



**LAWRENCE KESTENBAUM
COUNTY CLERK / REGISTER OF DEEDS**

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Clerks,

As you're well aware, the State of Michigan is in the process of replacing aging voting equipment that is at the end of its service life. The process has been led by the Michigan Secretary of State who developed an RFP, received bids, and determined three vendors are eligible for a 10-year contract, to be entered into by individual counties.

We are proud to have chosen Hart InterCivic to provide this equipment. Washtenaw County joins at least seven other counties in this selection, among those who have chosen so far.

My staff and I believe Hart is the only vendor among our three options that can best meet the needs of Washtenaw County and position us for the 10 year life of this contract beyond. Hart is ahead of the other two vendors in nearly every category.

Hart's ballot programming and election night reporting software suite are robust and simple to use. It will allow us to return to programming ballots in-house, saving local jurisdictions the cost of a 3rd party vendor providing this service and giving the County full control of the process. It will also allow us lean far less on County Information Technology staff who will no longer need to actively support our results reporting software - while building on the functionality our constituents have come to expect.

Hart's hardware is secure, modern and user-friendly for voters and poll workers alike. The system was designed in 2015 and incorporates modern Federal Election Assistance Commission recommendations for functionality. Our other options were developed more than 10 years ago, which showed in the deficiencies we found in them – for instance slower ballot tabulation speeds, lesser software functionality, cumbersome hardware and, in one case, poor customer service reputation.

Hart's pricing model is competitive with the other two vendors, though they are not the cheapest in some categories. Hart does, however, offer us

several cost advantages. For example, they include wireless modems for results transmission in the basic precinct setup at no additional cost, for instance.

Funding for this purchase is being provided primarily by the state, who has set aside approximately \$45 million to disburse to county and local governments through grant awards. This funding will entirely pay for the basic equipment required to administer elections in Washtenaw County, including one ballot tabulator per precinct, one accessible voting device per polling location, software for the County to program ballots and disseminate election results, certain accessories, and maintenance for 5 years.

County and local governments will be required to pay for implementation, as well as optional and spare equipment this year, and for service and maintenance after year 5.

I am sensitive to the fact that much of these costs are the responsibility of cities and townships and have real budget impact. As such, we have negotiated together with seven other counties to reduce the originally quoted cost as far as possible and to an amount that, while not the lowest of the three vendors, we believe appropriately reflects the quality of the equipment and its modern development.

You are our close partners in election administration and we are sensitive to your needs and concerns.

If you have any questions, please let me or Ed Golembiewski know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lawrence Kesteven".

Larry