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Colorado Secretary of State
Jena M. Griswold

Re: Comments for Proposed Election Rulemaking

Please see comments listed below associated with the following election rules:

Election Rule 7.2.4 Ballots & Ballot packets

The current process of voiding and reissuing ballots after ballots have already been sent out to voters is causing concerns because of the additional postage cost for mailing those replacements after a full ballot packet has already been sent out. It also causes an increase to our printing costs because we're having to order way more replacements ballots and inserts just to send a voter a second ballot because they made a minor change to their voter registration information at the driver's license office or online. We smaller counties are already under budget constraints. Even more concerning with the current process is that it causes major voter confusion as to why they are receiving a second ballot packet in the mail.

Election Rule 7.7.1 Signature Verification procedures

Currently in this election rule, a single election judge MUST conduct the first level (tier) of signature verification review of a returned voted ballot.

In my opinion for any election that County Clerks are performing there should always be a bipartisan team of judges doing signature verification especially for us smaller counties that do not have nor can afford the cost of an Agilis automatic sort/verification machine, which does signature verifying by a specifically set threshold number. The first level of review is very important and we should be conducted with bipartisan judges as a means of transparency no matter what type of election year it is. I feel in every election transparency is absolutely important when it comes to public perception and by only having one judge signature verifying at the first level (tier) of review means we are not up holding our responsibility for a transparent election. Maybe smaller counties should have the ability to choose the option one judge or two for signature verification depending on the size of the county and their budget constraints.

Below are my proposed changes to statute and election rule regarding signature verification:

CRS §1-7.5-107.3 (1)(a) Verification of Signatures except as provided in subsection (5) of this section, in every mail ballot election that is coordinated with or conducted by the county clerk and recorder and has fewer than thirty-seven thousand five hundred active electors in the county, may choose the option of using a single judge or two judges (bi-partisan team) in the first level of signature review to compare the signature on the self-affirmation for each return envelope with the signature of the eligible elector stored in the statewide voter registration system in accordance with subsections (2), (3), and (4) of this section.

7.7.1 Signature Verification procedures Election Rule:

When reviewing signatures through the use of signature verification judges and for counties with fewer than thirty-seven thousand five hundred active registered electors, may have the option of using a single judge or two judges (bi-partisan team) to conduct the first level (tier) of signature verification.

Thank you,

Jana Coen

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