My name is Juliann Perrigo Talkington. I live in Sioux Falls and I am representing myself.

I have engineering degrees from Stanford University and have worked in automation including robotics and automatic counting and movement devices. I am very concerned about the security of the electronic tallying systems, electronic vote transfer systems, and electronic voter roll systems used for elections in South Dakota.

It is impossible to secure an electronic system. This is the reason we have data breaches at Fortune 500 companies like Facebook and Microsoft and companies like Delta Airlines and the Federal Government all the time. Good hackers can hack into highly secure systems in a few minutes. Systems can be hacked via a memory stick, via a software update, or via the internet. The ESS machines that we use are exceptionally concerning, because they do not allow outside verification.

Tallying machines (counting computers) can easily be programmed to pass tests and begin modified counting after a specified number of ballots, at specific times, for specific races, etc. These sorts of changes could be made by a relatively inexperienced programmer.

Testing a tallying machine before counting and then doing a hand count verification days after the election (when the rooms holding the ballots are not truly secure) does nothing to assure us that the counts are accurate. As a minimum, we should be doing random hand count, machine count verifications during the tallying process. This would allow us to verify that the machine is counting properly through the process.

We should also be doing hand counts in the precinct, as the current law requires, so we can check to make sure the ballots that show up to the machine are the same as what is leaving the precinct.

Some people have expressed concern that there are not enough people to help with the hand count verification. I live in a Democratic precinct in Sioux Falls. I am a precinct committee woman in that precinct. In the fall of 2023, I walked my precinct and asked people if they would be interested in helping in the polls. Over 40 people volunteered to help with everything from counting in the precinct to hand count audits to processing voters. People from all parties volunteered. Many people preferred to help with hand counting because it could be done in the evening. Based on this survey, we should have no issue finding enough people to hand count in the precinct or help with hand count audits.

Also, I served as the table lead for the hand count audit in the general election. We had people of different parties at the table. We worked well together and had very effective systems for counting and verification.

In summary, there are significant security issues with the electronic hardware and software that are used in our elections. We need to change the way we tally and verify votes to assure the tallies are accurate.