



**State of Vermont
Office of the Secretary of State**

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**Sarah Copeland Hanzas, Secretary of State
S. Lauren Hibbert, Deputy Secretary**

**Elections Division
Seán Sheehan, Director**

January 21, 2025

**To: Hon. Matthew Birong, Chair
House Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs**

**From: S. Lauren Hibbert, Deputy Secretary of State
Sean Sheehan, Director, Elections and Campaign Finance**

Re: Follow-up testimony related to Bennington-1 Election

Dear Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide follow-up to our testimony related to the Bennington-1 election and the questions raised by the committee.

1. How many of Pownal’s misassigned voters actually voted?

To answer this question, Director Sheehan compared the list of misassigned Pownal voters from the Nov. 18 Pownal BCA meeting minutes with participation reports submitted by Pownal in the Vermont Election Management System. He then confirmed the numbers with Pownal Town Clerk Julie Weber, who also clarified that one of the 56 residents listed as misassigned in the Nov. 18 BCA minutes actually shouldn’t have been in Bennington-1, making 55 the correct number.

- Of the 55 Pownal residents on the Bennington-5 checklist who should have been on the Bennington-1 checklist, 43 voted in the 2024 General Election (78%).
- Of the 14 Pownal residents on the Bennington-1 checklist who should have been on the Bennington-5 checklist, 9 voted in the 2024 General Election (64%).

For context, voter turnout was: Pownal - Bennington-1: 76%; Pownal - Bennington-5: 75%; Bennington County: 72%; Vermont: 71%

2. How many blank votes and write-in votes were there in the Ben-5 house race?

To answer this question, Director Sheehan consulted the detailed reports available on the Secretary of State Office’s Election Results website. The number of blank votes for the Bennington-5 race is in the table below. Please note that Bennington-5 is a 2-seat district; therefore, voters could vote for up to two candidates and the total number of ballots cast would be one-half the number of votes shown below. If a voter only voted for one candidate, it would count as one blank vote. Please note there is no way to know how many, if any, of the ten write-in votes for Bennington-1 candidates in Pownal’s Bennington-5 district were cast by misassigned voters.

Town -District	Total Votes	Jonathan Cooper-write-in	Bruce Buso(sic)-write-in	Blank Votes
BENNINGTON – Ben-5	7138	1	0	1896
POWNAL – Ben-5	1020	7	3	344