MEMORANDUM

TO: Jim Silrum, Deputy Secretary of State
FROM: Brian D. Newby, Elections Director
DATE: November 5, 2021
RE: Analysis of “thebiglie.frankspeech.com”

Following a note sent by a voter to Senator Brad Bekkedahl, which was forwarded to our office on September 23, we asked the North Dakota Information Technology (NDIT) Cyber Operations Team to assess claims made regarding data on the website “thebiglie.frankspeech.com.” The concern in the email related to claims of vote changes in Williams County, although the site purported to link vote count manipulation to each county in North Dakota.

A report from NDIT’s Cyber Operations Team is attached.

Our office’s conclusion—informed by this report as well as our own analysis—is that the information presented on “The Big Lie” is just that, totally fabricated. Our staff watched the South Dakota event as it took place, have gone back and reviewed much of the materials shown, have reviewed national IT cyber experts’ views of the claims (including those cyber experts who were at the event), and conducted our own evaluation of our results compared to what is stated.

The information presented on the site used a common percentage of vote changes across the country. The percentage was the same across the country. Ostensibly, the authors tried to suggest what the outcome SHOULD have been, as opposed to WHAT it was. It’s akin to someone expecting turnout to be a percentage based upon population and previous turnout history. Or, perhaps, someone expecting the outcome in a race to reflect what pre-election poll data predicted.

The attached report begins to explain this.

NDIT’s conclusions were not unexpected. Other states have looked at similar data. For instance, in the state of Idaho, the same site claimed that all 44 counties supposedly were electronically intercepted and manipulated remotely over the Internet. However, the Idaho Secretary of State’s office immediately identified seven of these counties because they tally all votes by hand. These small seven counties do not tabulate results electronically.

The Idaho Secretary of State’s office conducted recounts in those counties against the initial hand-counting to prove there were, of course, no changes possible and actually sent a bill for these costs of the recount to Mike Lindell. Admittedly, that final step appeared to be a publicity stunt, but they did that to draw attention to the fact that results can’t be electronically altered if they never were tabulated electronically in the first place.
A similar analysis to NDIT’s was conducted in Oklahoma and also is attached. In addition, we know that the North Dakota Auditor’s office has looked at these allegations as well, and we await findings from the Auditor, expected in 2022.

It’s worth noting that while there are credible reports demonstrating the lack of truth in the claim that votes flipped in North Dakota and elsewhere, there also have been no credible reports or evidence supporting the claims of Dr. Frank and Mr. Lindell.

Our own evaluation, before any other entity looked at this information, began with the understanding that the voting system in North Dakota is “physically isolated,” which means it is not connected to the North Dakota state network or to the internet in any way—not directly, indirectly, or wirelessly.

For a deeper dive, we looked into the IP address in question from the email, 104.198.152.237, which is registered to a server in Council Bluffs, Iowa, that hosts numerous governmental websites, including Williamsnd.com. This server and IP address are not owned or managed by the State of North Dakota and are on a completely separate network from any state assets, including the Secretary of State maintained Election Night Reporting (ENR) website.

Also included in the email were figures that appeared to be vote totals. We searched williamsnd.com, but did not find any vote totals listed on that site. The site only had voter turnout statistics and a link back to the Secretary of State ENR site. Here is a screenshot from williamsnd.com:
The votes for presidential candidates in Williams County reported on the Secretary of State’s ENR site, are pictured below:

These totals match one set of numbers from the email, highlighted below in yellow:

WILLIAMS COUNTY:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>SOURCE IP</th>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>TARGET IP</th>
<th>VOTES AFTER HACK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DENMARK</td>
<td>DENMARK</td>
<td>104.198.152.237</td>
<td>48.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103.62</td>
<td>ND</td>
<td>WILLIAMS</td>
<td>1585</td>
<td>12,383</td>
<td>2169 11,739</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The highlighted results reflect the Final Official results, certified by the bipartisan Williams County Canvassing Board on 11/9/2020, not the vote totals on 11/6/2020, the date provided in the email.

As for the other figures listed that also resemble vote totals, we could not attribute those totals to any known data source. To further analyze these figures, we reviewed the full data set from the website linked in the email.

In our analysis, the website yielded images of two data sets without any accompanying information related to the source or authenticity of data.
The data in columns 15 & 16, appear to be the final and official vote totals that are available from [https://results.sos.nd.gov/Default.aspx?map=Cty](https://results.sos.nd.gov/Default.aspx?map=Cty), website, which is the public-facing Election Night Reporting (ENR) website for the State of North Dakota.

- The final and official results were uploaded by the counties to the ENR site on or shortly after 11/9/20. However, the dates in column 1 range from 11/3/20 to 11/6/20, days before final results were certified by the county canvassing boards.
- Vote totals are lower prior to canvass, because set-aside ballots, as well as mail-ballots received that were postmarked before election day, are presented to the county bipartisan canvassing board to accept prior to being included in the vote totals.

Even more interesting is the data presented in columns 13 & 14. No source could be found to correlate the data, but after comparing the data to the final, official votes in columns 15 & 16, it appears that the numbers in column 13 are roughly 4.2% lower than the corresponding number in the same row in column 15. The inverse is true for column 14, which is approximately 4.2% higher than the corresponding number in the same row in column 16. Therefore, the figure in column 17 is 8.4% of the difference between the four columns in each row.
It is unknown why the author applied a uniform formula to the official, final results and chose to display it in this manner.

Regardless, a major red flag anomaly with this data comes with Barnes County’s “final results” from 10:09 on November 3, 2020. The times on this report appear to be military time, as several are listed with hours, for instance, of “15”, “17,” and “23.” The time zone for any of these listed is unknown.

However, on election night (November 3), the Barnes County auditor had mechanical issues with the feeding of ballots into its DS 450 scanner. A support technician was unable to arrive and address this issue until after midnight, and Barnes County did not complete scanning ballots until 5:00 a.m. on November 4. There is no way to reconcile the actual completion date and time of reporting with the “results” on the report, approximately 19 hours earlier.

Back to the report, in the next section, “TargetIP” occasionally appears to be the IP address for servers that in some cases appear to be hosting a website that belongs to a county. In other instances, the IP address appears to be related to a server hosting a website outside of North Dakota.
An investigation we conducted of a random sample of the Target IP addresses from the list shows:

Billings County  IP Address in Manhattan, Kansas
Cavalier County  IP Address in San Francisco
Morton County  IP Address in Edina, MN
Nelson County  IP Address same as Oliver County, in Edina, MN
Oliver County  IP Address same as Nelson County, in Edina, MN
Sioux County  IP Address in Washington, Virginia

Recall the original foundation of our analysis--North Dakota’s voting system is not connected to the Internet and, thus, does not have associated IP addresses. It’s not just that these aren’t the correct IP addresses listed—there are no IP addresses for North Dakota’s voting system. This is a fact we fully expect to be verified with the North Dakota auditor’s security assessment that is about to be underway.

**Conclusion**

In the end, the “source of truth” are the paper ballots at our counties, not any website that lists results. The “Big Lie” numbers show results with dates from election night, before additional ballots were tabulated nearly a week later when county canvassing boards certified official results. The shenanigans claim is simply false, but had it happened as claimed, it would have been caught at the time of the county canvassing board meetings.

One final data point supporting correct outcomes in 2020 are recounts that were conducted. The North Dakota Secretary of State does not have the authority to initiate recounts (there is a process for election contests spelled out in North Dakota Century Code, at the county level), but nine recounts in the State were conducted in 2020, all validating the initial totals:

- Mayor, Ayr
- Council Member, Gardner
- School Board Member, West Fargo School District #6
- Fullerton City Measure #1, Fullerton
- Home Rule Charter City of Arnegard, Arnegard
- Publication of Minutes, Mantador
- Forest River Publication, Forest River
- Commissioner, Velva
- County Commissioner, McKenzie

It’s a shame that such ridiculous claims have generated such traction. This mis-information sullies the incredible work our North Dakota county auditors and their election teams did on behalf of all North Dakotans in a year that saw uncertainty from a pandemic and, yet, incredibly high voter turnout. **I have complete confidence that those certified as winners in all North Dakota state and federal races in 2020 were duly elected and properly seated as the winners in their races.**