

Election Transparency: Do Post-election Audits Improve Voter Confidence

Sarah Case, Lonna Atkeson, Yimeng Li, Austin Lloyd Cutler, Marli Wang Dunietz

Florida State University
Department of Political Science
LeRoy Collins Institute

Prepared for ESRA 2026



Background

In **2022**, the LeRoy Collins Institute received funding to **place ballot images online**

- ▶ With Mark Early, we collected post-election audit data and ballot image files exported from Clear Ballot
- ▶ We processed ballots for privacy and built a data dashboard displaying audit results and ballot images

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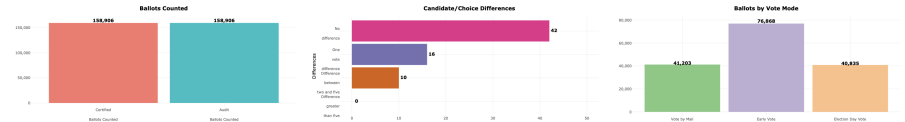
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Interactive Dashboard - Main Page

Dashboard [Contests](#)

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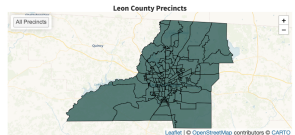


Contest	Choice	Certified Vote Count	Audit Vote Count	Difference in Counts	Over Vote	Under Vote
President and Vice President	Kamala D. Harris	94520	94520	0	54	1115
President and Vice President	Donald J. Trump	60397	60397	0	13	1115
President and Vice President	Write-In	927	927	0	2	1115
President and Vice President	Jill Stein	742	742	0	28	1115
President and Vice President	Chaos Oliver	568	560	8	16	1115

[Download Audit Data](#)

Ballot ID	Contest	Choice	Vote Type	Ballot Link	Precinct	Voting Method
ED-001+10003	President and Vice President	Harris	Voted for Choice	Click here!	1293	Election Day Vote
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ED-001+10003	State Senator District 3	Simon	Voted for Choice	Click here!	1293	Election Day Vote
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ED-001+10003	Superintendent of Schools	Hanna	Voted for Choice	Click here!	1293	Election Day Vote
ED-001+10003	Supreme Court Justice Renuke Francis	Yes	Voted for Choice	Click here!	1293	Election Day Vote

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Interactive Dashboard - Audit Information

Contest	Choice	Certified Vote Count
President and Vice President	Kamala D. Harris	94520
President and Vice President	Donald J. Trump	60397
President and Vice President	Write-in	927
President and Vice President	Jill Stein	742
President and Vice President	Chase Oliver	560
President and Vice President	Claudia De la Cruz	250

Audit Vote Count	Difference in Counts	Over Vote	Under Vote
94520	0	54	1116
60397	0	13	1116
927	0	2	1116
742	0	38	1116
560	0	16	1116
250	0	15	1116

Interactive Dashboard - Crosstabs Page

Dashboard Crosstabs

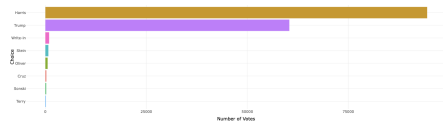
Context 1

President and Vice President

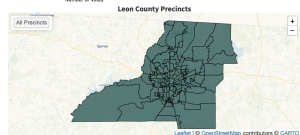
Crosstabs feature is in beta, some errors may occur.

Context 2

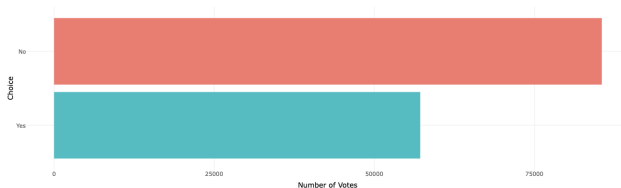
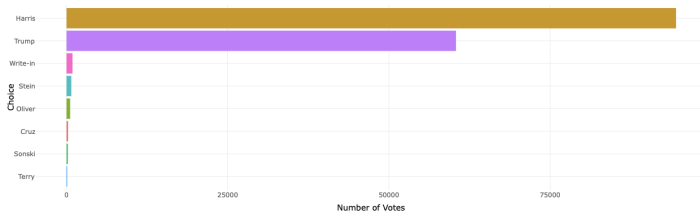
No. 6 Constitutional Amendment Article VI



President and Vice President	No	Yes	Undervote	Row Total
Harris	59133	27293	8594	94523
Trump	24261	28569	7567	60387
Write-in	400	339	98	507
Undervote	531	348	0	879
Blank	400	214	68	142
Oliver	300	211	49	560
Cruz	112	64	34	250
Sonoki	115	18	22	135
Terry	56	52	8	116
Column Total	85518	57168	15920	158606



Interactive Dashboard - Crosstabs Page



Interactive Dashboard - Crosstabs Page

President and Vice President	No	Yes	Undervote	Row Total
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Cruz	172	64	14	250
Sonski	115	78	22	215
Terry	56	52	8	116
Column Total	85518	57168	15920	158606

Interactive Dashboard - Sample Overvote Ballot

DUPLICATE CBEDUNS-3

Official Primary Election Ballot, August 23, 2022
Democratic Party
Leon County, Florida

Instructions: To vote, fill in the oval completely next to your choice. Use only the marker provided or a black or blue pen.
If you make a mistake, ask for a new ballot. Do not cross out or your vote may not count.

United States Senator (Vote for One)	State Representative District 8 (Vote for One)	School Board Member District 4 (Vote for One)
☐ Ricardo De La Fuente	☐ Hubert Brown	☒ Laurie Lawson Cox
☒ Val Demings	☐ Gallop P. Franklin	☐ Susan Hodges
☐ Brian Rush	☐ Gregory James	☐ Alex Sternle
☐ William Sanchez	☐ Sharon Lettman-Hicks	
Governor and Lieutenant Governor (Vote for One)	☒ Marie Rattigan	
☐ Charlie Crist	County Judge Group 1 (Vote for One)	
☒ Cadance Daniel	☐ Jason Jones	
☐ Nicole "Nikki" Fried	☐ Mario R. Theodore	
☐ Robert L. Willis	Board of County Commissioners At Large, Group 2 (Vote for One)	
Attorney General (Vote for One)	☐ Rudy Ferguson Sr	
☐ Aramis Ayala	☒ Josh Johnson	
☒ Jim Lewis	☐ Nick Maddox	
☐ Daniel Uhlfelder	☐ Dominique "Nikki" Zumbo	
Commissioner of Agriculture (Vote for One)	Board of County Commissioners District 3 (Vote for One)	
☒ Naomi Esther Blennur	☒ Joey Lamar	
☐ J. R. Gallot	☐ Rick Minor	
☐ Ryan Morales	☐ Damon Victor	

1/1

What Post-Election Audits Do (and Why Voters Should Care)

Post-election audits are checks conducted after an election to evaluate whether reported results are correct

- ▶ Verify accuracy
- ▶ Detect problems
- ▶ Strengthen accountability
- ▶ Demonstrate transparency

Do Transparent Processes Improve Voter Confidence?

- ▶ Transparency makes election decisions and actions **visible** and actors **accountable**
- ▶ Visibility can reduce misinformation and uncertainty, potentially increasing voter confidence

Why Audit Communication Format Matters

We know relatively little about whether **audit information** actually changes voter confidence

- ▶ Even less on different formats
- ▶ In practice, **IF** audit results are used, they are either **dense and data-heavy** or cover **minimal information**

We test whether the Leon County **visual dashboard** (with ballot images) or a **county-provided audit report** improves voter confidence and whether the absence of a audit report decreases voter confidence.

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- ▶ Does the availability of post-election audits **improve voter confidence**?
- ▶ Do differences in the presentation of post-election audits change the effect?

Hypotheses: Voter Confidence and Election Audits

- ▶ **H1:** Viewing the Leon County dashboard ↑ confidence in Leon County
- ▶ **H2:** Viewing one's own county audit report ↑ confidence in one's county
- ▶ **H3:** Viewing the Leon County dashboard ↑ confidence in one's ballot, one's county, and Florida

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Hypotheses: Voter Confidence and Election Audits

- ▶ **H4:** Viewing one's own county audit report $\uparrow$ confidence in one's ballot, Leon County, and Florida
- ▶ **H5:** No audit results were available to view leads to lower confidence in one's own ballot, Leon County and Florida
- ▶ **H6:** Neither treatment affects confidence about other states
- ▶ **H7:** Treatment effects are larger among Republicans and Independents than Democrats

Hypotheses: Voter Confidence and Election Audits

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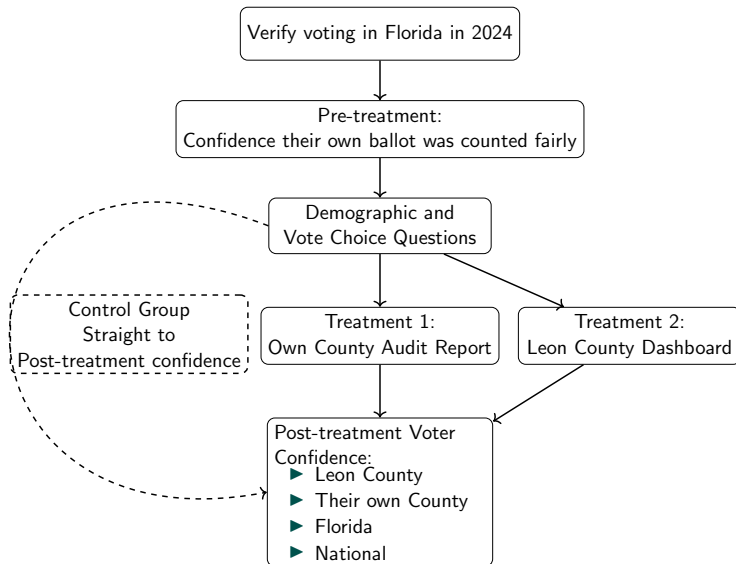
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- ▶ To test our hypotheses, we field a survey experiment with **Florida voters**, using a quasi pre-post design
- ▶ The survey was fielded twice in Florida, once on **YouGov** (n=1,088, 6/17 - 7/10) and once on **Prolific** (n=1,351, 7/29 - 10/13)
- ▶ For the main analysis, we combine these samples to maximize statistical power

Experiment Design



Sample Audit Report

Voting System Post-Election Audit Report

County: Osceola Date of Election: 11/05/24
Type of Audit (check applicable box): ☐ Manual ☒ Automated Independent

Precinct Number(s): all

Race (if Manual Audit): _____

1. Overall accuracy of the audit:

Discrepancy of less than .5%
Total accuracy = 99.6%

2. Description of any problems or discrepancies encountered:

Some races were off by less than .5%

3. Likely cause of such problems or discrepancies:

The two systems read ballots differently.

4. Recommended corrective action with respect to avoiding or mitigating such circumstances in future elections:

None

Check applicable box and sign below:

☒ We hereby certify that the report of the voting system audit performed for the election is accurate and that attached are precinct summary reports for each precinct audited.

☐ We hereby certify that a voting system audit was not done because a manual recount was conducted under s. 102.166, Florida Statutes.

Signatures of County Canvassing Board members:

KERRY TRICE
Printed Name
Robert L. Hansell
Printed Name
Chuck Darnick
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature
[Signature]
Signature
[Signature]
Signature

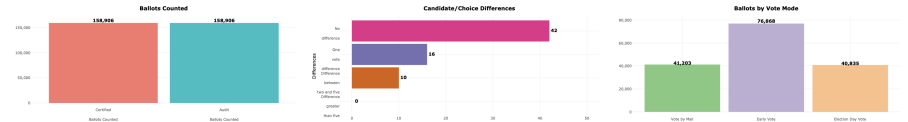
11/20/24
Date
11/20/24
Date
11/20/24
Date

Osceola County, FL, 2024 General Election, 11/05/2024 Comparison of Votes Cast									Nov 20, 2024 9:17:33 AM	
Choice	Ballots With Contest			Votes			Overvoted With Vote for this Choice	Undervoted Without Vote for this Choice		
	Comparison System	This System	Difference	Comparison System	This System	Difference				
President and Vice President (Vote for 1)										
REP Donald J. Trump	174,380	174,376	-4	86713	86710	-3	82		825	
DEM Kamala D. Harris	174,380	174,376	-4	84205	84204	-1	185		825	
GRE Jill Stein	174,380	174,376	-4	846	846	0	41		825	
Write-in	174,380	174,376	-4	513	513	0	28		825	
LPF Chase Oliver	174,380	174,376	-4	475	475	0	57		825	
PSL Claudia De la Cruz	174,380	174,376	-4	294	294	0	160		825	
ASP Peter Sorski	174,380	174,376	-4	133	133	0	45		825	
CPF Randall Terry	174,380	174,376	-4	110	110	0	56		825	
United States Senator (Vote for 1)										
REP Rick Scott	174,380	174,376	-4	85085	85083	-2	23		3,870	
DEM Debbie Mucarsel-Powell	174,380	174,376	-4	81586	81589	+3	30		3,870	
Ben Everidge	174,380	174,376	-4	1331	1331	0	13		3,870	
Tuan TQ Nguyen	174,380	174,376	-4	1305	1305	0	13		3,870	
LPF Feena Boncan	174,380	174,376	-4	1017	1017	0	9		3,870	
Write-in	174,380	174,376	-4	140	140	0	15		3,870	
Representative in Congress District 9 (Vote for 1)										
DEM Darren Soto	174,380	174,376	-4	90405	90407	+2	16		5,613	
REP Thomas Chalfoux	174,380	174,376	-4	74399	74401	+2	26		5,613	
Marous Carter	174,380	174,376	-4	3928	3928	0	12		5,613	
State Attorney 9th Judicial Circuit (Vote for 1)										
DEM Monique Worrell	174,380	174,376	-4	88074	88074	0	27		17,349	

Interactive Dashboard

Dashboard | [Crosstabs](#)

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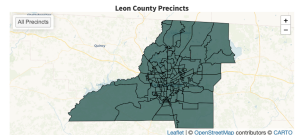


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ED-001+10003	Supreme Court Justice Renuke Francis	Yes	Voted for Choice	Click here!	1293	Election Day Vote

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Pre-treatment Confidence

How **confident** are you that **your ballot** was **counted correctly** during the 2024 general election?

☐ Very confident

☐ Somewhat confident

☐ Not too confident

☐ Not confident at all

Voter Confidence Measure: Own County

Thinking about vote counting throughout **your county**, on a scale of 0 (no confidence) to 10 (highest confidence), how **confident** are you that votes in **your county** were **counted correctly** during the 2024 election?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

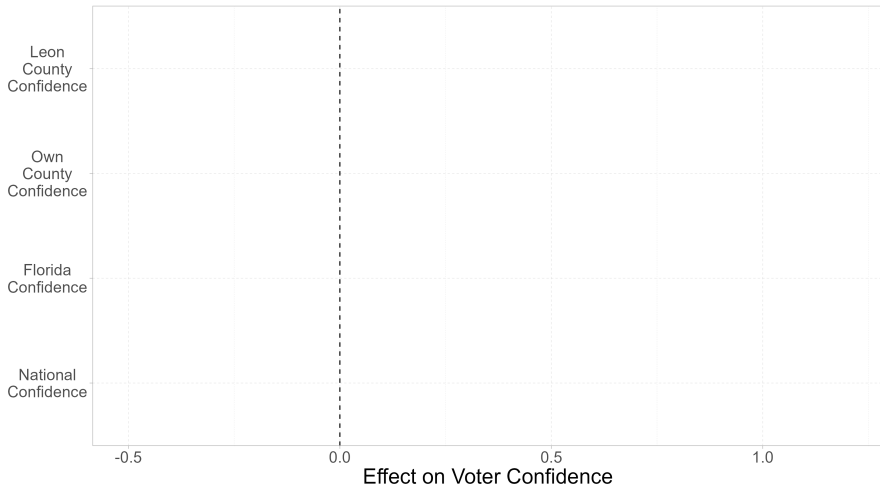
Level of confidence



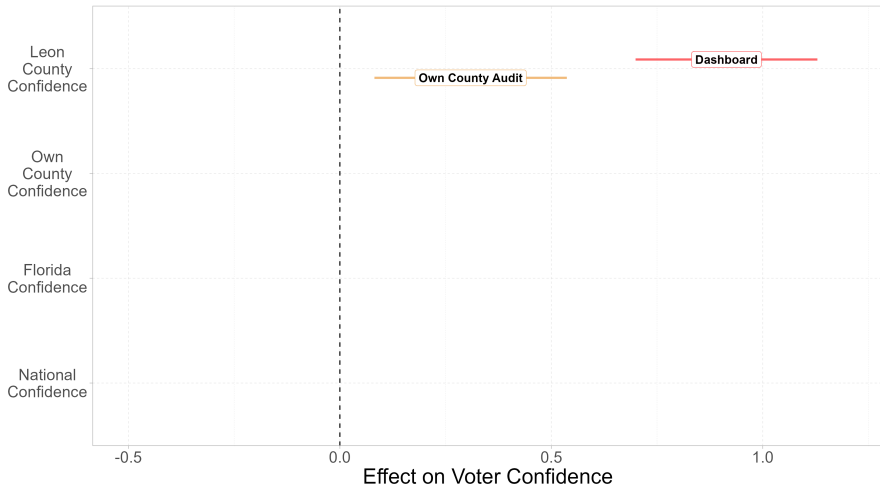
- ▶ To test our main set of hypotheses, we use **OLS regression** with random intercepts for data source (YouGov and Prolific)
- ▶ Treatment coded as a **categorical variable** with three levels (control, own audit, interactive dashboard)
- ▶ To assess partisan differences, we estimate a new model with our treatment indicator **interacted with** respondents' partisanship (measured pre-treatment)

Results

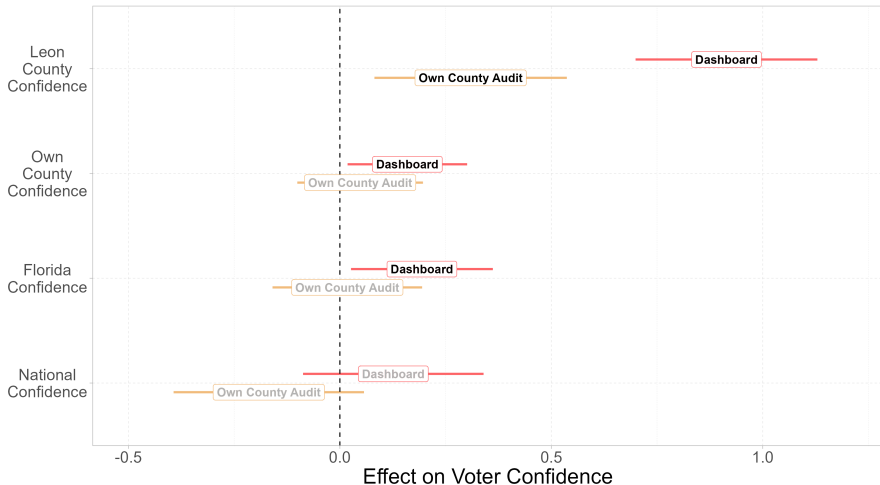
The Effect of Election Audits on Voter Confidence



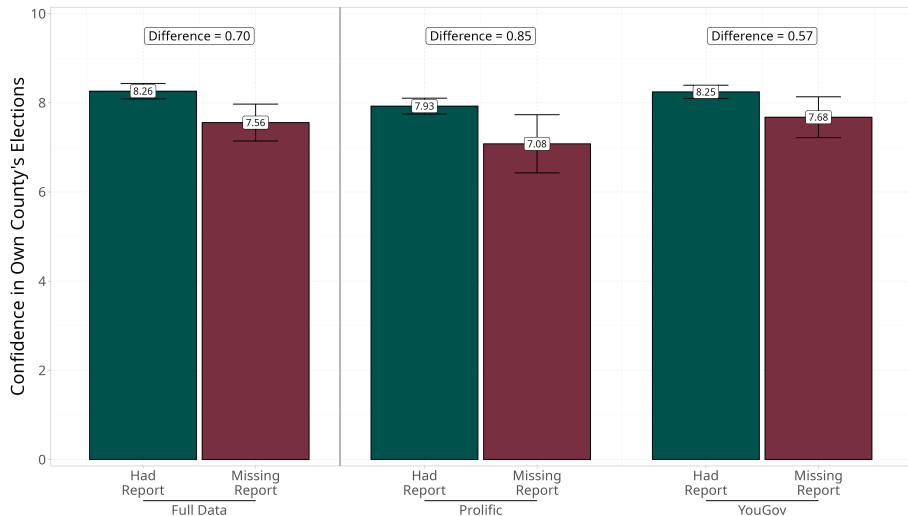
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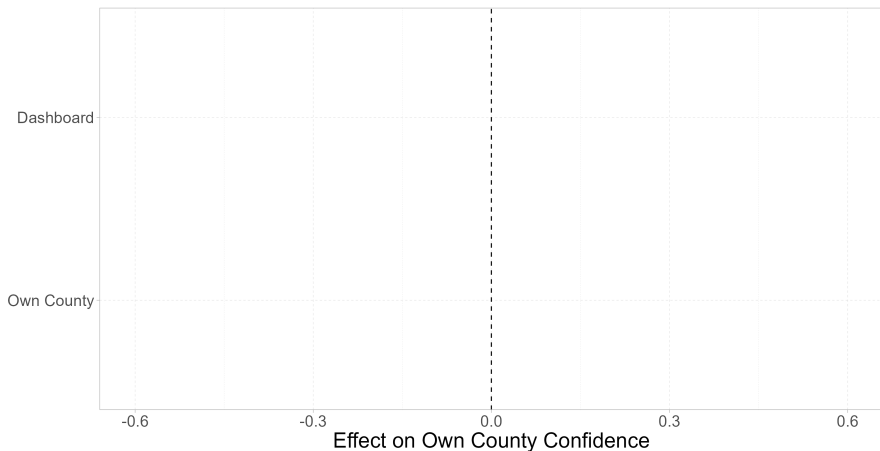


The Effect of No Post-Election Found Audits on Voter Confidence

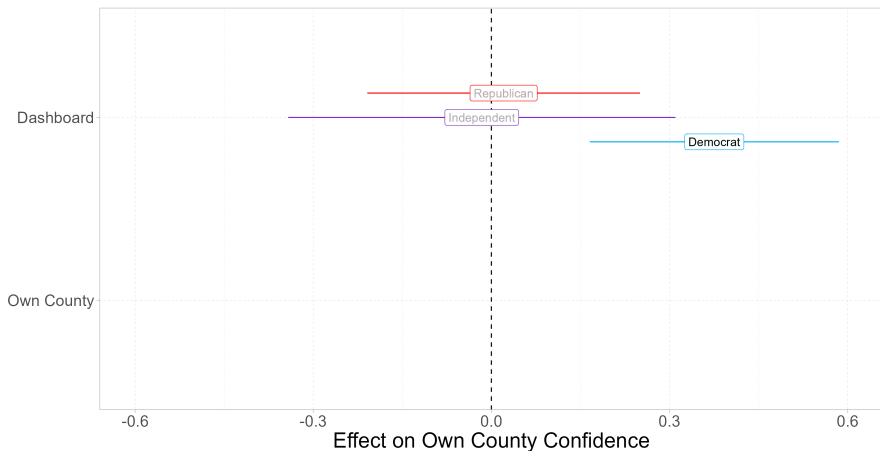


Results by Party

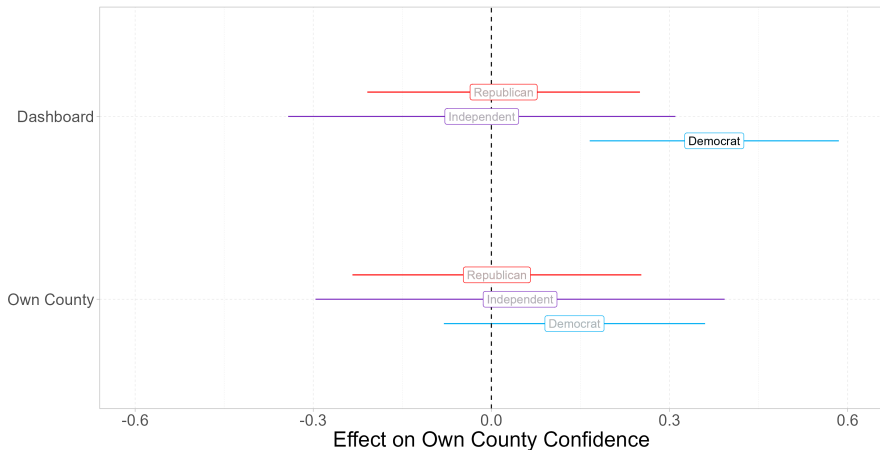
The Effect of Election Audits on Voter Confidence by Party



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The Effect of Election Audits on Voter Confidence by Party



Audits and Voter Confidence

- ▶ Viewing post-election audits can increase voter confidence and **format matters**.
- ▶ Interactive dashboards make audit results **accessible and understandable**.
- ▶ Interactive formats shows promise for building voter confidence.
- ▶ **Next:** test whether effects vary by **audit report quality**.
- ▶ **Future work:** replicate in other states and compare dashboard designs.

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Thank You!

Sarah Case skh24@fsu.edu

Lonna Atkeson latkeson@fsu.edu

Yimeng Li yimeng.li@fsu.edu

Austin Lloyd Cutler acutler@fsu.edu

Marli Wang Dunietz mdunietz@fsu.edu