



Fact Sheet: Improving California's Election Infrastructure

Contact: LittleHoover@lhc.ca.gov

California's elections are free, fair, and secure. However, the state cannot be complacent and should take steps to improve its election infrastructure to keep up with evolving technology and knowledge.

In its 2021 report, [California Election Infrastructure: Making a Good System Better](#), the Little Hoover Commission outlines potential improvements California can make in four broad areas of election security:

Open Source Elections System:

- Create and adopt an open source voting system to increase transparency, save money, provide counties with more versatility, and align with state's open source software goals. Such a system must be accompanied by policies to ensure its proper use, and its adoption must not be rushed.

Risk-Limiting Audits:

- Swap the state's current outdated election audit with risk-limiting audits. Such an audit reviews randomly selected ballots until the risk limit—a pre-determined chance that a wrong outcome will not be discovered—is reached. This could be done by the state directly or through a funded mandate to counties.

Training:

- Conduct a needs assessment to understand where to prioritize security training.
- Develop a training program for everyone who interacts with election infrastructure to ensure that the state's election workforce meets election security best practices. Ideally, this curriculum is informed by the needs assessment recommended above.

- Create incentives to encourage people to sign up to be election workers, such as bonus pay for election workers in hard-to-fill areas and expanded opportunities for high school and college students to work at the polls.
- Provide well-trained staff—on the jurisdiction's dime—to any voting jurisdiction that is unable to supply enough trained election workers.

Compliance Audits:

- Delineate standards and create a framework for mandatory compliance audits. These audits should be publicly verifiable and results should be available in writing, shared with the Secretary of State's office, and easily accessible to the public.
- Expand the election observation program by randomly auditing additional voting jurisdictions during, after, and between elections to ensure they are following laws and regulations. If errors are uncovered, the Secretary of State should commit to working with the jurisdiction on improving its compliance with security measures.

The Commission's recommendations will help California build on its good work and make our elections even more secure.

Last updated: January 2023