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**Written Testimony submitted for the record of the House Administration Committee--
Subcommittee on Elections' hearing entitled: "2022 Midterms Look Back Series: Successes
in the 2022 Midterm Elections."**

Chair Lee, Ranking Member Sewell, and members of the House Administration Subcommittee
on Elections,

I commend this Committee for holding a hearing on the 2022 midterms, and I thank you for
inviting me to submit testimony for the record.

Election officials across the country worked long hours, stretched scarce resources, and made do
with aging equipment to ensure that the 2022 midterm elections were safe and secure. In Shasta
County, where I have been elected five times to serve as the Clerk & Registrar of Voters, we
were concerned that the spread of conspiracy theories in our community would lead to
disruptions or attacks on election processes. We prepared for the worst, but we were extremely
grateful that the November 2022 election was conducted successfully and peacefully.

The months since that election, however, have not been peaceful. The Shasta County Board of
Supervisors, inspired by repeatedly disproven conspiracy theories, has undermined our county's
election system and the people who operate it. Their actions have placed the security of our
elections at risk and created a dangerous precedent encouraging outsiders to undermine our
elections at the county-level.

Six weeks ago, the Board of Supervisors took extreme action by [canceling the county's contract
with Dominion Voting Systems](#) over concerns about local voters' trust in the voting system that
surfaced immediately after the results of the 2020 election were published, with no plan in place
to conduct future elections.

The move effectively left Shasta County without a voting system, leaving the Elections
Department in the vulnerable position of not being able to accomplish its primary mission: to
conduct elections.

Last week, the Board of Supervisors [voted](#) to create a hand count-only election system. Board
Chair Patrick Jones cited ['concerns' about the 2020 election](#), and has previously expressed in

public forums that he does not believe that technology is required to conduct free and fair elections.

He is wrong.

Such a system puts as yet unknown constraints on the ability of the county to provide legally required services to voters under California and federal law, and to report results in a timely manner. Moreover, [extensive research tells](#) us that hand counting ballots at a large scale is less secure and less accurate than machines. Shasta County currently has more than 111,000 voters.

Most troublingly, such a system would disenfranchise voters with disabilities.

The Help America Vote Act of 2002 and California Elections Code are specific in their requirements to allow all voters to vote privately and independently regardless of their physical capability. That requires technology. Voters with visual impairments can listen to an audio version of a ballot, or increase the text size. Touchscreens and handheld controllers can also provide voters with additional assistance to ensure they're able to exercise their freedom to vote privately.

Hand counting ballots at this scale is not only less accurate, it is also far more expensive than machine counting. Even with California's long canvass period, the complexity of our ballots that include races down to local fire board, could lead to delays in result reporting. The use of technology allows ballot tabulation to occur in a non-biased process; human counting will always have an element of bias. Supervisor Kevin Crye announced during the most recent Board of Supervisors' meeting that he has found a source to fund this effort: MyPillow CEO Mike Lindell. [Supervisor Crye reached out to Lindell](#), who offered a hand-count voting plan of uncertain provenance and promised to "provide all of the resources necessary, including financial and legal for this fight."

The Shasta County Board of Supervisors is on the verge of creating a large liability and risk for the county and the state in the form of lawsuits. Mr. Lindell is promising to pick up the tab for those lawsuits, and for the hand counting system itself, but we should not [mortgage our democracy](#) to any one person.

Some members of the Board of Supervisors' embrace of unproven conspiracy theories is deeply troubling. Unfortunately, the situation we are facing is not limited to our jurisdiction here in northern California. There are similar conversations happening in other parts of the state, including [Kern County](#), all rooted in the same nefarious movement to undermine American elections.

It is time for this attack on democracy in Shasta County to stop. Over 6 million voters in California voted for Donald Trump in the November 2020 election, and those voices are most clearly heard in rural communities like Shasta County. Some of those voters are angry and do not feel heard. Because of disinformation there remains a lack of trust in the system of conducting elections, a challenge felt all around the country. A functioning democracy requires all of us – Republicans, Democrats, and independents – to work together to keep our elections free, safe, secure and trusted. Any effort to jeopardize this founding principle must be defeated.

While it is right and proper for this hearing to focus on successes in election administration during the 2022 midterm elections—Shasta County’s elections certainly fit into that definition—the spread of conspiracy theories and lies that I have experienced, along with hundreds of my colleagues across the country, threatens the success of future elections.

I ask that the elections subcommittee come to Shasta County. Conduct a field hearing in our elections office. I promise to give you a full tour of our processes and answer any questions you may have. See for yourselves where the new frontline in the fight to preserve our republic and democracy has been drawn.