

Rigged Election? County Clerk Debbie Ming Mendoza says not in Madison County

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EDWARDSVILLE – Madison County Clerk Debbie Ming Mendoza is going on record to assure county voters on the integrity of the November 8 General election.

“Any allegations of a ‘rigged’ election as they pertain to Madison County, or for that matter the entire State of Illinois, are completely unfounded,” Mendoza stated as she watched residents take advantage of early voting, casting their ballots in the lobby of the county’s Administration Building.

“There are numerous safeguards that protect the integrity of our voting machines, the tabulation of election results, even how the ballots are transported to the County Clerk’s office. And the State Board of Elections oversees the testing of the equipment used and the procedures being implemented in every county,” Mendoza said.

“Given the work we do in Madison County to protect the integrity of our elections, any candidate espousing a rigged election is doing a great disservice to our county,” added Mendoza.

According to the State Board of Elections, each of the 109 election authorities in Illinois MUST conduct errorless pre-tests of its automatic tabulating equipment and program to verify they will correctly count the votes for all offices and public questions.

Not less than five days before the election, the election authority must publicly test the equipment. The public test for Madison County was conducted at 9:00 a.m. today (Friday) in the Election Warehouse in the presence of several citizens.

Following the mandatory public tests, the voting equipment and memory cards are locked and sealed in containers until election day. The containers are unlocked and the machines unsealed in the presence of election judges and any authorized watchers who are present. If any tampering had occurred, it would be evident at that time.

As the election authority for Madison County, Mendoza also conducts nine training sessions for all citizens who serve as election judges. “The training sessions are particularly thorough, addressing voting procedures, potential issues, everything that could possibly arise on election day,” Mendoza said. “And, of course, I and my staff in the County Clerk’s office are available to assist with any issue.”

Following the closing of a voting location, the election judges -- composed of both Democrats and Republicans -- together process the ballots in the presence of any authorized poll watchers in attendance.

“Although we are expecting a large turnout for the November 8 general election, I am confident the election process in Madison County will be smooth and talk or charges of a rigged election will be nonexistent,” Mendoza said.