



**LUZERNE COUNTY**  
**ACTING COUNTY MANAGER**  
**BRIAN SWETZ**

**County of LUZERNE**  
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**TO:** For Immediate Release

**FROM:** Brian Swetz, Acting County Manager

**DATE:** March 20, 2023

**RE:** Invitation to Testify before U.S House Committee  
November 8, 2023 Election

I was made aware of the inquiry into the Luzerne County ballot paper shortage via newspaper late Saturday night. Since I was not aware of this inquiry at the time of press questions, I could not respond. I have read comments from both Rep. Cartwright and Rep. Meuser and while they disagree, both do have some common ground. While it is understandable that the Committee on House Administration wants to hold a hearing on our mishap; it would be preferable if the hearing were conducted after the Luzerne County District Attorney's report has been finalized. At this point it would be best that the invitees participate informally by means of providing a written reply. Of course, it is up to each invitee to determine how he/she wish to participate. However, it is not in Luzerne County's best interest, with a primary election around the corner, to have the Chair of the Luzerne County Election Board and the prior Acting Director of Elections travel to Washington, D.C. to testify about the 2022 general election. I would prefer that the invitees provide written testimony and if necessary, testify in-person after the completion of the May 16, 2023 Municipal Primary election.

The comments regarding government voter suppression and Luzerne doing the worst job of any county in the country do not help an already weak application pool in terms of number of applications. The Director of Elections was a very difficult position to fill without this negative public feedback. This is a fact and not a statement to sweep the embarrassing and unfortunate events of November 8, 2022 under the rug. To the contrary, the errors of the November 8, 2022, election need to be scrutinized. To that end, the District Attorney is engaged in a through investigation into the 2022 General Election. Luzerne County administration has a duty to the public to be accountable.

In the words of Bear Bryant "When you make a mistake, there are only three things you should ever do about it: admit it, learn from it, and don't repeat it." It is with that spirit that Luzerne County is conducting a Municipal Primary election using paper and scanners. If all voters are using the same resource and format, paper, this would seem to mitigate the chance of the same difficulties occurring again. I also realize that not all residents are in favor of the upcoming change to paper and this would be my response. Doing the same thing repeatedly while expecting different results is insanity. I am here in this form of government to make decisions, and I will continue to do so as County Manager even in an "acting" capacity.