

Fact Sheet: HB25-1143 – Election Integrity Enhancement Act

Bill Overview

HB25-1143 mandates the use of **open-source software in Colorado’s voting systems to enhance transparency, reduce costs, and protect the state from cybersecurity vulnerabilities**. This bill is not based on any assumption of existing flaws in Colorado’s election system but instead seeks to **improve efficiency, strengthen security, and increase public confidence** in elections.

Key Benefits of HB25-1143

1. Open-Source Software: Transparent, Secure, and Accountable

- **What is Open-Source Software?**
 - Open-source software is **publicly accessible code** that anyone can inspect, audit, and improve.
 - Unlike proprietary software, which is controlled by private companies, **open-source software can be reviewed by security experts and the public**, increasing confidence in election integrity.
 - **Why is This Important for Elections?**
 - Open-source voting software ensures **no “black box” coding** - every function is transparent.
 - This makes it easier to **detect vulnerabilities, verify accuracy, and confirm there are no hidden manipulations** in election software.
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2. Cost Savings & Fiscal Responsibility

- **Reduced Licensing Fees:**
 - Currently, Colorado pays millions in licensing fees to private companies for proprietary election software. Open-source software **eliminates these costs**.
 - Counties and the state **can modify and maintain the software without expensive third-party contracts**.
 - **Long-Term Sustainability:**
 - Unlike proprietary software that requires costly upgrades and renewals, open-source systems **are developed and improved by the broader community**, reducing long-term expenses.
 - Instead of paying **perpetual fees**, Colorado would **invest in a long-lasting, adaptable election system**.
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3. Strengthened Election Security & Liability Protections

- **Better Cybersecurity Standards:**
 - Open-source software allows security professionals **nationwide to examine the code for vulnerabilities.**
 - **Faster updates and patches** ensure that security risks are addressed **before they can be exploited.**
 - **Liability Protection for the State & Counties:**
 - **Proprietary vendors hold counties and states responsible for failures** - even when the software is at fault.
 - Open-source solutions **allow for greater state oversight**, reducing potential liability for election system failures.
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4. Public Trust & Confidence in Elections

- **Fully Auditable Systems:**
 - Open-source election software means **any independent expert can verify that the system operates fairly and accurately.**
 - This increases **voter confidence** by removing doubts about **hidden algorithms or corporate control** over election systems.
 - **Non-Partisan Approach:**
 - This bill does **not change election procedures** - it simply ensures that **voting systems are more transparent, cost-effective, and secure.**
 - **Trust in elections is critical** for democracy. HB25-1143 enhances **both election security and public faith in the process.**
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Implementation Strategy

- The **Secretary of State** will set **certification and oversight standards** for the use of open-source software in voting systems.
- **Counties will transition** to open-source software **within existing resources** by:
 - **Negotiating with current vendors** to implement open-source components.
 - **Exploring new vendors** who offer cost-effective open-source solutions.
- Starting in **January 2028**, the Secretary of State will **report on progress and outcomes annually** during legislative budget hearings.

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Conclusion

HB25-1143 is a **common-sense, nonpartisan** enhancement to Colorado’s election system.

- ✓ **Cost savings** - reduces reliance on expensive private vendors.
- ✓ **Security** - allows nationwide experts to identify and patch vulnerabilities.
- ✓ **Public trust** - ensures full transparency in how votes are counted.
- ✓ **Liability protection** - shields the state and counties from vendor-based risks.

This bill strengthens election security, **saves taxpayer money**, and ensures that **Colorado’s elections remain fair, transparent, and beyond reproach.**