



## Hidalgo County Commissioners Court

**Ramon Garcia**  
*County Judge*

**A. C. Cuellar, Jr.**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 1*

**Hector "Tito" Palacios**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 2*

**Joe M. Flores**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 3*

**Joseph Palacios**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 4*

## OFFICE OF HIDALGO COUNTY JUDGE RAMON GARCIA

**Public Affairs Division**  
Julia Benitez Sullivan  
*Director*

302 W. University Drive  
Edinburg, Texas 78539  
(956) 292-7026 P  
(956) 292-7766 F  
www.co.hidalgo.tx.us W  
public.info@co.hidalgo.tx.us E

Contact: Julia Benitez Sullivan  
Phone: 956.292.7026  
Email: [public.info@co.hidalgo.tx.us](mailto:public.info@co.hidalgo.tx.us)

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Wednesday, August 13, 2014

## **March 4 Primary Election Audit: Independent forensic investigation finds no evidence of voter fraud or malfeasance**

**EDINBURG** –The long-awaited results of an independent audit of the March 4 Democratic Primary elections found no evidence of machine tampering, voter fraud or malfeasance, according to the report released Tuesday.

The Election System Audit Report – prepared by Data Defenders, the independent Chicago-based firm hired by the District Attorney's office after allegations were made that the election results of the March 4 primary may have been influenced due to tampering with the electronic voting machines – validated the integrity of the Hidalgo County Elections Department.

"Voting is a right and privilege. As stewards of our county and its residents, we take these allegations very seriously," said Hidalgo County Judge Ramon Garcia. "Our residents can now rest assured in the knowledge that each individual's vote counts and is counted in an honest, reliable manner."

The 41 page report focused on four "allegations made by various parties" and included recommendations for improvements. The detailed and thorough forensic investigation involved analyzing 169 electronic voting machines, iVotronic Direct Record Electronics or DREs, and two management system workstations.

"These iVotronic DRE devices were suspected of being associated with events that caused voters to question the operational integrity of the devices utilized during the election in question," the report states, adding the devices were transferred to Data Defenders directly from the DA's office following the proper chain of custody.

Elections Department Director Yvonne Ramon said she welcomed the investigation as a way to show Hidalgo County residents that their votes do count.

"I knew that there would be no findings of wrong-doing," Ramon said. "But I understand that voters must be assured that they can trust the integrity of our elections and that an independent audit was needed."

According to the report, Data Defenders defined the four allegations that were the basis for the examination after several conversations with the District Attorney's office. In each case, the report concluded that there was no evidence of tampering.

– MORE –



## Hidalgo County Commissioners Court

**Ramon Garcia**  
County Judge

**A. C. Cuellar, Jr.**  
Commissioner, Precinct 1

**Hector "Tito" Palacios**  
Commissioner, Precinct 2

**Joe M. Flores**  
Commissioner, Precinct 3

**Joseph Palacios**  
Commissioner, Precinct 4

### OFFICE OF HIDALGO COUNTY JUDGE RAMON GARCIA

**Public Affairs Division**  
Julia Benitez Sullivan  
Director

302 W. University Drive  
Edinburg, Texas 78539  
(956) 292-7026 P  
(956) 292-7766 F  
www.co.hidalgo.tx.us W  
public.info@co.hidalgo.tx.us E

Contact: Julia Benitez Sullivan  
Phone: 956.292.7026  
Email: [public.info@co.hidalgo.tx.us](mailto:public.info@co.hidalgo.tx.us)

The following is a brief summarization of the examination results.

**Allegation #1:** Voters in a particular polling place stated that during the process of casting their votes using the iVotronic DRE, when voting for one candidate, that vote was displayed for another candidate.

**Conclusion:** Data Defenders found no evidence to conclude that tampering had occurred with any of the iVotronic DREs from any of the voting precincts examined during this ESA.

**Allegation #2.** Election Day and Early Vote tallies for some precincts do not match the number of voters signed in for those precincts.

**Conclusion:** Given that the forensic analysis of the iVotronic DREs did not indicate any tampering on any of the devices, the ESA conducted could not conclusively determine the reason for any discrepancies between the voters marked off as voting at particular precincts and the corresponding precinct vote tallies.

**Allegation #3.** An individual has claimed to have knowledge of others having unauthorized access to iVotronic DREs prior to the election in question while these devices were at the polling places.

**Conclusion:** Data Defenders found no evidence to conclude that tampering had occurred with any of the iVotronic DREs examined during this ESA.

**Allegation #4.** Claims have been made of knowledge of intentional tampering the with election system by individuals within the Hidalgo County Elections Department.

**Conclusion:** Data Defenders found no evidence during this ESA to conclude that tampering had occurred with any of the iVotronic DREs examined. Data Defenders recommends that the Hidalgo County Elections Department consider integrating the ESA process into its election management workflow to ensure the integrity of the election system and election management process going forward and helpful documentation thereof.

The full report is available at <http://co.hidalgo.tx.us/DocumentCenter/View/18961>

###

*Hidalgo County is home to one of the fastest growing regions in the nation. We provide health and justice to the 807,000 residents of our county as well as a variety of services to residents who live outside city limits. We partner with the cities in our county on services, special projects and economic development. We strive to be accessible and responsive to our citizens. We are committed to providing excellent public service through the values of leadership, transparency, collaboration, fairness, respect and fiscal responsibility. To see your County government in action, learn more about the services we provide, and connect with your Commissioner please visit our web site or watch our videos online at [www.co.hidalgo.tx.us](http://www.co.hidalgo.tx.us) and attend Commissioners Court meetings, held every other Tuesday at the Edinburg City Council Chambers.*