



OFFICE OF
**ASSESSOR-COUNTY CLERK-
RECORDER & ELECTIONS**
COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

MARK CHURCH
CHIEF ELECTIONS OFFICER &
ASSESSOR-COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER

August 1, 2019

**Preliminary Response to
The San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury Report on
“Security of Election Announcements”
Mark Church, Chief Elections Officer & Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder**

(Redwood City, CA) On July 24, 2019, San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury released its Report on the “Security of Election Announcement” in San Mateo County.

Our Department is in the process of reviewing the 34-page Report and will provide a detailed point by point reply to the Report’s findings and recommendations. The reply will be provided to the San Mateo County Superior Court on or before September 23, 2019.

The release of the Grand Jury Report on the same day as former Special Counselor Robert Mueller testified in Washington D.C. that foreign enemies have interfered with our elections is apparently designed to contribute to the national discussion on the security of the elections.

Our Department welcomes the Grand Jury Report and its recommendations. In cooperation with the County’s Information Services Department (ISD), we will incorporate those recommendations and best practices that are in the best interests of the public.

In our formal response to the Grand Jury Report, we will address our concerns that the Report failed to recognize the County’s extensive leading-edge cyber security programs and procedures that have been in place for some time protecting the County’s Elections infrastructure.

San Mateo County Elections and Information Services Department (ISD) work collaboratively together daily, to provide the highest level of cyber defenses to the voters of the County. We serve as members of the Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EI-ISAC) and the Multi-State Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC). These partnerships provide immediate and accurate updates of cyber incidents and mitigative measures that can be implemented to neutralize all forms of cyber-attacks.

Additionally, San Mateo Elections website vendor, Digital Deployment, hosting provider Pantheon, along with Drupal, the County's website platform vendor, are also members of EI-ISAC and MS-ISAC. These systems are FEDRAMP certified meeting the highest

federal security standards, and are used by the Department of Defense, Department of Energy, NASA, Department of Homeland Security and other high-level federal security agencies. They are amongst the securest systems in the nation.

San Mateo County Elections has implemented several proactive measures to enhance its cybersecurity defenses. San Mateo County Elections was one of the first counties in the state to retain the services of an independent Cybersecurity consultant to conduct an extensive security audit and "trusted hack" of the County's voter registration system.

Regrettably, the San Mateo County Grand Jury Report did not adequately recognize the rigorous and robust cyber security protocols put in place by both ISD and Elections to protect our technology resources and elections infrastructure.

San Mateo County voters can rest assured that our voter information, voting tabulation systems, websites, and communication structures are safe and secure.