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Pennsylvania Lawmakers Question Trump's Voting Plan

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Three Republican lawmakers from Pennsylvania expressed skepticism Tuesday over former President Donald Trump's proposal to eliminate voting machines and mail-in ballots nationwide, saying such changes are neither practical nor within the president's power.

During an event at BAE Systems' armored vehicle facility in York County, U.S. Sen. Dave McCormick emphasized that mail-in voting played a role in Republican victories, including his own, in Pennsylvania. "I would never want to unilaterally disarm," McCormick said. "I

would only support removing them if it could be done everywhere at once. I'm not sure that's a realistic path."

Reps. Lloyd Smucker, representing Lancaster and York counties, and Scott Perry, representing Dauphin County and parts of Cumberland and York, echoed that sentiment. Smucker said he was hesitant about centralizing elections at the federal level, while Perry pointed to the U.S. Constitution, which grants states the authority to manage elections, including setting time, place, and procedures.

All three Republicans said they preferred in-person voting on Election Day without mail-in ballots or machines. However, none indicated plans to introduce legislation to mandate such changes.

Trump's comments followed his August 15 meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Alaska, where he claimed Putin questioned the legitimacy of the 2020 U.S. election, citing mail-in voting fraud. Those claims have been repeatedly dismissed by U.S. courts, with judges rejecting all 64 related lawsuits before the 2020 election was certified.

Experts argue that dismantling mail-in voting would be highly disruptive. Barbara Smith Warner, head of the Vote At Home Institute, said mail voting supports military members, people with disabilities, and voters with demanding schedules. Eight U.S. states conduct elections entirely by mail, and removing the system would be "all but impossible" in those states, she said.

Julie Wheeler, York County president commissioner, noted that mail-in ballots add costs but said inconsistencies in state law are a bigger burden. "What we want is a consistent and uniform election code so that counties conduct elections fairly and equitably," Wheeler said.

Regarding voting machines, York County's system relies on them, according to county spokesperson Brett Marcy. Eliminating machines would require significant manpower to count ballots, create delays, and likely introduce human error, said Mark Lindeman, policy director at Verified Voting. Manual counting would also require extensive space and resources to manage results across multiple jurisdictions.