



SHIRLEY N. WEBER, PH.D.
CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE

June 27, 2022

The Honorable Steve Glazer
Senator, 7th Senate District
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 7520
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 1480 (Glazer) Remote accessible vote by mail systems – Oppose

Dear Senator Glazer:

It is with regret that I must express several concerns in opposition to SB 1480.

SB 1480 would authorize the Secretary of State (SOS) to certify an electronic voting system for voters with a qualifying disability and would also permit a voter with a qualifying disability to return a copy of their complete ballot by fax. Both options would require the use of the internet, which is currently not permissible in California. This presents many significant concerns for SOS as we are responsible for ensuring the security and integrity of elections in the state.

The electronic transmission of ballots would make counties targets for bad actors attempting to intercept, hack into, or manipulate ballots. This bill would also allow remote access vote-by-mail (RAVBM) systems to possess the capability to tabulate votes, creating additional risk of votes cast to be targets of manipulation. To this end, several concerns that should be addressed before secure internet voting is feasible include resolving:

- Malware threat present whenever software connected to the internet is used
- Denial-of-service (DoS) attacks is a risk in any voting medium. Many vendors can provide services that can mitigate, but not eliminate these attacks.
- Hackers have multiple options for interfering with an online election. Aside from planting malware on the voter's internet connected device, that can attack the ballot, hackers can attack the election website, tamper with ballots in transit, blast an avalanche of garbage traffic in an attempt to slow down or to deny the ability to serve voters through DoS attacks.
- Advances in prevention of malware and DoS attacks need to be realized before any internet voting should be undertaken in public elections.

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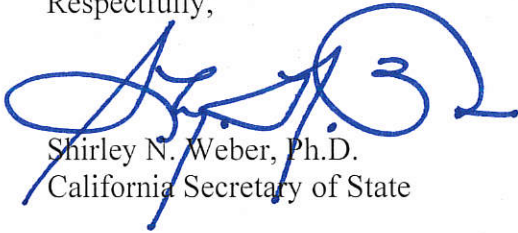
- Multiple servers along the route offers a chance for hackers to tamper with an electronic ballot.
- Existing voting systems do not possess encryption technology robust enough to handle the challenges of internet voting.

This bill also poses a conflict and concern regarding the RAVBM systems that are already certified and used in California. Those RAVBM systems that are currently certified but do not have this capability would be required to update their systems to comply with this new requirement of allowing voters to submit their ballots online or risk becoming decertified.

The SOS of course supports the expansion of the franchise so that more voters can vote with more convenience. However, it is also our responsibility to weigh the expansion of the franchise with the security and safety of our existing election methods. While I am empathetic to the concerns the author and sponsors are attempting to resolve in SB 1480, at this time I cannot support this bill.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact my Deputy of Legislative Affairs, Erric S. Garris, at 916-653-6774 or erric.garris@sos.ca.gov.

Respectfully,



Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.
California Secretary of State

CC: Assembly Elections Committee
Senate Elections Committee