Dear Committee Members, County Auditors and Election Officials,

Thank you for your questions and comments during the July 9 Senate State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections Committee work session in Vancouver. As I stated in my testimony, as a state, we cannot combat the national cyber threat to our election system with aging technology. Washington has launched an important tool to combat cyber threats. All 39 counties have already begun using this tool – the VoteWA system.

In reviewing the [hearing on TVW](), many questions and comments were made by presenters and committee members that I did not have time to adequately address. I am concerned that if a few were left unanswered, these comments will undermine public confidence in our elections system. Please enter the following responses into the official hearing record.

The VoteWA project was guided by the Elections Modernization Project Steering Committee Charter. Additionally, all 39 County Auditors and Election Officials were involved in every aspect of this statewide election modernization project. There were statements during the meeting that suggested landmarks and decisions were not on schedule, however, VoteWA hit all milestones identified for the project. The project continues to be on-scope, on-time, and on-budget.

In accordance with the requirements by the Governor's Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), established by the Legislature in 2011, the Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS) has followed the defined reporting schedule. The status and all details of the VoteWA project have been displayed and available to the public on the [OCIO dashboard]() throughout the project.

In preparation for turning on the VoteWA system statewide, my office worked with four volunteer counties and successfully completed end-to-end system testing. My office also collaborated with county election staff to develop and issue guidance for how counties will operate should they not be able to access VoteWA during a critical time period.

As of this morning, we have not received any reports from county users on issues related to the voter crediting process for ballots received. All system users can report, view, and track the status of any issues reported in VoteWA. This strengthens the support the VoteWA team can provide, when made aware.

It was disappointing at best to hear exaggerated comments about system down time and large numbers of entries backlogged in county system queues. Upon review of the queue from the morning of the hearing, King County had 3,500 records to process versus the 20,000 records reported in testimony. There were brief outages in the first few weeks of system operation. When issues like this were identified, controls were developed to ensure the issues did not reoccur.

Regarding voter address information in the system, the King County geographical information system (GIS) team has asked my office to not update their address points in VoteWA. We have been honoring this request and hence, address points in King County are positioned where their GIS team has requested. Finally, regarding printing issues with VoteWA, our staff has been and currently is available to assist counties in setting up their personalized voter identification card template to meet their needs.

As planned from the start of the modernization project, state and county election administrators have been adapting their individual workflows and managing the change that comes with successfully implementing a complex information technology project. While a couple of counties appear to be struggling to manage this change, the vast majority of county election offices have created the management structure to implement the VoteWA tool into their processes for the August Primary and beyond.

As we move through this primary election, we expect to continue to receive questions that will be addressed immediately. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have on VoteWA or on our elections process.

Thank you,

Kim Wyman
Washington Secretary of State