



NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY CENTER

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National Cybersecurity Center Completes Successful Audit of King County's Mobile Voting Pilot

*New mobile voting option doubles voter turnout in King Conservation District
Election*

SEATTLE, March 4, 2020 – Today the National Cybersecurity Center announced the completion of a third party audit for King Conservation District's (KCD) recent elections. The third-party audit determined that votes cast over via Democracy Live's OmniBallot were accurately recorded and tabulated and there was no interference with the ballots kept in the secure Amazon Web Services (AWS) cloud.

The final election numbers showed that voter turnout doubled from last year's KCD Board of Supervisors election and of all ballots that were submitted in this year's

KCD election, 94% of voters opted to return the ballot electronically, even given the option of mail-in or drop-box alternatives. This marks the completion of the largest U.S. mobile voting pilot in the country and the first election in which a mobile voting option was available to all eligible voters.

“King County Elections was happy to work the King Conservation District on the pilot for their February election,” **said Janice Case, Deputy Director of Elections in King County, WA.** “The post-election audit showed that the number of ballots submitted via the OmniBallot system matched the number of paper ballots that were processed and accounted for. The OmniBallot system worked well for our team, from downloading to verifying to printing to tabulating. The system produced a paper ballot that was able to be run directly through our tabulation scanners and the process was efficient, easy to use, and even provided additional layers of privacy between the voters’ identity and their votes cast. Perhaps most surprising, the voter signatures submitted via OmniBallot matched at a higher level of acceptance than traditional signatures. King County Elections was impressed with the OmniBallot system and happy to partner with KCD and DemocracyLive to pilot it in our area.”

The process between King County and Democracy Live was seamless: ballots submitted online were stored in the AWS cloud and kept secure using AWS Object Lock that encrypts the ballots leaving them unable to be manipulated. After voting was completed, King County election officials downloaded and printed the ballots stored in the cloud, ran signature verification and then tabulated them according to the same standards as mail ballots.

“The successful King Conservation District election demonstrates that with top-notch platform development, effective election official training and voter education, mobile voting can be accomplished securely,” **said Forrest Senti, NCC Director of Business & Government Initiatives.** “Best practices and standards can and do exist for mobile voting, just as they do for casting a paper ballot; when vendors and jurisdictions embrace those standards, the voter wins.”

The pilot was a collaboration between KCD, King County Elections, Democracy Live, Tusk Philanthropies and the National Cybersecurity Center (NCC). The KCD

election was supported by King County Elections and funded in part by Tusk Philanthropies. Democracy Live is an established elections vendor that utilizes AWS secure cloud to store voters' encrypted ballots. Ballot choices are encrypted via Amazon's Object Lock, which has been vetted by all the major federal security agencies as a "write once, read many" security feature which protects data from being altered. AWS meets federal standards for secure online storage of critical agency data and is NIST compliant. Voters using the Democracy Live OmniBallot system have the option to print and mail their ballot, or the ballot may be printed at the elections office to ensure a full paper ballot trail.

"In a perfect world, we should all want the same thing: elections that are both safe and convenient," said **Bradley Tusk, CEO and Founder of Tusk Philanthropies**. "Perhaps it's not the world we live in now, but that's why mobile voting pilots like the one in King County is so important—to stress-test the concept, strengthen our security capabilities in more controlled settings and prove that this voting option increases voter turnout."

The first audit concluded on February 28th, 2020. The audit conducted by NCC looked at four main components when reviewing all the votes cast in the election:

- **Ballot Audit** - Ensuring the number of ballots submitted via the OmniBallot Portal were received and processed by King County
- **Signature Verification** - Comparing the OmniBallot signature approval and rejection rate to the traditional, paper-marked signatures King County receives
- **Ballot Tabulation** - Determining if the ballots received from OmniBallot be directly printed and tabulated into the King County tabulation scanning system
- **Digital Forensics Audit** - Review of raw audit logs, digital footprint and review of external attempts to interrupt service

The full audit report is available [here](#).

We appreciate the opportunity to work with KCD, King County Elections and Tusk Philanthropies,” said **Bryan Finney, CEO of Democracy Live**. “Thanks to these pilots, jurisdictions like King Conservation District can test newer methods to make voting more secure, accessible and cost efficient. By more than doubling the turnout in this election, this pilot shows that a mobile voting option, which also generates a paper ballot, offered voters a trusted, accessible voting option.”

“As a long-time resident and voter in King County who happens to be blind, I applaud the work of all those involved in this pilot,” said **King County voter Douglas Bright**. “By using the Democracy Live system, I was able to vote and submit my ballot entirely independently for the first time in my life.”

Summary of Key Results:

- Of the 6,280 ballots that we submitted in the KCD election, 5,921 voters opted to return the ballot electronically. 94.2%.
- 99.63% of all signatures were approved. 23 signatures were rejected.
- 100% of ballots returned electronically and printed at the elections office were able to be directly tabulated.
- Of 6,575 voters that logged into OmniBallot, 6280 returned a ballot. 95.5%

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About Tusk Philanthropies

Tusk Philanthropies was created by Bradley Tusk, Founder and CEO of Tusk Holdings & Tusk Ventures, for the purpose of working on reducing hunger throughout the United States by providing greater access to programs like school breakfast and to dramatically increase voter turnout and participation in U.S. elections through mobile voting, beginning with qualified military service members. Mobile voting is a non-partisan initiative designed to not favor any one candidate or party but to expand voting options to increase participation in our electoral process.

None of the Tusk entities has a financial interest in DemocracyLive or any other voting technology company.

About King Conservation District

King Conservation District is a special purpose district created by the Washington State Legislature in 1949 to help Washington residents care for natural resources. A non-regulatory agency, KCD is governed by a Board of five Supervisors, three elected and two appointed by the State Conservation Commission. KCD partners with individuals, organizations, communities, and municipalities to leverage expertise and financial resources in improving natural resource conditions.

About Democracy Live

Founded in 2007, Democracy Live provides voting and voting information technologies to the 200 million eligible voters in the U.S. In partnership with Amazon Web Services, Democracy Live has provided secure cloud voting technologies in over 1,000 elections in the U.S. Selected and funded by the Department of Defense and deployed to voters in over 90 countries, Democracy Live is a leading authority on secure voting technologies. Democracy Live technologies have been approved for funding by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Elections Assistance Commission to assist voters with disabilities. OmniBallot is the most deployed accessible online balloting platform in the U.S.

About National Cybersecurity Center

The National Cybersecurity Center exists to help secure the world using knowledge, connections and resources to solve global cybersecurity challenges and develop a protected cyber ecosystem. An independent and non-profit think tank based in Colorado Springs, Colo., the NCC provides cybersecurity leadership, services, training and a cybersecurity community for public officials, business executives and the workforce. Discover the NCC at cyber-center.org.

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