

To Whom It May Concern,

KNOWiNK takes the security, reliability, and integrity of election infrastructure with the utmost seriousness. We understand and respect public concern over cybersecurity and are committed to operating with complete transparency and accountability.

To address the points raised:

#### Use of Microsoft Azure Government

KNOWiNK's TotalVote system is hosted on Microsoft Azure Government, a platform purpose-built for U.S. government agencies and contractors handling sensitive and regulated data. Azure Government operates in physically isolated data centers within the continental United States, with all customer support and administrative access restricted to U.S. persons who have undergone rigorous background checks.

Microsoft Azure Government is FedRAMP High authorized and compliant with FISMA, CJIS, IRS 1075, DoD IL5, and other critical national security frameworks. These standards are established and regularly audited by federal authorities to ensure the integrity and security of systems handling government data.

#### Claims of Foreign Access

There is no evidence or verified report from the Department of Defense or any federal agency confirming that foreign nationals, including individuals in China, have unauthorized access to Microsoft Azure Government infrastructure. Public speculation or social media commentary does not constitute official confirmation or breach verification.

Microsoft's government cloud services, including those supporting federal agencies and defense contractors, are contractually and technically segregated from global cloud environments and are restricted to U.S.-based personnel in accordance with ITAR and DFARS requirements.

#### Security of Voter Information

All voter registration and election night reporting data hosted on TotalVote is encrypted at rest and in transit, monitored continuously for suspicious activity, and protected by strict role-based access controls. KNOWiNK does not subcontract any infrastructure development or operational access to foreign nationals, and all personnel operate under U.S. legal jurisdiction and background verification.

Regarding the November 1, 2024, outage in South Dakota, the event was unrelated to any external breach or unauthorized access. It was promptly investigated, documented, and addressed in collaboration with the Secretary of State's office.

#### State-Level Compliance

KNOWiNK works closely with each state to ensure that all systems meet both federal and state-specific cybersecurity requirements. References to contract terminations in other states are based on localized procurement decisions and are not evidence of security failures or breaches of compliance.

We remain committed to the secure operation of South Dakota's voter registration system and stand ready to provide full transparency and continued collaboration with state officials to protect and enhance election infrastructure.

**Respectfully,**

**Derek Rieger, CISSP**

Chief Information Security Officer | KNOWiNK

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