



NEWS RELEASE

Arizona House of Representatives

Representative Rachel Keshel (R-17)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Representative Rachel Keshel Praises President Trump's Executive Order to Restore Transparent, Verifiable Elections

STATE CAPITOL, ARIZONA – Arizona State Representative Rachel Keshel issued the following statement today in support of President Donald J. Trump's March 25th [Executive Order](#), "*Preserving and Protecting the Integrity of American Elections*."

"This Executive Order is exactly what this country needs," said Representative Keshel. **"It puts Americans — not machines, not foreign influence, not barcode algorithms — back in charge of their elections. Our elections should never be decided by unreadable digital codes hidden inside barcodes. Every vote must be visible, verifiable, and countable by human beings — full stop."**

The order requires the U.S. Election Assistance Commission to finalize implementation of the long-delayed *Voluntary Voting System Guidelines 2.0* (VVS 2.0). Once those standards are applied, no currently certified electronic voting systems will meet compliance. That means that states like Arizona, which rely on barcode-based vote counting, will be forced to change course — and fast.

In Arizona, voters hand-mark their paper ballots — but those marks are *not* directly counted. Instead, the filled-in bubbles are scanned, converted into a digital code, and then read by machines that do not interpret English text. The *official* vote is the barcode, not the words or marks on the page.

"This system is a slap in the face to every voter in Arizona who thinks their ballot speaks for them," Representative Keshel said. **"What good is a hand-marked ballot if a machine replaces it with a code we can't even read?"**

Representative Keshel is calling for immediate action:

- Arizona must begin preparing now to conduct the 2026 elections using hand-marked, hand-counted paper ballots — no machines, no black boxes.
- State and county election officials should end funding for non-compliant electronic systems and cancel maintenance contracts that will become obsolete under federal standards.
- The Legislature must use existing state authority to allow counties to become "paper ballot counties," ensuring secure, transparent elections before it's too late.

President Trump's order reaffirms the constitutional role of states in administering elections, while making clear that federal standards must be enforced where national security and citizenship verification are concerned.

“This order is the first step,” said Representative Keshel. “More reforms are coming — and they should. We are not going to sit by while this nation’s elections are left in the hands of machines and foreign money. We are taking our elections back.”

Representative Keshel also pointed to strong federal legislative support, including U.S. Representative Chip Roy’s SAVE Act, which would require proof of citizenship to vote in federal elections, and U.S. Representative Pete Sessions’s MESA Act, which supports hand-marked, hand-counted elections nationwide.

“This isn’t complicated. We need elections that every voter can understand, witness, and trust. Machines don’t vote. Americans do,” added Representative Keshel.

Rachel Keshel is a Republican member of the Arizona House of Representatives serving Legislative District 17 in areas within Pima County and Pinal County, including East Tucson, Oro Valley, Marana, Picture Rocks, and Mount Lemmon. Follow her on X at @RJ4arizona.

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