

Townhall

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Oops! Poll Workers at Nine Arizona Voting Sites Forgot to Deliver Results

Madeline Peltzer

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Arizona's primary election was Tuesday, but voters and candidates still don't know the results in some of the most contentious races. That's partially because poll workers at nine vote centers "forgot" to retrieve the data packs holding the results information.

According to the [Arizona Republic](#), each of the state's 99 voting centers were equipped with two tabulators. After voters filled out their ballots, they fed them into the machines, which counted the results. The information was stored on memory packs in the machines.

But at nine centers, poll workers failed to pick up these packs before they headed back to election headquarters, says Maricopa County Elections Department Spokesperson Megan Gilbertson. The votes were tabulated but not uploaded.

Gilbertson said the packs are stored in locked, tamper-proof compartments inside the machines. On Wednesday morning, a bipartisan team of poll workers retrieved the data packs to bring them back to headquarters for processing.

The memory packs account for some 3,000 votes. That could make a difference in some of the tightest races in the state that have yet to be called. Currently, the race for Maricopa County sheriff is neck-and-neck, with Jerry Sheridan leading legendary former Sheriff Joe Arpaio by only 572 votes. Nancy Barto and Heather Carter are similarly battling it out for state senate, with Barto leading 51.6% to Carter's 48.4%. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have [poured in](#) from liberal out-of-state PACs to elect Carter, a moderate Republican, making their race arguably the nastiest and most closely-watched of the cycle.

The data fiasco and delay in results has frustrated many voters, but Adrian Fontes, the Maricopa County Recorder, says they should "relax."

Get it right > get it fast.

Relax folks.

Our bipartisan teams of citizens are making this election one of the biggest and best ever. [#ProtectDemocracy](#)

— Adrian Fontes (@Adrian_Fontes) [August 6, 2020](#)

Stephen Richer, a Republican running against Fontes in November, called him out for what he called a “false dichotomy.”

Employee (elected official) just told his boss (voters) to shut up, presenting us with a false dichotomy between accuracy and reasonable promptness. My take: sorry if you're in a close race or following a close race; you're in for a grueling wait. <https://t.co/8CTBCDiHkE>

— Stephen Richer (@Richer4Recorder) [August 6, 2020](#)

Arizona’s primary debacle adds to growing concerns over election integrity, especially as many on the Left call for mail-in voting in light of COVID-19. The results of a Congressional Democratic primary in New York City were [finally announced](#) on Tuesday—six weeks after polls closed. And when a local reporter in Pennsylvania [conducted an experiment](#) with mailing in mock ballots to see how reliable a total vote-by-mail system would be, he found that 21% of the ballots failed to materialize for four days and 3% never showed up at all.

With a presidential election on the horizon, incidents such as those in Arizona and New York City should serve as a warning to voters and lawmakers on both sides of the aisle. When a single vote could make all the difference, every vote must be counted.