

Steven Ward

From: Mary Eberle [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2015 11:14 PM
To: Wayne Williams
Cc: Suzanne Staiert; Steven Ward
Subject: Comment for Watcher Panel

Dear Secretary of State Williams,

Having been a watcher in various counties and especially in my own county of Boulder, I can assure you of the value of watching. I have been privileged to help in the correction of discrepancies. You'll have to agree that's a good thing.

But Boulder County has studiously fought against allowing watchers to witness and verify. In 2014, the signature verification operation was stuffed into a tiny space guaranteed to prevent watchers from seeing the monitors clearly. DSOS Staiert can give you the details, and in a formal complaint I documented the dreadful conditions. I hope the rules you propose will force Boulder County to make watching accessible and able to be effective.

One topic that I believe has not been touched on is the reception and acceptance of emailed UOCAVA ballots--somewhat similar to signature verification in that both processes let a ballot into the system to be counted. In Boulder County in 2012 and 2014, a single staff member opened the emails and printed the contents. No election judges or watchers were allowed any access. Mistakes or fraud could easily have occurred. At the very last minute last year, the Secretary of State's Office forced Boulder County to have two election judges (one R, one D) to oversee the staff member's work on Election Day night. A watcher was allowed to be present but did not have watchable access. This process is one example of not enough citizen oversight. Watcher oaths must match election judge oaths, and UOCAVA ballot reception needs to come under the watchers' purview. The same holds, by the way, if Everyone Counts is handling the ballot delivery--which I think should not be happening but may be.

The GOP stand on watching is a very good place to begin, as far as principles in concert with statute are concerned. Several posted comments are really excellent as well, such as the one from the four senators, the GOP Election Oversight Committee's offering, and the lengthy statement from Watcher Extraordinaire Harvie Branscomb, which Marilyn Marks has augmented. I'm sure there are other helpful comments or will be by the time the panel convenes at 10:00 Friday.

Thank you for supporting rules that enhance watching of signature verification so that watchers' statutory rights are upheld.

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