



BIPARTISANSHIP

Legacy Teams Undermine Election Integrity

By Linda Rantz, Author, *Missouri Elections: Return to Hand Counting*

The Myth: Clerks Can Run Elections Any Way They Want

In 2023, the former Missouri Deputy Secretary of State told me, “The clerk can run this any way she wants,” as a bipartisan team was proceeding to certify their own work without a Verification Board’s oversight. This myth allows clerks to bypass bipartisan intent, often seen in actions like covering windows during Detroit’s 2020 election to block Republican watchers.

Finding: Legacy Teams Erode Bipartisanship

Bipartisanship ensures fair elections, but when county committees fail to nominate election judges and bipartisan teams, clerks appoint the same “Legacy Teams” for decades. By using Legacy teams, clerks prioritize convenience over fairness, sometimes rejecting new nominees, and reducing oversight. In Osage County, a Legacy Team certified results with 57 test ballots included — caught by my Election Results Verification (ERV) tool. In Vernon County’s 2024 primary, the ERV tool found 350 missing ballots due to an upload error, overlooked by the Legacy Team.

Restore Bipartisanship with Fresh Teams and Tools

Rotating election roles prevents complacency and invites new, younger participants, ensuring transparency. My ERV tool (download at ReturntoHandCounting.com/Tools) helps Verification Boards catch errors, restoring proper oversight separate from bipartisan teams.

Action for Elected Officials

Legacy Teams undermine bipartisanship, risking errors and exclusion. Support policies requiring rotation of election roles and use of tools like the ERV to ensure fair, transparent elections. For more, including Osage and Vernon County errors, scan the QR code, visit the hand count [website](https://ReturntoHandCounting.com), or email ContactUs@ReturntoHandCounting.com.

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