



Auditor of Public Accounts
Mike Harmon

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: **Michael Goins**
Michael.Goins@ky.gov
502.564.5841
502.209.2867

**Auditor Harmon Announces Results of Election Leave Report
by His Office**

Records indicate more than 1,300 state employees claimed voting leave, but were not entitled to do so, costing taxpayers more than \$100,000

FRANKFORT, Ky. (December 5, 2017) – Mike Harmon, Kentucky’s 47th Auditor of Public Accounts, today released the results of a report on election leave by state employees. The report examined the use of election leave for public employees during the 2015 General Election and the 2016 Primary Election.

The report by Auditor Harmon’s office found during those two elections, as many as 1,329 public employees claimed four hours of paid election leave but were not entitled to it. Of that total, 1,176 of those employees took paid election leave, but records indicate they did not vote in one or both elections examined. The potential cost to Kentucky taxpayers for improper voting leave is more than \$102,000 in wages.

“Our report and the resulting findings regarding use of election leave should be troubling not only to taxpayers, but to those who have fought for the right to allow all of us the freedom to choose our leaders,” said Auditor Harmon. “The preliminary information summarized in our report will be forwarded to the Executive Branch Ethics Commission and to the Personnel Cabinet for further investigation and possible disciplinary action.”

The Auditor’s report presents summary information on the findings related to voting leave usage. The individual instances of election leave discrepancies are considered preliminary pending follow-up and investigation, and are being provided to the Kentucky Personnel Cabinet to instruct state agencies on the appropriate follow-up actions to take.

Another finding in Auditor Harmon’s report found multiple discrepancies with Kentucky’s Voter Registration System, or VRS. Among the issues identified included one state employee who

appeared in their county election precinct book twice in the same election, but did not receive credit for casting a ballot. In addition, the report found that social security numbers within VRS are not being validated or used consistently in the registration process.

Auditors also found two public employees who were registered to vote in two different counties, one in both Harlan and Fayette, and the other on election register books for both Morgan and Fayette during the 2015 General Election.

“It is essential to keep our election registration system in Kentucky accurate and avoid any issues which could give the appearance of improprieties with voting records,” Auditor Harmon said. “I encourage the State Board of Elections, Secretary of State, and others who oversee our election rolls to review this finding carefully, and to take the actions necessary to eliminate errors our auditors uncovered.”

These two findings are among five cited in Auditor Harmon’s report. This is the third time the Office of the Auditor of Public Accounts has conducted an election leave report, and the first since 2007.

The complete election leave report is available for review at www.auditor.ky.gov.

###

The Auditor of Public Accounts ensures that public resources are protected, accurately valued, properly accounted for, and effectively employed to raise the quality of life of Kentuckians.

Call 1-800-KY-ALERT or visit our website to report suspected waste and abuse.

