



Office of Ellis County Judge Todd Little
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“Ellis County Election Board Opts for Sequential Ballots”

Ellis County, TX – Following input from citizens, on December 28th the Ellis County Commissioners’ Court allocated extra funding for the Elections Office to purchase sequentially-numbered, pre-printed ballots. Sequentially-numbered, pre-printed ballots ensure election results can be easily and independently audited, thus ensuring the security, integrity, and openness of Ellis County elections.

“Election integrity is among our highest priorities,” said Judge Little. “If we cannot be sure that every single vote counts the way the voter intended it to count, we lose our republic.”

Chapter 52.062 of the Texas Election Code requires “the ballots prepared by each authority responsible for having the official ballot prepared shall be numbered consecutively beginning with the number ‘1’.” In other words, one pre-numbered ballot is printed for every single registered voter in the county. However, a waiver from this requirement is available for counties that use approved voting machines which utilize randomly-numbered ballots. Since 2018, Ellis County has used the ES&S voting system, which typically does not number the ballots until they are printed by voters. This saves the county money because unused ballots with no number can be re-used in the next election.

However, several citizens at the December 14th Commissioners’ Court meeting expressed concerns about the potential for election fraud created when ballots are randomly-numbered. They argued that the ability of election results to be easily audited more than justified the added costs of purchasing sequentially-numbered, pre-printed ballots. During the discussion, commissioners agreed that the amount of extra funding required to purchase pre-printed ballots was a justified expense due to the importance of election integrity.

At the subsequent Commissioners’ Court meeting on December 28th, Judge Little prompted commissioners to approve a transfer of \$20,000 from Contingency-Surplus to the Elections Office for the purpose of purchasing pre-printed ballots. The week of January 10th, the Ellis County Elections Board agreed that the Elections Office should only use sequentially-numbered, pre-printed ballots in all Ellis County primary and general elections.

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