditor's Office is dedicated to open, transparent and maintaining the integrity of elections.

Sincerely,

Shirley Forslof
Whatcom County Auditor

cc: Sam Crawford, County Council Chair (Canvassing Board Member)
Royce Buckingham, Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney (Canvassing Board Member)