



A Performance Audit of the Signature Verification Process

Improving Controls and Transparency

Rules Review and General Oversight Committee
May 22, 2025

The Lieutenant Governor is the Filing Officer for Statewide Races



The Office of the Lieutenant Governor is responsible for the statewide races we reviewed.

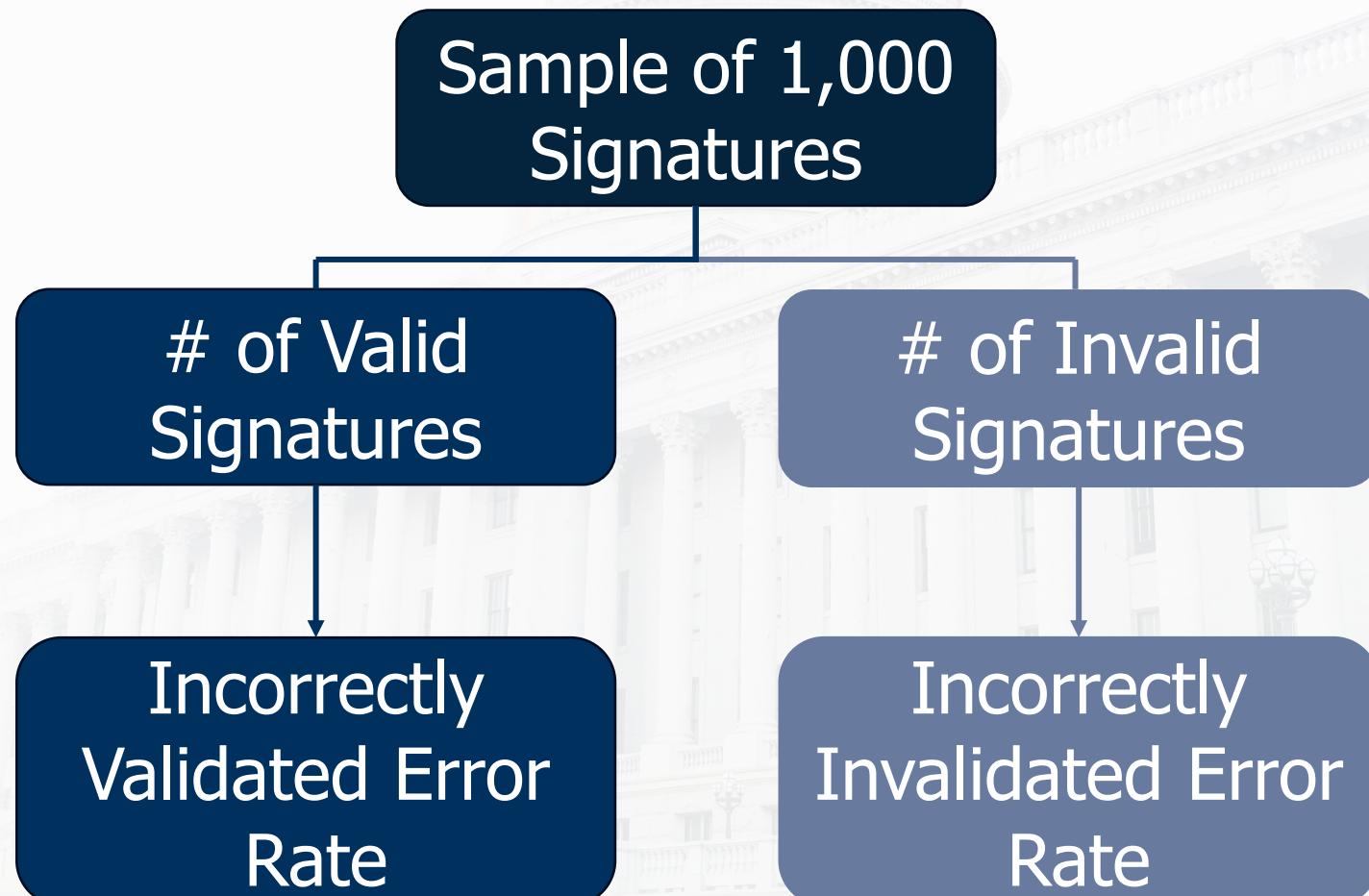
- There is an MOU in place that allows Davis County to verify signatures for these races.

After completing signature verification training, we tested a sample of 1,000 signatures for each candidate, about three times the size of a statistically significant sample. We did so to maximize our review and improve our conclusions and opinions about the full signature verification process.

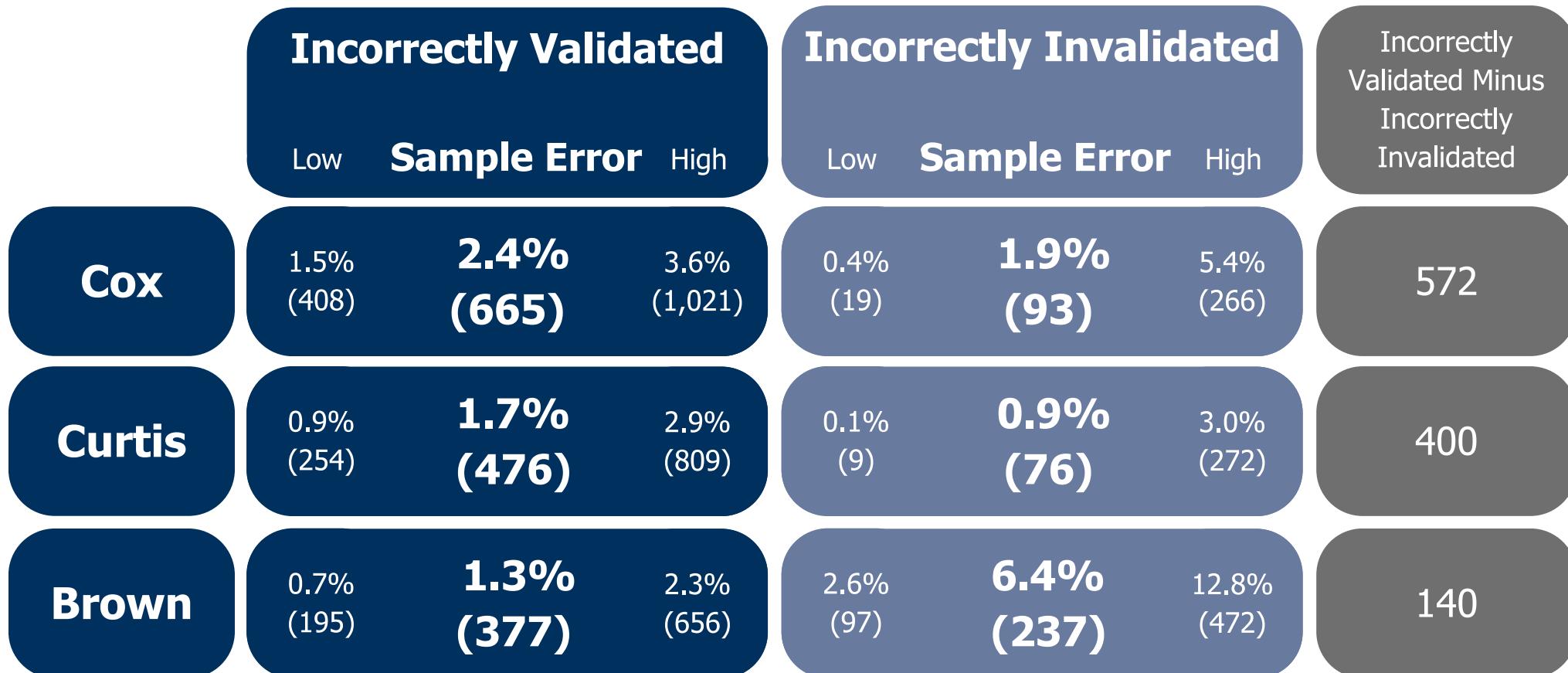


We also reviewed every packet that was submitted for the three statewide races. We brought in over a dozen auditors to help with our review process, including the most senior auditors.

We Tested Whether the DCC's Office Correctly Validated and Invalidated Signatures



Two Types of Misclassified Signatures Show the Need for a Quality Control Process





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WE HELP ORGANIZATIONS IMPROVE.

Our mission is to improve programs moving forward. Thus, our recommendations are designed to be prospective, showing ways that organizations can improve for the future.

Each Candidate Followed the Processes That Were Given to Them, But Had Options to Have More Signatures Validated, If Needed

Cox

- Submitted an additional 492 signatures.
- Had 28 more days to collect more signatures.

Curtis

- Submitted an additional 2,594 signatures.
- Had 6 more days to collect more signatures.

Brown

- Submitted an additional 1,801 signatures.
- Had 10 more days to collect more signatures.

Signature Standards Are Neither Differentiated Nor Defined

- “Substantially Similar” vs. “Reasonably Consistent”



Must utilize the following: “agreement in style and general appearance...agreement in the proportions of individual letters, height to width...irregular spacing, slants, or sizes of letters that are duplicated in both signatures.” **WAC 434-379-020**

“A signature may not be rejected merely because a person signed with a middle name, nickname, or initials instead of the first name in the voter registration records, as long as the handwriting [of the signatures] is clearly the same...” **Idaho Secretary of State Directives p. 51**



“A signature may not be rejected merely because...the handwriting on the printed name or address does not match the handwriting on the presented signature. The handwriting of the printed name or address is not relevant to the task of signature matching.” **Idaho Secretary of State Directives p. 51**



The Legislature Can Consider Options to Improve Controls and Transparency

Controls

- Post-Verification Signature Audit
- Email Notification for Signers
- Formalized Chain of Custody Processes

Transparency

- Include citizens in the post-verification signature audit.
- Permit the publication of individuals who signed nomination petitions.
- Include signature verification in poll watchers statute.

Questions



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