Introducing Actual Vote

A crowdsourced system that empowers you to help protect vote reporting.

America Counts
www.americacounts.us

Actual Vote is a free app from America Counts that enables large-scale nationwide vote report auditing with poll tapes.

Go to https://americacounts.us/get-actual-vote/ for download links. You can also search for “Actual Vote” on the App Store or the Play Store.

America Counts

We're a non-partisan non-profit organization working to improve election transparency and accuracy.

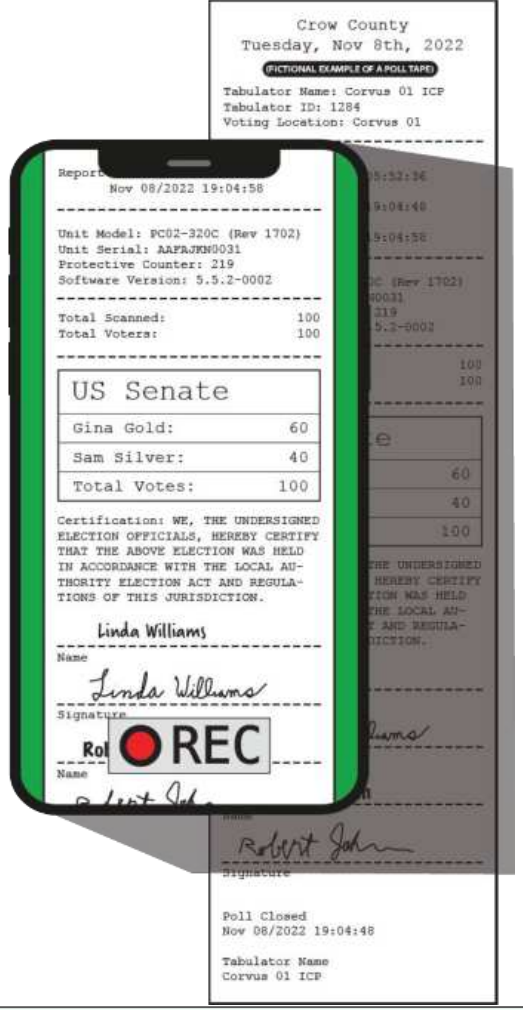
We help build trustworthiness in elections

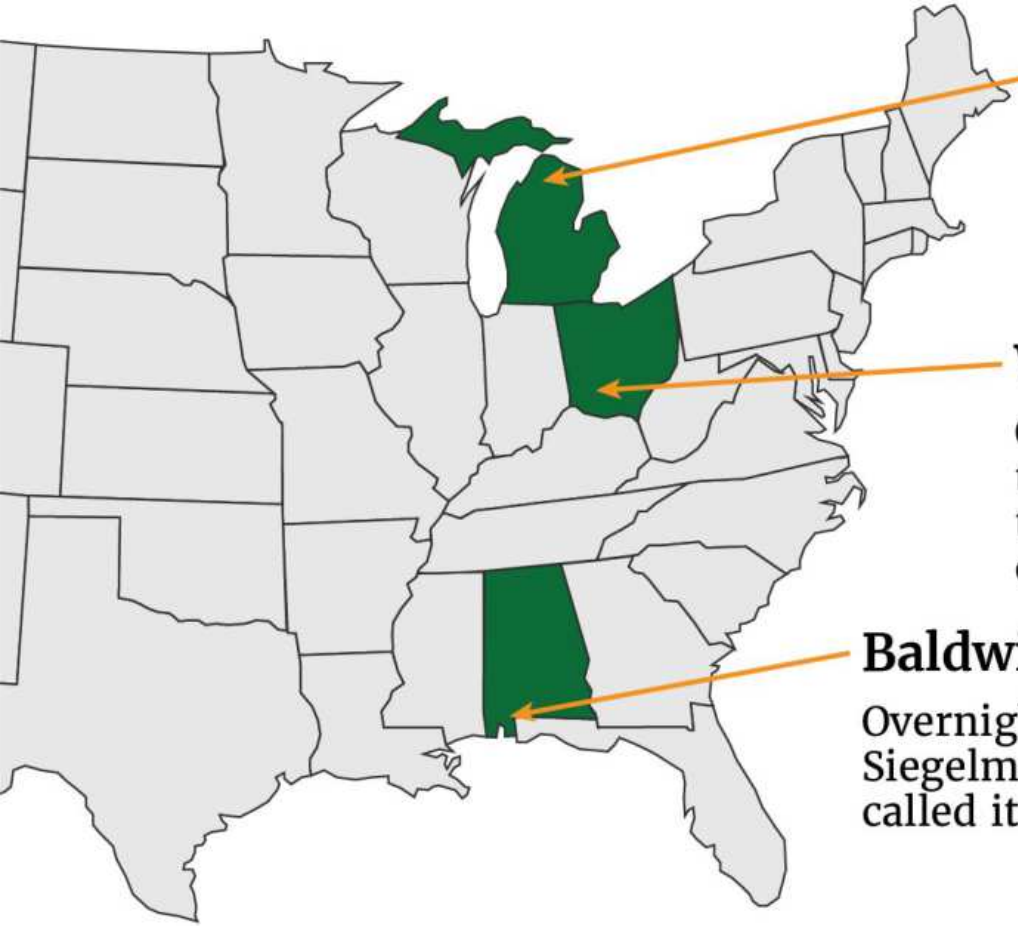
We make free election-auditing apps anyone can use

We're non-partisan

With Actual Vote, people like you video-record poll tapes at some point after they're printed.

Why is this important?





Antrim County, Michigan, 2020

Initial reporting showed Biden winning Antrim by 3,260 votes. Trump actually won by 3,788.

Warren County, Ohio, 2004

On election night, officials locked down the county building over a terrorism threat the FBI said it knew nothing about, then counted out of public view.

Baldwin County, Alabama, 2002

Overnight, about 6,300 votes came off Don Siegelman's total at one precinct. Officials called it a data error. Critics called it unexplained.

For more on these stories, see https://americacounts.us/why-its-critical/

Agenda:

1. How vote reporting works

2. What can go wrong

3. How you can be a part of the solution by using our Actual Vote app

Example of How Votes Are Reported

Step 1: Voters vote

Crow County uses ExpressVote machines.

When a voter is done voting, it prints out a piece of paper showing their choices.

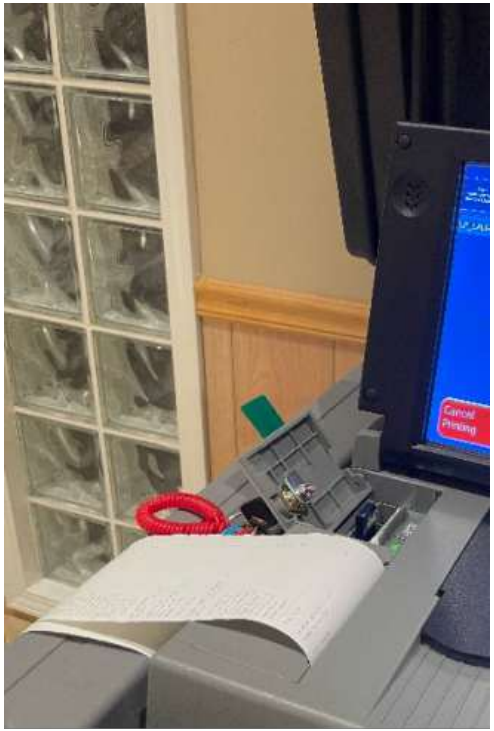
Step 2: After closing time, votes are tabulated

This is a tabulating machine. Each polling place in Crow County has one.

It scans the pieces of paper from each voter.

When the polls close, it adds or tabulates the vote totals from each paper to get overall vote totals.

Step 3: The tabulator prints poll tapes

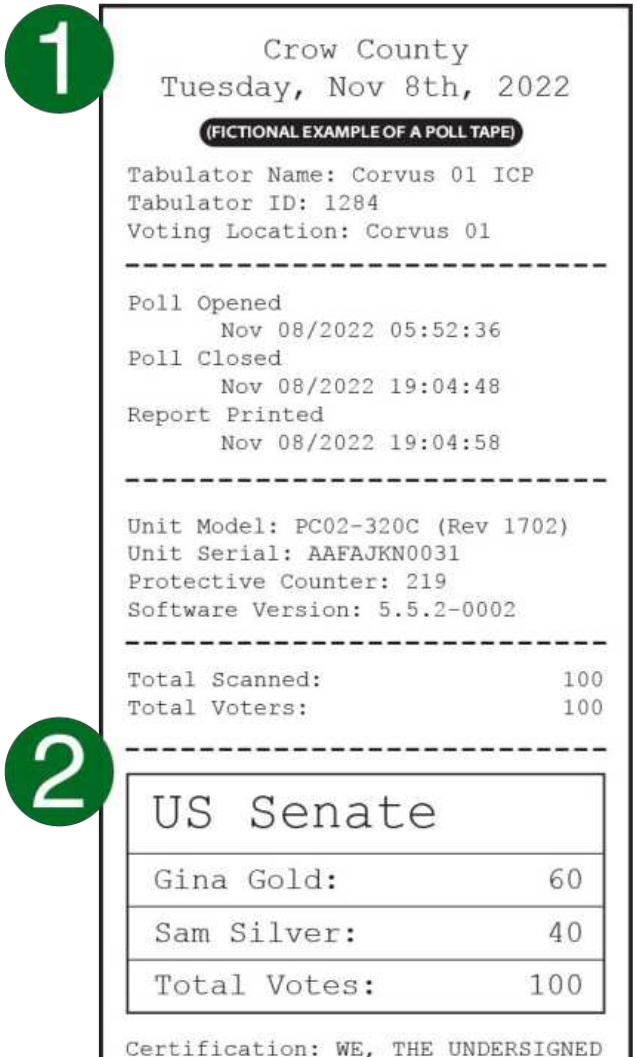


A poll tape is a long strip of paper that shows the vote totals from one polling place.

A Closer Look at a Poll Tape

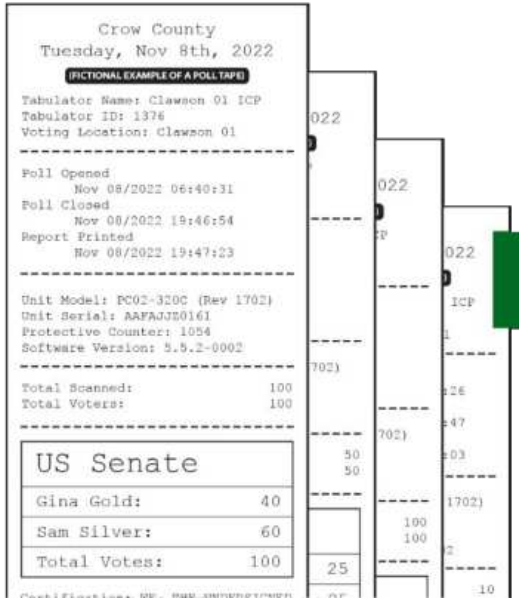
(1) The header section. This tape is for the Corvus 01 precinct of Crow County, in the Nov 8th, 2022 election

(2) The vote totals section. US Senate candidate Gina Gold received 60 total votes today at the Corvus 01 precinct



Step 4: Votes are reported

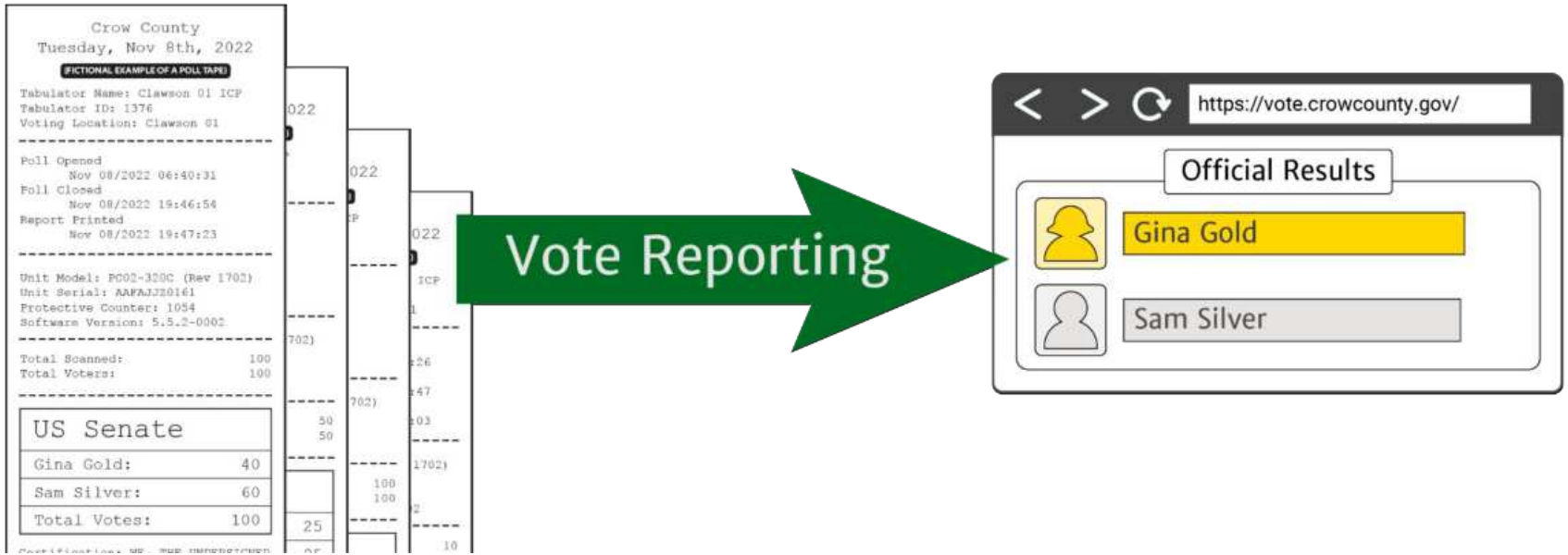
Tabulated results from each Crow County precinct



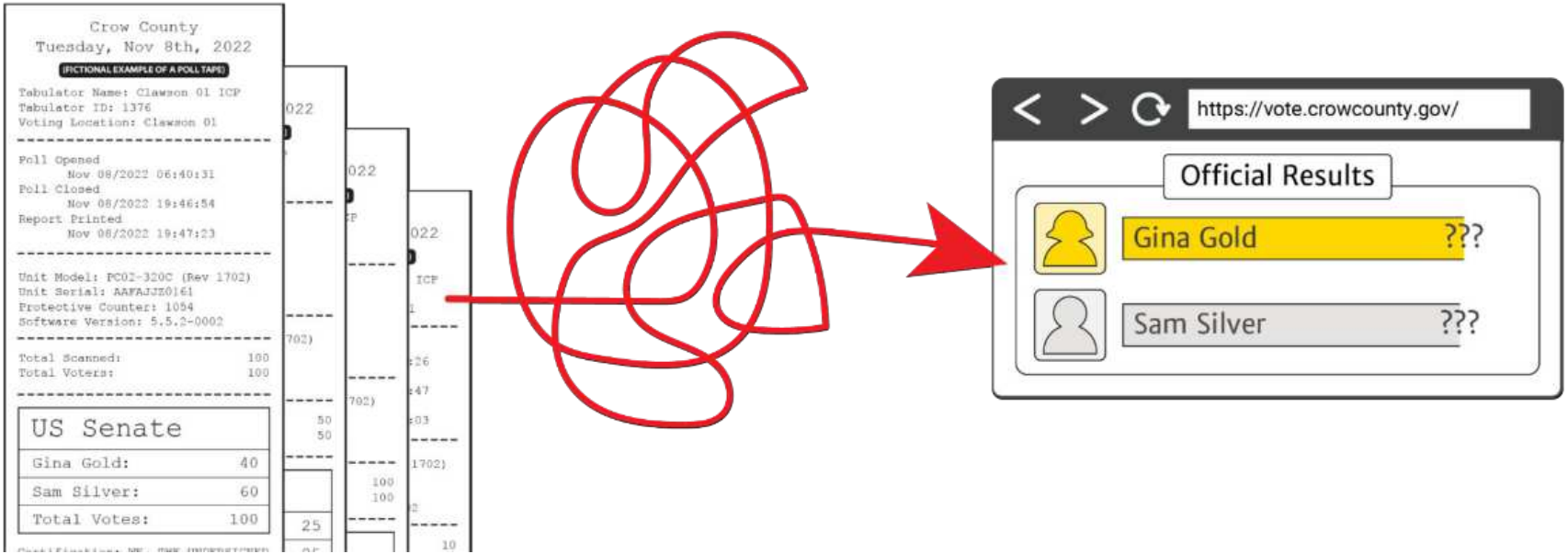
Vote Reporting

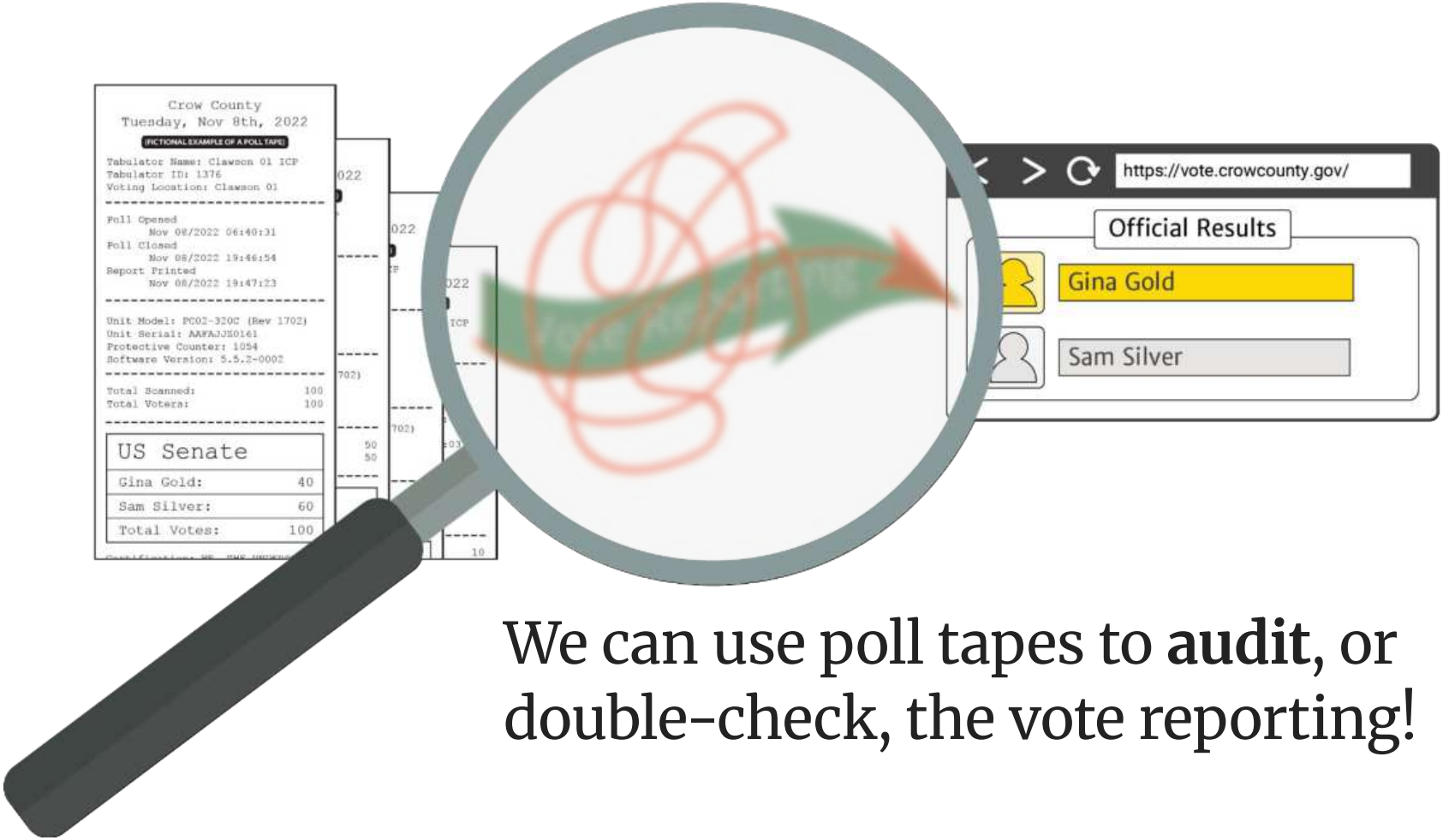
Official Results for Crow County

What can we do to protect correct vote reporting…



...and help out when vote reporting might have gone wrong?

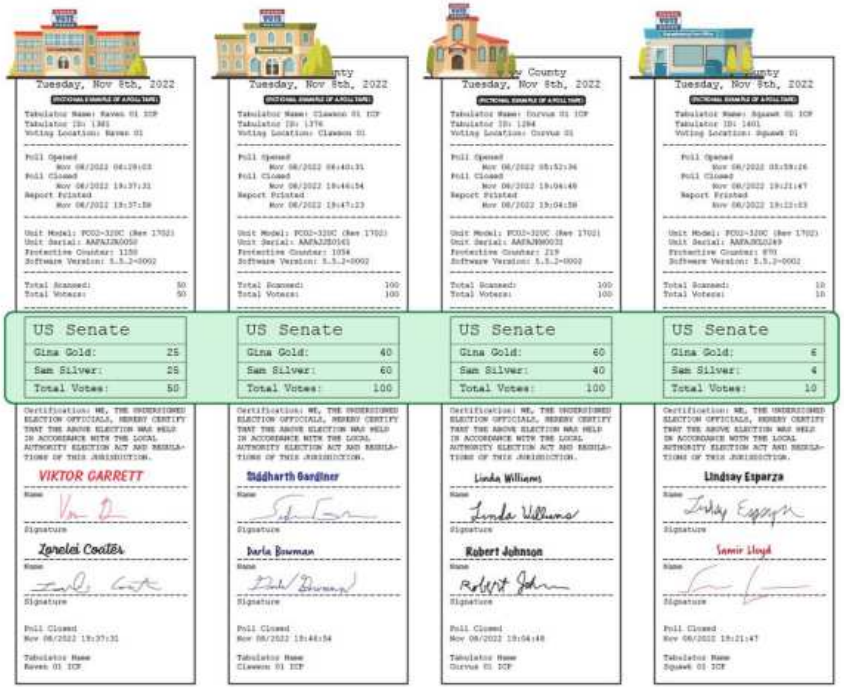




We can use poll tapes to **audit**, or double-check, the vote reporting!

Key Insight

Poll tape totals should equal official totals!



row County
Tuesday, Nov 8th, 2022

(FICTIONAL EXAMPLE OF A POLL TAPE)

Tabulator Name: Clawson 01 ICP
Tabulator ID: 1376
Voting Location: Clawson 01

Poll Opened
Nov 08/2022 06:40:31
Poll Closed
Nov 08/2022 19:46:54
Report Printed
Nov 08/2022 19:47:23

Unit Model: PC02-320C (Rev 1702)
Unit Serial: AAFAJJZ0161
Protective Counter: 1054
Software Version: 5.5.2-0002

Total Scanned:	100
Total Voters:	100

US Senate	
Gina Gold:	40
Sam Silver:	60
Total Votes:	100

Certification: WE, THE UNDERSIGNED ELECTION OFFICIALS, HEREBY CERTIFY

Key Insight

Easy to detect vote reporting discrepancies!

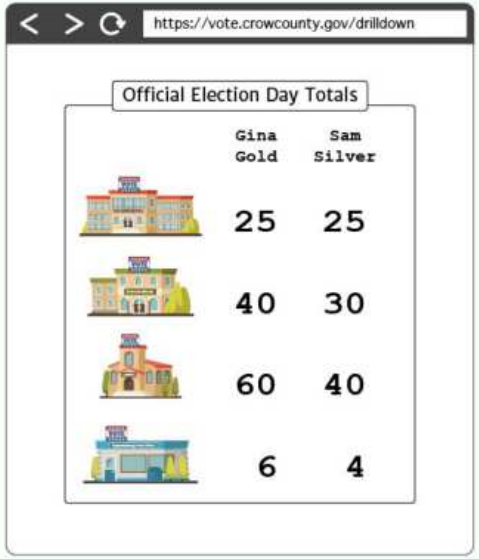
https://vote.crowcounty.gov/drilldown

Official Election Day Totals

	Gina Gold	Sam Silver
	25	25
	40	30
	60	40
	6	4

Key Insight

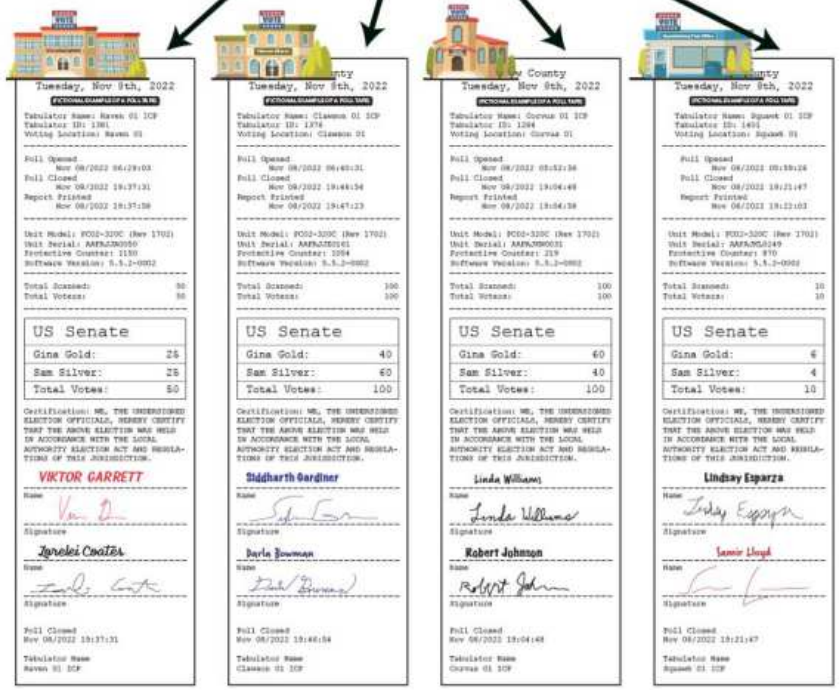
All of this is public information!

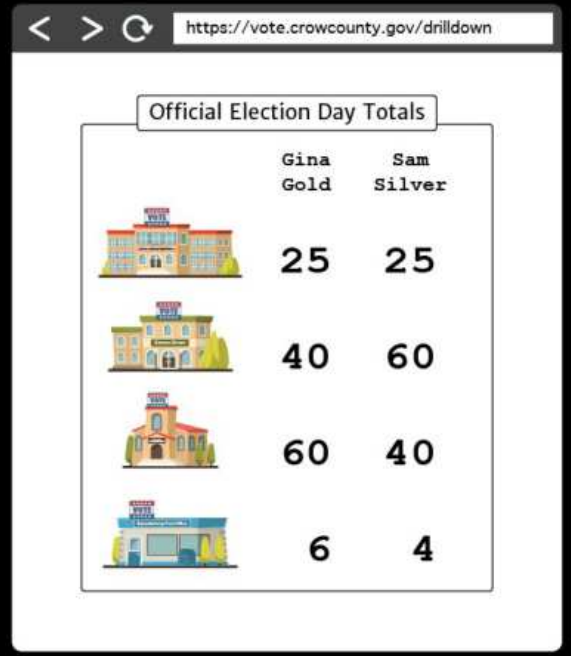


Would have to be recorded!

Key Insight

Easily available





Idea:

1. Get people across the US to video-record poll tapes with their mobile device

2. Collect the recordings in a central location

3. Efficiently compare the vote totals on the poll tapes to the official results

Actual Vote is a free app from America Counts that enables large-scale nationwide vote report auditing.

Go to https://americacounts.us/get-actual-vote/ for download links. You can also search for “Actual Vote” on the App Store or the Play Store.

It’s election day in Crow County.

Download the Actual Vote App and Practice

Works on Android Oreo 8.0 and up (late 2017 and after)

Works on iOS 15 and up (Sept 2021 and after)

Make sure you have enough space on your device

Make a practice recording to make sure app works!

Borrow a device from a friend or family member if necessary

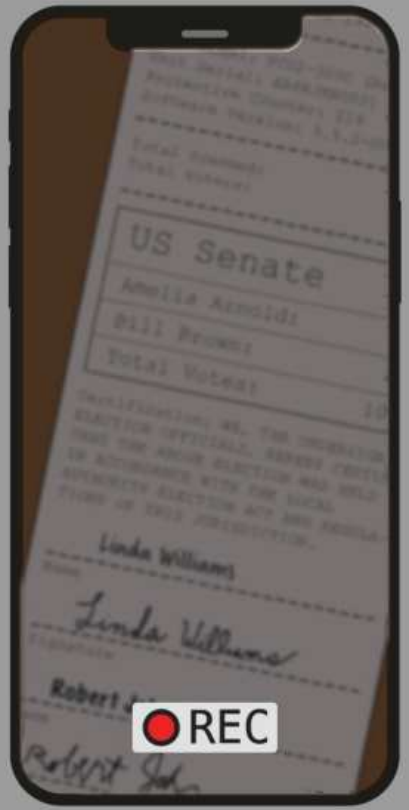
Search for “Crow County Polling Places”

Our Crow County Actual Vote Plan

A Different Crow County Actual Vote Plan

Great recordings are:

- ✓ In focus and well-aligned
- ✓ Legible
- ✓ Well-lit



Bad recordings are:

- ✗ Blurry and crooked
- ✗ Hard to read
- ✗ Poorly lit

One Tape Per Recording if Possible

AI transcribes it easily

https://av.democracycounts.org/polltape/4868

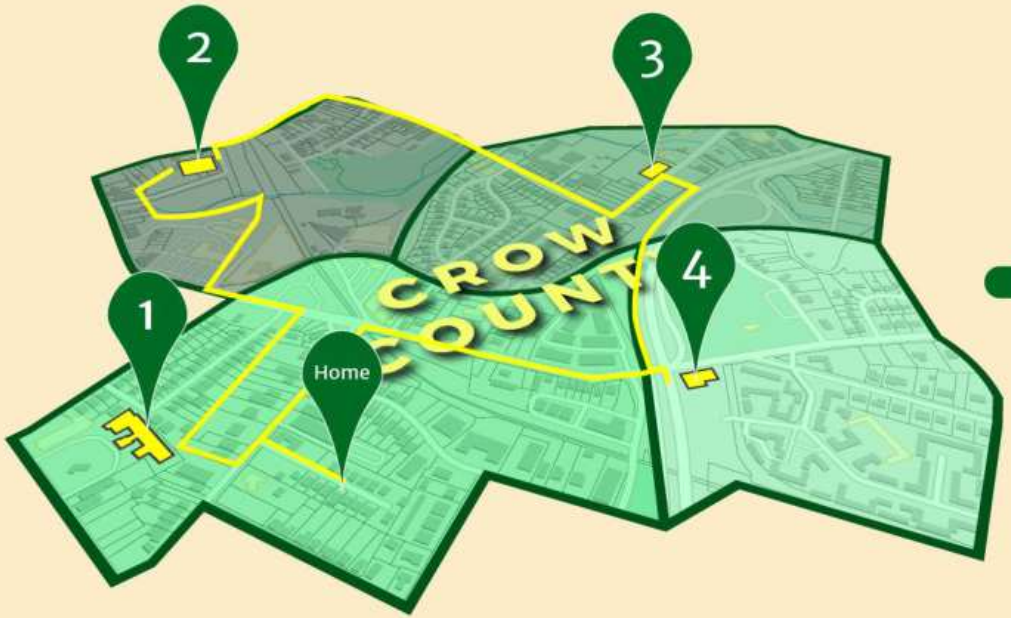
Doable for a human

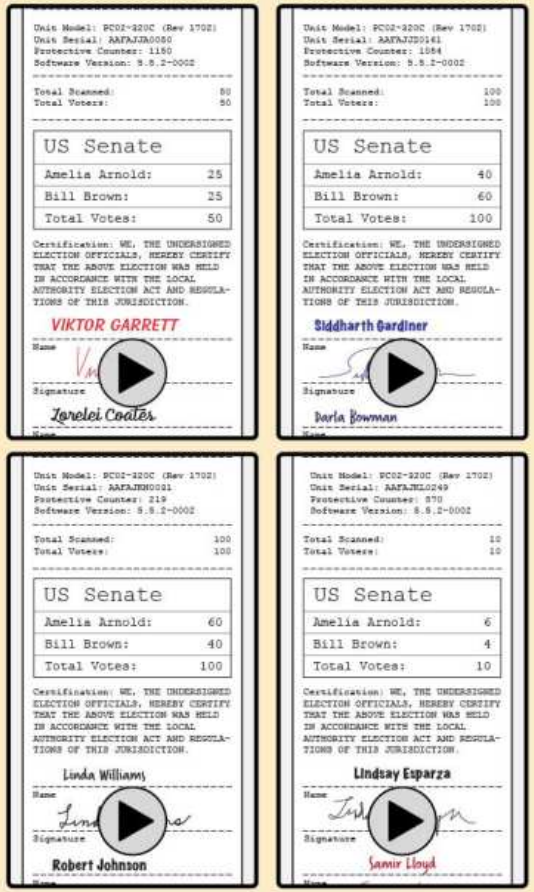
https://av.democracycounts.org/polltape/4881

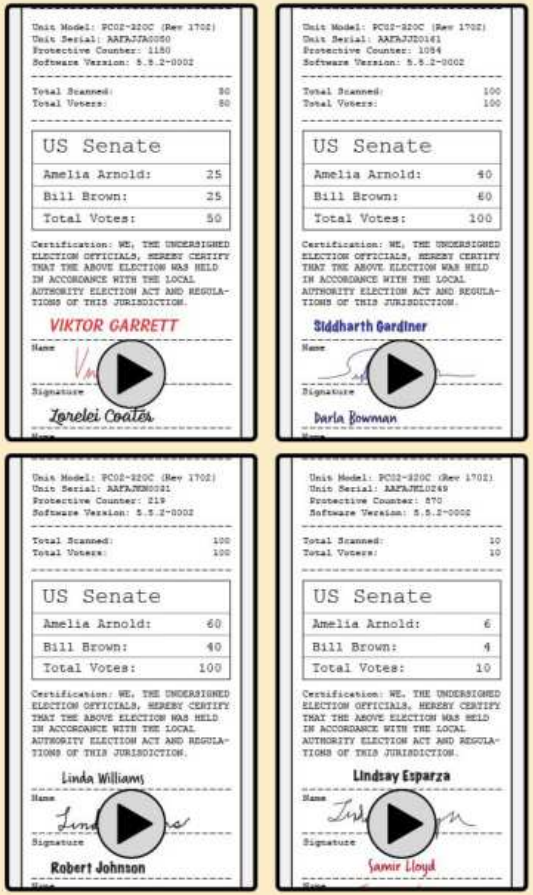
Exhausting for a human

https://av.democracycounts.org/polltape/4962

Poll tapes posted on election night


2
3
1
4
Home
CROW
COUNTY

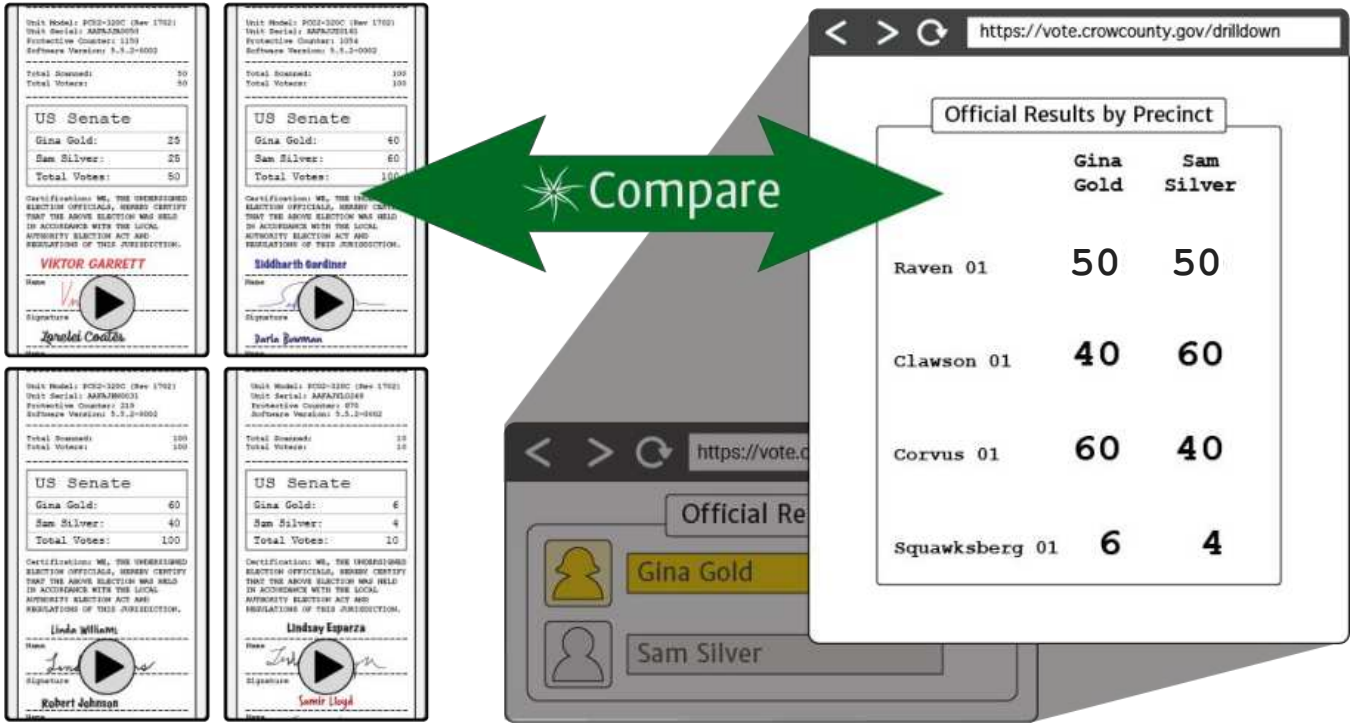

Unit Model: PC02-320C (Rev 1702)
Unit Serial: AAFAJJA0050
Protective Counter: 1160
Software Version: 9.5.2-0002
Total Scanned: 50
Total Voters: 50
US Senate
Amelia Arnold: 25
Bill Brown: 25
Total Votes: 50
Certification: WE, THE UNDERSIGNED ELECTION OFFICIALS, HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE ELECTION WAS HELD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITY ELECTION ACT AND REGULATIONS OF THIS JURISDICTION.
VIKTOR GARRETT
Name
Signature
Lorelei Coates
Unit Model: PC02-320C (Rev 1702)
Unit Serial: AAFAJJD0161
Protective Counter: 1564
Software Version: 9.5.2-0002
Total Scanned: 100
Total Voters: 100
US Senate
Amelia Arnold: 40
Bill Brown: 60
Total Votes: 100
Certification: WE, THE UNDERSIGNED ELECTION OFFICIALS, HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE ELECTION WAS HELD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITY ELECTION ACT AND REGULATIONS OF THIS JURISDICTION.
Siddharth Gardiner
Name
Signature
Darla Bowman
Unit Model: PC02-320C (Rev 1702)
Unit Serial: AAFAJNH0021
Protective Counter: 219
Software Version: 9.5.2-0002
Total Scanned: 100
Total Voters: 100
US Senate
Amelia Arnold: 60
Bill Brown: 40
Total Votes: 100
Certification: WE, THE UNDERSIGNED ELECTION OFFICIALS, HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE ELECTION WAS HELD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITY ELECTION ACT AND REGULATIONS OF THIS JURISDICTION.
Linda Williams
Name
Signature
Robert Johnson
Unit Model: PC02-320C (Rev 1702)
Unit Serial: AAFAJHL0249
Protective Counter: 570
Software Version: 8.6.2-0002
Total Scanned: 10
Total Voters: 10
US Senate
Amelia Arnold: 6
Bill Brown: 4
Total Votes: 10
Certification: WE, THE UNDERSIGNED ELECTION OFFICIALS, HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE ELECTION WAS HELD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITY ELECTION ACT AND REGULATIONS OF THIS JURISDICTION.
Lindsay Esparza
Name
Signature
Samir Lloyd



America Counts

The recordings are automatically uploaded to America Counts.

America Counts uses our software to efficiently compare poll tape vote totals from the videos to official results.



Actual Vote Comparison Analysis

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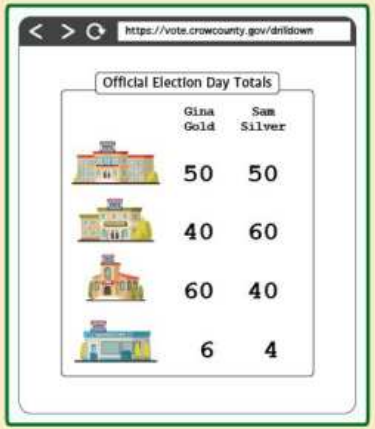

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Precinct Name	Gina Gold		Sam Silver	
	Poll Tape	Official	Poll Tape	Official
Raven Academy High School	50	50	50	50
Clawson Library	40	40	60	60
Corvus Hill Community Center	60	60	40	40
Squawksburg Post Office	6	6	4	4

Everything checks out!

Vote reporting is vulnerable to error and fraud!

Vote reporting is also vulnerable to false accusations of error and fraud!

Actual Vote Comparison Analysis

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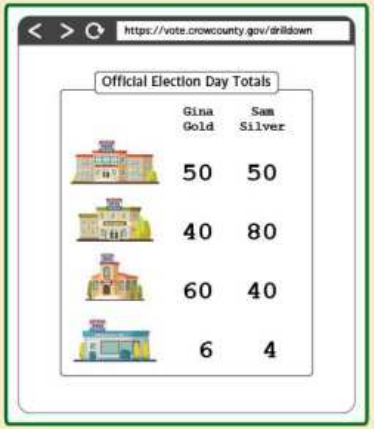

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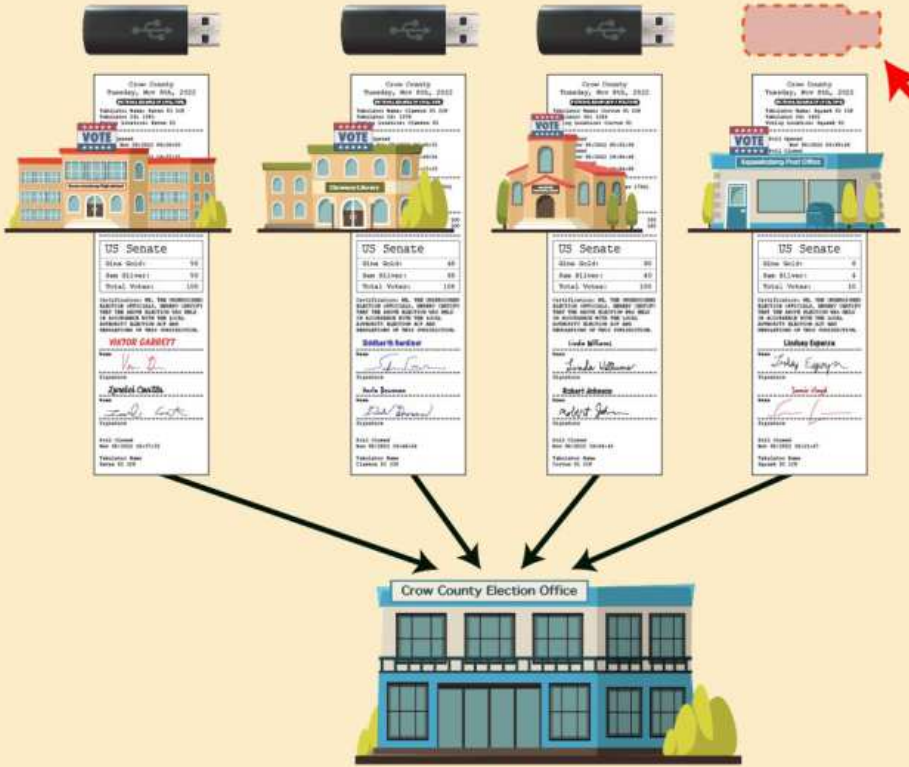
	Gina Gold		Sam Silver	
Precinct Name	Poll Tape	Official	Poll Tape	Official
Raven Academy High School	50	50	50	50
Clawson Library	40	40	80	60
Corvus Hill Community Center	60	60	40	40
Squawksburg Post Office	6	6	4	4

Apparent Discrepancy!

Vote reporting vulnerability: upload failure



Thumb drive storing vote totals lost on the way to election office.

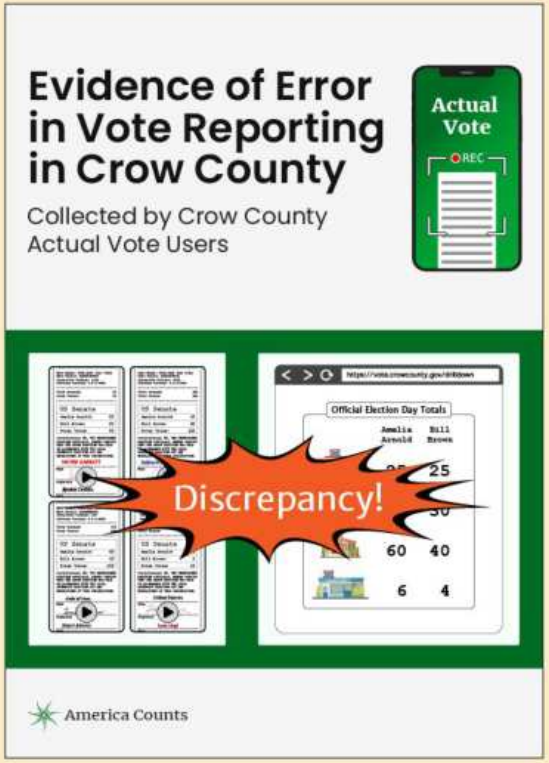
(Georgia, 2020)

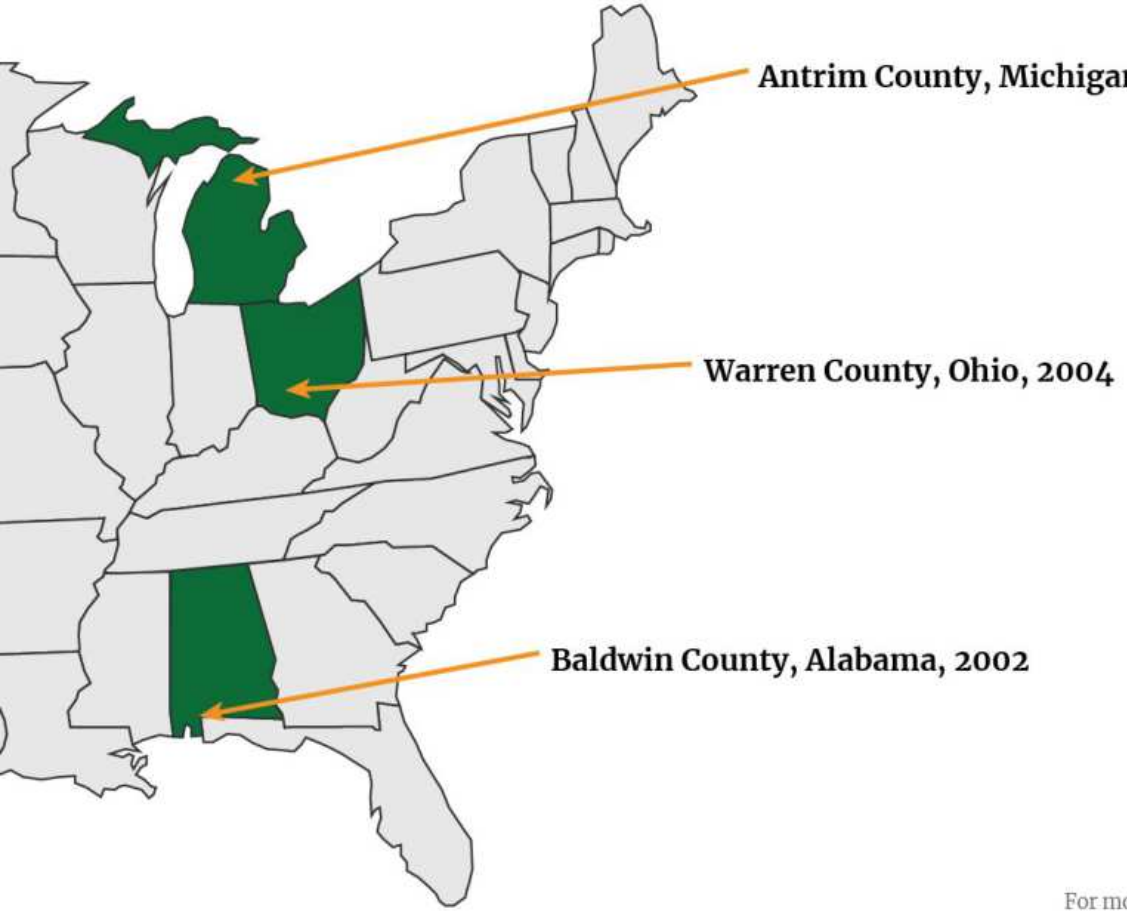
Vote reporting vulnerability: software bugs in election management systems (EMS)

(Butler County, OH, 2008
Shelby County, TN, 2015
Gaston County, NC, 1998)

Vote reporting vulnerability: double-counting

(Monmouth County, NJ 2022)


Evidence of Error in Vote Reporting in Crow County
Collected by Crow County Actual Vote Users
Actual Vote
REC
Discrepancy!
Official Election Day Totals
Amelia Arnold
Bill Brown
25
60 40
6 4
America Counts



Actual Vote poll tape videos would have added much needed transparency to each of these situations… but it didn't exist.

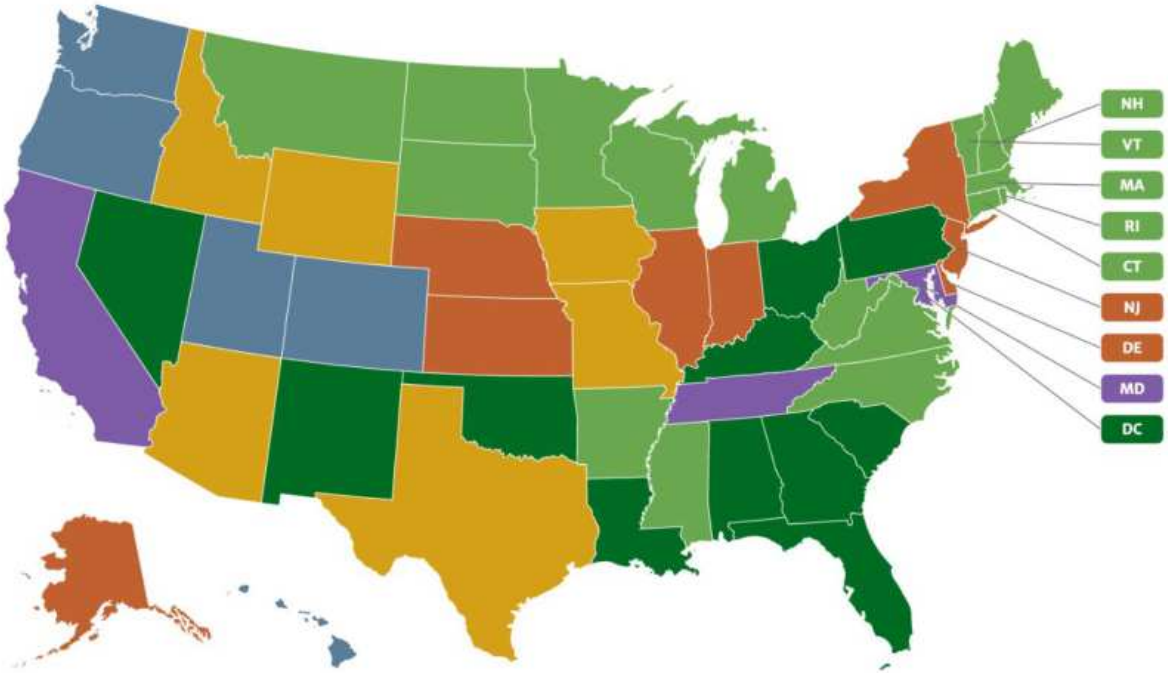
Now it does!

For more on these stories, see https://americacounts.us/why-its-critical/

Improved Election Transparency
Improved Election Accuracy
Improved Voter Confidence
Protect Against False Accusations

Ways to access poll tapes...

Which states post poll tapes on election night?



- Poll tapes posted outside, in public (12)
- Poll tapes posted inside, or at closing time only (17)
- Access poll tapes after election night (6)
- Watcher credential needed to access poll tapes on election night (8)
- Observe the count (vote-by-mail states) (5)
- Varies by county (3)

Source: americacounts.us/actual-vote/in-your-state · October 2026

Basic steps for making a plan to use Actual Vote on election night:

1. Download the app and make a practice recording
2. Find a friend to go with you to hold a flashlight
3. Find a list of all polling places in your county
4. Choose some to visit on election night

For much more on how to make your own Actual Vote plan for November, go to https://americacounts.us/make-your-plan/

Get involved in other ways!

1. Help coordinate Actual Vote users in your area
2. Spread the word in person and on social media
3. Help America Counts transcribe numbers from poll tape videos
4. Help America Counts with Actual Vote data analysis

What 3 people you know might join you in using Actual Vote?

AV For Election Officials

1. You're dedicated professionals who do your jobs with integrity under intense pressure

2. Our work will help protect your correct vote reporting from bad-faith accusations

3. In the rare case there is an error, we want to help catch it

4. We're your friends, not your adversaries

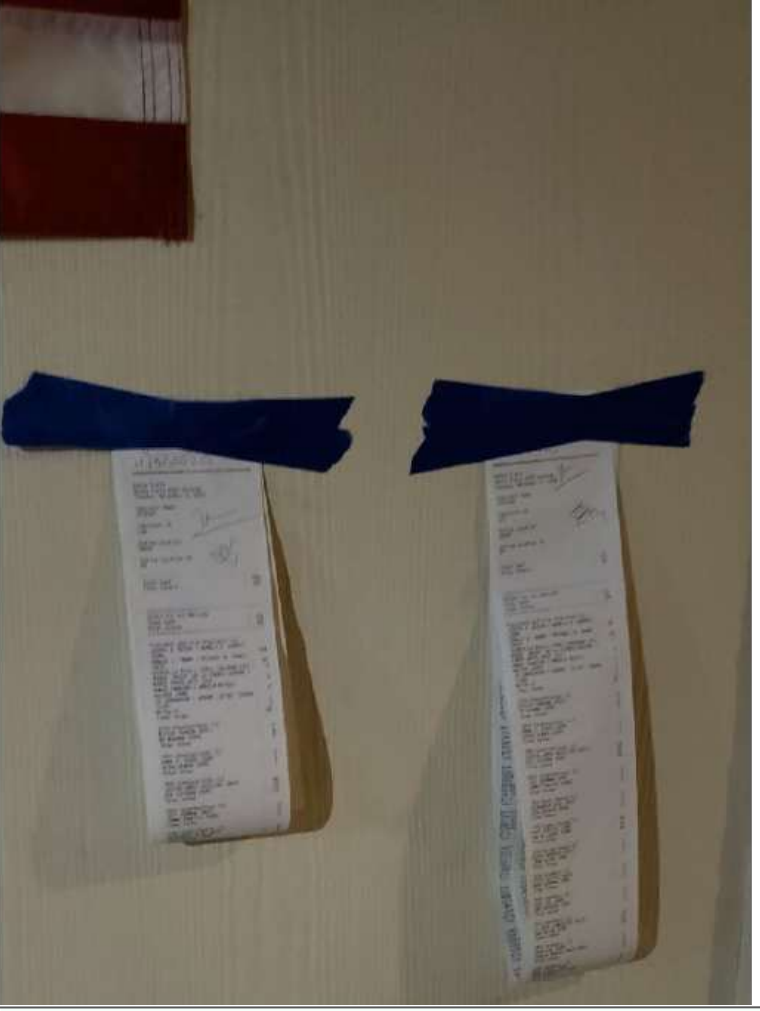
AV For Candidates/Campaigns

1. Get election night results quickly

2. Make sure your race was reported correctly

3. Your opponents know you're checking the reporting

4. Mobilize campaign staff to use AV



Mindset When Using AV

1. Be professional and assertive

2. Arrange poll tapes for easier recording

3. “I’m just exercising my right to observe the poll tapes, which are public documents”

4. Poll workers: “Could I take a video of the poll tapes right after they’re done printing?”

Questions?

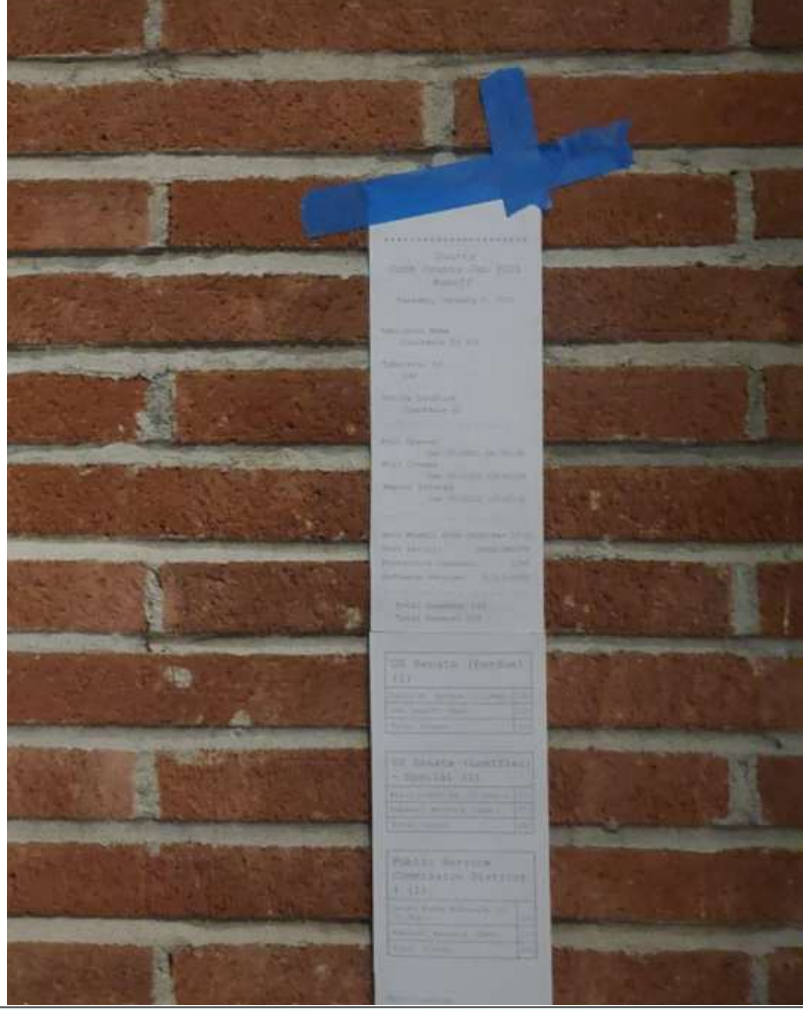
More info:

https://americacounts.us/get-started/

See a Detailed Report: (for data lovers)

https://americacounts.us/2024-03-05-north-carolina-primary-actual-vote-project/

Contact

info@democracycounts.org

Thanks for coming!