To: Valle, Paula[pvalle@sos.ca.gov]; Reyes, Steve[SReyes@sos.ca.gov]
Cc: Mahood, Sam[SMahood@sos.ca.gov]
From: Dresner, Jenna[/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=F4A4F8E820504621B354866221CFFA1E-JDRESNER]
Sent: Tue 1/12/2021 6:29:40 PM (UTC-08:00)
Subject: Re: Request for interview
EI-ISAC Reporting Misinformation Sheet Final.pdf

Attorney Client Privileged Communication

Hi - I'd drafted this note below with a stern word up top... let me know your thoughts.

Jenna

Hey Freddy,
I've responded to your questions below. I want to stress to you that election mis- and disinformation is dangerous. We've now seen the result of a mis and disinformation campaign about the 2020 election amplified by foreign actors taking a violent toll on Washington, D.C.

Elections officials have watched mis and disinformation from everyday Californians being spread by bots and fake news sites created by foreign actors in effort to sew confusion and distrust in our elections. We are here only to ensure everyone has the accurate election information they need to cast their vote and protect everyday Californians from lies about our elections that might hinder their ability to do so.

Trust in our elections and the people who run them is the greatest defense against foreign interference in our elections.

I hope you consider this reality as you continue your story.

Jenna
--
I reached out to the users on page 7 and page 21 of the Misinformation Tracker request I received. Both individuals wanted to know how their posts ended up being labeled misinformation and how, given their relatively small following, they came to the attention of the Office of Election Cybersecurity?
We've discussed the pathways by which election mis and disinformation is reported to us. It's important to remember we regularly encourage voters to report election misinformation themselves so many of the posts come from everyday Californians whose privacy we want to protect.
Another user named "DC O'Bryan" had his post taken down (page 5 of the Misinformation Tracker). In an email, you highlight a report sent to the state that says, "I don't know if this is hot air meant to provoke. If it is, a call from an official might get the point across that you don't joke about election fraud." Was O'Bryan called to confirm that his post was a joke?
How does the Office of Election Cybersecurity differentiate between parody and satire and misinformation?
Did CISA, Facebook, or any other partners provide guidance on how to spot and define misinformation?
If someone has their posts in the Misinformation Tracker, are there plans to contact those individuals and is there a way for them to petition the state to delete them?
The California Secretary of State's Office is the arbiter of California's election codes. We investigate claims by having our legal team determine if they are in violation of California's election laws and codes. I've included EI-ISAC's reporting guide as it defines election misinformation quite simply - information about our state's elections that is false - and it's a consistent definition across the organizations you mention.
Voting is the foundation of our democracy and elections officials work tirelessly to ensure no eligible voter is denied their chance to cast a ballot. If someone, intentionally or unintentionally, spreads a lie about our elections - inaccuracies from voter eligibility to registration deadlines and much more - it could easily hinder a Californian's ability to vote.
Because we take Californian's right to free speech incredibly seriously, we were intentionally selective in reporting just 32 posts ahead of the November General Election. When we reported the 32 posts, it's because the Office of Election Cybersecurity has greater insights into the role foreign interference plays in amplifying mis and disinformation about our elections.
We keep records because we want to maintain a paper trail for the sake of transparency (for reporters like yourself), as well as evidence in cases of potential voter fraud. We do not refer back to these posts otherwise. We'd encourage any Californian to reach out to VoteSure@sos.ca.gov if they have any questions about this process.
The Electronic Frontier Foundation said they aren't overly surprised by the Office of Election Cybersecurity's monitoring

efforts, but were surprised by the lack of transparency around a program designed to surveil for misinformation. You have been very forthcoming and open about what your duties entail, but I would like to ask if there was ever a press release issued detailing your surveillance efforts and the Misinformation Tracker that I may have missed, and if one was not issued, then why not?

We have and always will be transparent about our efforts to protect election integrity from foreign and domestic adversaries seeking to undermine our elections through the spread of mis and disinformation. We are not only forthcoming with information about our office's efforts to maintain the spread of inaccurate election information, but we promote it so Californians are aware of the role foreign adversaries have played in amplifying misinformation and the need to be cautious when reading or sharing information online.

We simply use a spreadsheet as a 'misinformation tracker' to organize mis and disinformation, since it gets reported to us from multiple pathways. By organizing the mis and disinformation circulating, we can detect trends so that we can confront common fallacies with research-backed messaging and materials detailing accurate election information. Promoting accurate election information is a more effective way to confront mis and disinformation.

According to emails between yourself and officials at Facebook, you said a user named @LeoAlpine, is "closely affiliated or operated by the same actors who set up the NAEBC website," essentially deeming this user a Russian actor. I am wondering if you could elaborate on how you reached this conclusion and who else in the Office of Election Cybersecurity helped you reach this decision.

As we've discussed, the Office of Election Cybersecurity works with a defense contractor who researches mis and disinformation for ties to foreign actors so that we can continue to understand the role foreign actors play in amplifying mis and disinformation. We also alert and receive alerts from organizations like EI-ISAC regarding mis and disinformation trends involving foreign actors.

In several emails you state that "While we investigate internally…" What was the internal investigative process like for labeling posts misinformation?

The California Secretary of State's Office is the arbiter of California's election codes. We investigate claims by having our legal team determine if they are in violation of California's election laws and codes.

From: Valle, Paula <pvalle@sos.ca.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2021 1:35 PM
To: Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov>; Reyes, Steve <SReyes@sos.ca.gov>
Cc: Mahood, Sam <SMahood@sos.ca.gov>
Subject: RE: Request for interview

Attorney Client Privileged Communication

Hi Steve – Please see below – the reporter at Cal Matters who PRA'd us is doing a follow-up story. We asked him to send us his questions. I am not necessarily comfortable with his line of questions and the additional doors that this will open. I want to get your feedback I would simply like to give him a statement about what our goal is and leave it at that. Thoughts?

Sam feel free to chime in too – read below.

From: Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2021 10:15 AM
To: Valle, Paula <pvalle@sos.ca.gov>
Subject: Fw: Request for interview

FYI

From: Fred Brewster <fred.brewster01@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2021 9:21 AM
To: Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: Request for interview

Hey Jenna,

No worries, thanks for getting back to me.

Here are the questions I have:

I reached out to the users on page 7 and page 21 of the Misinformation Tracker request I received. Both individuals wanted to know how their posts ended up being labeled misinformation and how, given their relatively small following, they came to the attention of the Office of Election Cybersecurity?

Another user named "DC O'Bryan" had his post taken down (page 5 of the Misinformation Tracker). In an email, you highlight a report sent to the state that says, "I don't know if this is hot air meant to provoke. If it is, a call from an official might get the point across that you don't joke about election fraud." Was O'Bryan called to confirm that his post was a joke?

How does the Office of Election Cybersecurity differentiate between parody and satire and misinformation?

Did CISA, Facebook, or any other partners provide guidance on how to spot and define misinformation?
If someone has their posts in the Misinformation Tracker, are there plans to contact those individuals and is there a way for them to petition the state to delete them?

The Electronic Frontier Foundation said they aren't overly surprised by the Office of Election Cybersecurity's monitoring efforts, but were surprised by the lack of transparency around a program designed to surveil for misinformation. You have been very forthcoming and open about what your duties entail, but I would like to ask if there was ever a press release issued detailing your surveillance efforts and the Misinformation Tracker that I may have missed, and if one was not issued, then why not?

According to emails between yourself and officials at Facebook, you said a user named @LeoAlpine, is "closely affiliated or operated by the same actors who set up the NAEBC website," essentially deeming this user a Russian actor. I am wondering if you could elaborate on how you reached this conclusion and who else in the Office of Election Cybersecurity helped you reach this decision.

In several emails you state that "While we investigate internally…" What was the internal investigative process like for labeling posts misinformation?

Thanks for your help again,
Freddy

On Jan 11, 2021, at 5:48 PM, Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov> wrote:

Hey Freddy,

Sorry about that. Can you send along the questions you're looking for answers to?

Jenna

From: Fred Brewster <fred.brewster01@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 11, 2021 3:20:25 PM
To: Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: Request for interview

Hey Jenna,

Just following up with this email here to see if you have anytime today or tomorrow for a phone call.

I reached out to a couple of voters whose posts are in the database and wanted to ask you a few questions about some of their reactions and to ask you a few questions on their behalf.

On Jan 11, 2021, at 8:13 AM, Fred Brewster <fred.brewster01@gmail.com> wrote:

Hey Jenna,

Thanks for working with my editor to clear up any discrepancies. I am wondering if you have any time to chat today or tomorrow?

Freddy

> On Dec 28, 2020, at 1:34 PM, Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov> wrote:
>
> Sure that works!

> **From:** Fred Brewster <fred.brewster01@gmail.com>
> **Sent:** Monday, December 28, 2020 1:14 PM
> **To:** Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov>
> **Subject:** Re: Request for interview
>
> Hey Jenna,
>
> It is mostly clarifications about the tracker and some of the numbers, as well as some quick fact checks. Does 10 a.m. work for you?
>
>> On Dec 28, 2020, at 10:57 AM, Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov> wrote:
>>
>> Hey Freddy - I can talk tomorrow on background! Are you able to send along some questions prior?

>> **From:** Fred Brewster <fred.brewster01@gmail.com>
>> **Sent:** Monday, December 28, 2020 8:51 AM
>> **To:** Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov>
>> **Subject:** Re: Request for interview
>>
>> Hey Jenna,
>>
>> I hope the holidays have been treating you well so far. Do you have time for a few questions this afternoon or tomorrow?
>>
>> Sent from my iPhone
>>
>>> On Dec 21, 2020, at 5:36 PM, Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov> wrote:
>>>
>>> Hi Freddy,
>>>
>>> Here are responses in red. Let me know if you have additional questions, tomorrow should be less busy.
>>>
>>> Jenna

Why does the Office of Election Cybersecurity operate under the Sec. of State's Communications department?

After the 2016 Election, the federal intelligence community determined foreign actors interfered in our elections primarily through the spread of mis and disinformation. Fighting misinformation is primarily a communications challenge. As a result, the California Secretary of State's Office set up the Office of Election Cybersecurity as a communications department to monitor and combat mis/disinformation.

To meet the challenge of the evolving threats to our democracy, the California Legislature appropriate funds to establish the Office of Election Cybersecurity and Enterprise Risk Management. The Office of Enterprise Risk Management coordinates efforts between the Secretary of State and local elections officials to enhance cyber-attack prevention capabilities and establish improved cyber incident response.

What was happening at the Office of Election Cybsecurity from its inception up until you started working there?

When the Office of Election Cybersecurity was created, it was the first of its kind. Since its inception, the OEC has focused on:
- Monitoring/reporting misinformation that could prevent Californians from exercising their voting rights
- Building partnerships with social media platforms to address misinformation in a more timely manner
- Educating Californians about the threat of election mis/disinformation, to prevent mis/disinformation campaigns from disenfranchising voters and undermining democracy (see details on award-winning Vote Sure campaign below)
- Developing public education materials about election mis/disinformation that could be used by partners, including county elections officials

Details on our 2018 Vote Sure California Campaign, for which we won the NASS IDEAS Award, can be found at the link here: https://www.nass.org/sites/default/files/awards/2020/CA-IDEAS-Award-2020.pdf

And then just clarification about one thing. You said, "This year the National Association of Secretaries of State has partnered with CISA, EAI-ISAC -- these are all elections intelligence organizations -- to develop a single source at which elections officials could report misinformation they found on social media."

I was probably citing CISA and EI-ISAC as examples but it's CISA, EI-ISAC, NASS, NASED & Stanford University. Here are the details they provided:
To help combat misinformation in elections, the EI-ISAC has teamed up with CISA, NASS, NASED, and Stanford University to establish a single source at which election officials can report misinformation found on social

media.

Election officials and their representatives can report misinformation to the misinformation email.The EI-ISAC will get the report to federal partners, the social media platforms through CISA, and the Election Integrity Partnership at Stanford University, where it will undergo analysis to determine if it's part of a broader disinformation campaign. The EI-ISAC will also inform officials when its partners identify a campaign. You'll get an email informing you of what they've seen and what actions are being taken.

Where is this information reported to and who runs it?
Does this mean that there is a national database like the "Misinformation Tracker" the state has?
If so, what is it called and what states have contributed to it?

The extent of information I have on their internal processes is in my prior answer. Those organizations would be able to provide more details.

Thanks again for your help,

From: Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov>
Sent: Monday, December 21, 2020 2:51 PM
To: Valle, Paula <pvalle@sos.ca.gov>; Mahood, Sam <SMahood@sos.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: Request for interview

Hi all - because this is turning into a larger story it seems with the PRA - wanted to run answers by you --mainly the question on what the OEC has been doing since I started here...

Jenna

From: Fred Brewster <fred.brewster01@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 21, 2020 2:23 PM
To: Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: Request for interview

Oh cool, thanks.

Just a few questions really.

Why does the Office of Election Cybersecurity operate under the Sec. of State's Communications department?

After the 2016 Election, the federal government and intelligence community determined foreign actors interfered

in our elections primarily through the spread of mis and
disinformation. As a result, the California Secretary of State's
Office set up the Office of Election Cybersecurity as a
communications department to monitor and combat
mis/disinformation as misinformation is, by nature, a
communications challenge.

That said, when the California Legislature established the
Office of Election Cybersecurity, it also appropriated funds
for Enterprise Risk Management which coordinates efforts
between the Secretary of State and local elections
officials to enhance cyber attack prevention capabilities
and establish improved cyber incident response.

What was happening at the Office of Election Cybsecurity
from its inception up until you started working there?

When the Office of Election Cybersecurity was created, it was
in many cases the first of its kind. As a result, the OEC has
been laying the groundwork for statewide election security in
preparation for each subsequent election cycle. Preparation
included developing partnerships and pathways with federal
intelligence communities and social media companies where
it did not otherwise exist and further developing its
understanding of the role foreign governments played in our
election. The OEC took those findings to educate Counties
and the public through webinars and public education
campaigns, respectively.

You can read about an earlier public education campaign
here: https://www.nass.org/sites/default/files/awards/2
020/CA-IDEAS-Award-2020.pdf

And then just clarification about one thing. You said, "This
year the National Association of Secretaries of State has
partnered with CISA, EAI-ISAC -- these are all elections
intelligence organizations -- to develop a single source
at which elections officials could report misinformation
they found on social media."

**I was probably citing CISA and EI-ISAC as examples but it's
CISA, EI-ISAC, NASS, NASED & Stanford Univeristy. Here's the
details they provided:**
To help combat misinformation in elections, the EI-ISAC has teamed
up with CISA, NASS, NASED, and Stanford University to establish a
single source at which election officials can report misinformation
found on social media.

Election officials and their representatives can report misinformation
to the misinformation email. The EI-ISAC will get the report to federal
partners, the social media platforms through CISA, and the Election
Integrity Partnership at Stanford University, where it will undergo
analysis to determine if it's part of a broader disinformation
campaign. The EI-ISAC will also inform officials when its partners
identify a campaign. **You'll get an email informing you of what
they've seen and what actions are being taken.**

Where is this information reported to and who runs it?
Does this mean that there is a national database like the

"Misinformation Tracker" the state has?
If so, what is it called and what states have contributed to it?

The extent of information I have on their internal processes is in my prior answer. Those organizations would be able to provide more details.

Thanks again for your help,

> On Dec 21, 2020, at 1:53 PM, Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov> wrote:
>
> Hi Freddy, I'm actually in the process of pulling together the rest of your PRA.
>
> Anything I can respond to via email? Otherwise can probably talk closer to 4PM.
>
> Jenna

From: Fred Brewster <fred.brewster01@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 21, 2020 1:14 PM
To: Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: Request for interview

Hey Jenna,

I am wondering if you have time today for a quick call.

> On Dec 11, 2020, at 2:04 PM, Fred Brewster <fred.brewster01@gmail.com> wrote:
>
> Oh great, thanks!!
>
>> On Dec 11, 2020, at 2:03 PM, Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov> wrote:
>>
>> Hey Freddy,
>>
>> Still working on it, just getting cleared by our attorney but we entered your original request as a PRA as well so should have that for you soon.
>>
>> Jenna

From: Fred Brewster <fred.brewster01@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 11, 2020 1:28 PM
To: Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: Request for interview

Hey Jenna,

Just following up to see if you are able to get those training manuals?

Thanks again for your help,

> On Dec 4, 2020, at 2:34 PM, Fred Brewster <fred.brewster01@gmail.com> wrote:
>
> Ok thanks.

On Dec 4, 2020, at 2:33 PM, Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov> wrote:

Hi Freddy,

I'm working on this for you now, just flagging it'll take some time as I need to get approvals to share our internal documents.

Let me know if you have questions in the interim,
Jenna

From: Fred Brewster <fred.brewster01@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 4, 2020 1:15 PM
To: Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: Request for interview

Hey Jenna,

Thanks for getting back to me. I would like to respectfully ask for the screenshots again. I feel that it is in the best interest of the public to know what their government is considering to be misinformation and requesting for it to be removed from the internet.

Could you also send me any training manuals and/or handbooks that you were provided by the state to define your role and how to spot and

define misinformation?

Thanks again,

Freddy

On Dec 2, 2020, at 2:48 PM, Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov> wrote:

Hey Freddy,

So looks like it's the same funding for the Office of Election Cybersecurity as is listed on our website (Oec.sos.ca.gov). As far as getting you copies of reported posts - because we do take the privacy of Californian's so seriously and because we don't want to risk misinformation re-circulating, we'd rather provide examples at this point.

A couple:
• In one video post, a voter documented himself registering under an alias which needed to be investigated and reported - it was subsequently removed from YouTube.
• Another, a Twitter user claimed there were thousands of 2020 ballots being thrown out, which was being perpetuated widely. As it could serve as a form of voter suppression, we elected to report it with the accurate story so the CA public trusted their vote would count.

Again, we do the work of investigating and understanding misinformation as a form of voter suppression or proof/intent of voter fraud and deliver that finding for social media companies to determine based on their community standards.

Let me know if there's anything else.
Jenna

From: Fred Brewster <fred.brewster01@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 1, 2020 9:59 AM
To: Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: Request for interview

Ok great. Does the number you called me from previously work?

On Dec 1, 2020, at 9:59 AM, Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov> wrote:

Hi Freddy,

Apologies missed this! Can talk any time before 2PM.

Jenna

From: Fred Brewster
<fred.brewster01@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 30, 2020 2:19 PM
To: Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: Request for interview

Hey Jenna,

Thanks for this information. Do you have time tomorrow for an interview?

On Nov 25, 2020, at 8:16 AM, Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov> wrote:

Hi Freddy,

I was able to track down a few items for you, just slow going as some folks I need to hear from are on vacation.

Attached is the statement from Dominion and some details about the Secretary's stance on open-source voting. I also

The Secretary has long been a supporter of open-source voting technology. As State Senator, he wrote the legislation authorizing open source voting systems for use in California.

*However, an open-source voting system, made entirely of American made components, does not currently exist and would likely be cost prohibitive for most (probably all) jurisdictions to develop. LA County—the largest voting jurisdiction in the country—took years to develop the the first **and only** publicly owned and designed voting system certified for use in the United States.*

This is from the bottom of our release on the first certification of LA County's VSAP system:

"In addition to a publicly owned voting system option, I have been a long time believer in the promise of 'open source' voting technology, but source code disclosure must be done prudently. Accessibility can and must be balanced with security," Padilla added.

Secretary Padilla is therefore asking Los Angeles County to regularly update the Secretary of State's office on its consultation with stakeholders in the governance of and plan for disclosure of VSAP's source code.
As a State Senator, Secretary Padilla authored SB 360 (2013) to authorize "open source" voting systems where the source code is made publicly available.
https://www.sos.ca.gov/administration/news-releases-and-advisories/2020-news-releases-and-advisories/ap20009-secretary-state-alex-padilla-conditionally-certifies-los-angeles-county-vsap-system

Also item #28 on our re-certification of VSAP: https://votingsystems.cdn.sos.ca.gov/vendors/LAC/vsap2-1/vsap21-cert.pdf

Regarding our approach to misinformation, I'm waiting to see if I can share one of the presentations from our partners on responding to misinformation best practices we used in our presentation to Counties. It also looks like we reported around 30 posts, around 25 of which were removed.

Happy to talk next week, generally free Tuesday.

Happy Thanksgiving!
Jenna

From: Fred Brewster <fred.brewster01@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 24, 2020 9:21 PM
To: Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: Request for interview

Hey Jenna,

Just following up on our conversation from yesterday and wondering if you will be able to provide me with those documents this week or should I be expecting them next week?

I am also hoping to schedule another interview with you next week for a few follow up questions I have.

Thanks for your help and I hope you enjoy the upcoming holiday,

Freddy

On Nov 23, 2020, at 1:00 PM, Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov> wrote:

Sounds good - will try you then.

From: Fred Brewster <fred.brewster01@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 23, 2020 12:48 PM
To: Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: Request for interview

Yeah, that works.

You can call me at 513.379.7522

On Nov 23, 2020, at 12:44 PM, Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov> wrote:

Does 1:30pm work by chance?

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Fred Brewster <fred.brewster01@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 23, 2020 12:39:49 PM
To: Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: Request for interview

Hey Jenna,

Today works. How about 1 p.m.?

On Nov 23, 2020, at 12:32 PM, Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov> wrote:

Hi Freddy,

I can talk today around 3PM or tomorrow before 12PM!

Let me know if either work.
Jenna

From: Fred Brewster <fred.brewster01@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 23, 2020 12:04 PM
To: Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: Request for interview

Hey Jenna,

Thank you for your response. Do you have time for a phone call today or in the next two days?

Thanks,

On Nov 18, 2020, at 3:15 PM, Dresner, Jenna <jdresner@sos.ca.gov> wrote:

Hi Freddy,

Received your inquiry below. I lead communications for the Office of Election Cybersecurity for the CA Secretary of State which is tasked with handling mis/disinformation.

I just wrote down some preliminary responses below to provide some context - but happy to speak on the phone as well.

Let me know what works best for you.
Jenna

-----Original Message-----
From: Fred Brewster <fred.brewster01@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 18, 2020 2:04 PM
To: Secretary of State, Press <SOSPRESS@sos.ca.gov>
Subject: Request for interview

Hello,

My name is Freddy Brewster and I am a reporter with CalMatters. I am working on a story about misinformation during the past election and wanted to ask a few questions.

My deadline is Friday at 12:00 p.m.

Here are my questions:

Did the Secretary of State's office receive very many reports of voter misinformation during the past election cycle?

If so, what was reported the most?
How many reports came in?

We have several pathways to

monitor for mis/disinformation online. We have a dedicated email line, voter hotlines, media monitoring tools, contractors, etc. to stay apprised on misinformation and give voters an outlet to report. We always see an influx in misinformation around elections, but this year it was louder than ever.

Given the sheer volume and nature of social media, we at the State level monitor for trends and themes more often than we do individual pieces of misinformation in order to ensure we're countering misinformation with fact-based messaging.

Since September, our office has tracked somewhere around 200 social media/media posts, but our priority is working closely with social media companies to be proactive so when there's a source of misinformatio

n, we can contain it. It would be difficult to quantify what what reported the MOST, as misinformation surged around different things in the news or events.

Did the Secretary of State's office reach out to any social media companies to help them combat misinformation? If so, who was contacted, what concerns were expressed and how did the social media company respond?

We have working relationships and dedicated reporting pathways at each major social media company. When we receive a report of misinformation on a source where we don't have a pre-existing pathway to report, we find one. We've found that many social media companies are taking responsibility on themselves to do this work as well.

We worked closely and proactively with

social media companies to keep misinformation from spreading, take down sources of misinformation as needed, and promote our accurate, official election information at every opportunity.

In your opinion did misinformation play an influential role in dissuading voters during this election cycle?

Misinformation led to greater voter anxiety, but it didn't dissuade voters from voting. We saw record breaking numbers across all fronts, including those metrics that indicate a deep desire to vote but a need for more assurance in the process like voting early and signing up for Where's My Ballot to track the status of their ballot throughout the process.

How did the Secretary of State's office deal with misinformation?

Monitoring misinformation

and responding appropriately is a full-time job. Misinformation by nature is a communications challenge - it's why the California Secretary of State created the Office of Election Cybersecurity as a communications department to monitor and respond to the influx of mis/disinformation.

We have several pathways to monitor for mis/disinformation online, but given the sheer volume and nature of social media, we at the State level monitor for trends and themes more often than we do individual pieces of misinformation in order to ensure we're countering misinformation with fact-based messaging.

Were county officials trained on how to combat misinformation at a local level?

On several occasions, yes. We know the best defense to misinformation

is accurate information presented widely and consistently. Many organizations, including the Office of Election Cybersecurity - provided proactive messaging and trainings over the past year to equip Counties protocols to respond to misinformation. For example, we at the Office of Election Cybersecurity led County PIOs in a presentation on crisis communications, equipped them with a toolkit on possible scenarios, and a presentation on best practices the week prior to the election.

Thank you for your help,
Freddy Brewster
513.379.7522

<DVS-Statement-Voting-System-Facts-110720.pdf>