

Hello John,

Thank you for reaching out about this.

We are always working to educate people about the election process and the recent records request could be confusing to some.

Responses are below in RED:

I am on a tight deadline. An editor at Real Clear Investigations asked me if you could please also please confirm if you are a Democrat?

I am a non-partisan elections administrator, who is appointed not elected.

- 1) Do you have an explanation for why Missoula County tallied 4,592 more votes in last fall's election than it received ballot envelopes?

We did not tally more votes than the number of affirmation envelopes received. Our canvass documentation, submitted to and certified by the Secretary of State's Office, did not indicate this discrepancy. I believe this discrepancy comes from the public record review process conducted at the request of Rep. Brad Tschida, R - HD97, and the count conducted there does not accurately reflect the number of envelopes received. We do not manually count affirmation envelopes a single time, as was done for this records review, but scan them into the Secretary of State's voter database and verify signatures to generate the number we reported. After scanning the affirmation envelopes into the system, we have teams of two confirm each physical envelope to the report that the Secretary of State's database generates. The review conducted by the records requester Jan. 4, 2021 did not include any sort of double-check process. A list of voters who submitted and had their ballot accepted for the 2020 federal election can be attained through a public records request, and I encourage you or the original requester to make this request and contact voters to confirm they returned their ballot before publishing inaccurate information.

- 2) Can you explain why the people reviewing the envelopes were not allowed to take pictures of the signatures? It seems that there could be privacy protections in place if that is the concern.

They were permitted to take photocopies of the affirmation envelopes. Based on precedent set by the Secretary of State's voter database, which omits signatures, we agreed not to include the signature block in any photocopies. They opted not to make any copies.

- 3) It is my understanding that videos were supposed to have been taken during the envelope opening and counting process last November but that something happened to the videos. Could you tell me what happened to the different videos? If files were corrupted or accidentally deleted, what efforts were made to recover them? Could you tell me what experts you contacted to recover those files?

There was a live stream of the ballot counting center which was not able to be re-played. The county recording was past the retention schedule when requested.

- 4) Can you provide any insights on chain of custody, and/or procedures for determining what happened to these ballots along the way? What are the limits to such post-election inquiries?

This is not an issue as the discrepancy comes from the review and count of envelopes, not a discrepancy of the number of affirmation envelopes received. The data we provide to the public on the number of ballots received comes from scanning the unique barcode on the envelope into the Secretary of State's voter database, verifying the voters signature, and is doublechecked throughout the process. I feel that a second inspection of these records with proper accuracy control would eliminate any concerns about this issue, which would include the suggestion above about attaining a list of voters and contacting them to confirm they submitted a ballot.

Also, when ballots were transported, it was done under the supervision of two election judges as required by state law.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can be of any more assistance,
Bradley