

NEW JERSEY REPUBLICAN STATE COMMITTEE

November 21st, 2022

Hon. Matthew J. Platkin, Attorney General of the State of New Jersey
PO Box 112
Trenton, NJ 08625-0112

Dear Attorney General Platkin,

I wish that I were writing to you today under better circumstances. The unresolved situation concerning the failures that occurred in the administration of the November 8th General Election in Mercer County has become an embarrassment for our State. Please treat this letter as my formal request that the appropriate branch of your office immediately conduct an investigation into what caused this situation, either in conjunction with or independently of any ongoing investigation by the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office.

The complete failure of Mercer County voting machines on Election Day is unacceptable in a modern society. Media outlets have published photos depicting ballots strewn across the floor of a polling location and the reports of voter confusion and frustration were many. According to [local media](#), Mercer County's voting machine vendor has disclaimed responsibility for this debacle, calling this a "printing issue" and claiming that the "tabulators functioned exactly as they should by rejecting incorrectly printed ballots." The County's ballot printing vendor has similarly disclaimed responsibility, claiming "there was nothing wrong with the printing."

Further still, the Mercer County Clerk of Elections, County Clerk Paula Sollami-Covello, is [quoted](#) as saying that "a more thorough and public review" of the Mercer County elections process is warranted, and that "[we've] got too many people in control and the quality of our elections has suffered as a result, undermining peoples' faith in the democratic process." Notably, the County Clerk's election duties include the designing, printing and delivery of ballots to polling locations (N.J.S.A. 19:14-1). Faith in the election process is not bolstered where voters view the system as disorganized, cumbersome or that election officials do not treat their ballot with the respect and care that it deserves.

Your office recently announced a Voter Protection Initiative for the 2022 General Election, which is claimed to operate separately and apart from the Division of Law, which represents county election officials. The stated goal of your office's Election Day duties was to "ensure a fair, free, and smooth-running election, to protect the right to vote, and to assist voters, election officials, and law enforcement in resolving any emergent voting-related legal matters."

The public has still not been informed how Mercer County election officials, whose legal duty it is to ensure every voter's Constitutionally protected right to cast a ballot, allowed this calamity to occur. Voters deserve a swift and comprehensive response to the questions of how this problem was allowed to occur after Mercer County just purchased new voting systems in 2021, what the specific error or oversight was, how it came to exist and a detailed explanation of the chain of custody of all ballots, some of which were initially misplaced according to [media reports](#). Your office's investigation into these matters can help put these issues to rest.

Respectfully,



Bob Hugin
Chairman, New Jersey Republican State Committee

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