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[00:00:16] **Speaker 1** In a move that had state election officials sounding the constitutional alarm, President Trump threatened in an all-cap social media post to get rid of mail-in ballots and target highly inaccurate, very expensive and seriously controversial voting machines. He said he would sign an executive order to do so. The president went on to post that mail- in voting results in massive voter fraud. Election experts say this is not true. The White House Press Office demurred on Trump's call a day later saying it could be a subject for Congress to take up. But we wanted to check in with a local election clerk for her take. Rock County Clerk Lisa Tollefson joins us now and thanks a lot for being here. So what was your reaction when you saw the call to abolish mail-in voting and voting machines?

[00:01:15] **Speaker 2** Just another piece that's trying to get some false information out there. To get some headlines, it's not accurate. Those voting machines are extremely accurate that we use, been through nine recounts, and it's now the machines that have issues. They're highly accurate. It's usually somebody didn't sign the envelope correctly, something small. It's human error, not the machines.

[00:01:38] **Speaker 1** Machines are accurate. Beside that point, can such a thing be done by presidential executive order?

[00:01:48] **Speaker 2** I believe Congress has the authority to change it, not the president. And each state actually sets their own rules for how they run elections, not not the President.

[00:02:00] **Speaker 1** So again, in your experience, does absentee or mail-in voting result in fraud or massive fraud?

[00:02:10] **Speaker 2** So there's a check and balance through our entire system. Some states mail out absentee ballots to every person. But in Wisconsin, we only mail you an absenteed ballot if you have requested it. And to request it, you have to be a registered voter. So there're lots of steps and checks and balances that we go through in the entire system, so it's not randomly, you just mail in a ballot with nothing to back it up. There's checks all the way through the system.

[00:02:39] **Speaker 1** What about voting machines or tabulators, how do they work?

[00:02:47] **Speaker 2** So tabulators are not connected to the internet. They are highly tested before they can be certified at the federal level and then at the state level. We do public tests to make sure everything's working correctly before the election. And then after the election, we do audits to verify that they counted correctly also. And again, if we need, we do a recount. And I've been through nine and again, they don't, it's not the machines that are the errors. It's human error. Highly accurate.

[00:03:20] **Speaker 1** Where does all of this leave clerks who maintain the integrity of elections when it comes to assuring voters, once again, that these things, as you say, are highly accurate?

[00:03:37] **Speaker 2** So it means we have to explain again over and over. Sometimes the biggest thing we can do is invite them to the public test or have them be poll workers. Once they learn the system and all the checks and balances in place, they feel more comfortable with it and they understand all the work that goes into an election.

[00:03:56] **Speaker 1** What is it like to ride the roller coaster of election conspiracies?

[00:04:05] **Speaker 2** Well, I don't have a boring job. It keeps me very entertained sometimes, some of the things that come in. Yeah, it's up and down. Boring might be nice every once in a while, but we keep ourselves very, very. We're explaining things constantly over and over. And sometimes that keeps us from doing other things we'd like to be doing. Getting ready for another election or training more poll workers or, you know, working right now where everyone's working on their budgets for next year at all the municipal levels. You know, a clerk does not just do elections. We are basically in the towns, they're the administrator of those municipalities. There's a lot of other jobs that we do. We don't just do election.

[00:05:00] **Speaker 1** Is there cause though to be highly vigilant when it comes to election security?

[00:05:07] **Speaker 2** We are always highly vigilant. We are constantly doing checks and balances. We are checking security tags and chain of custody. There's tons of pieces that we're always doing. They're always in place. So that never goes away. That's constant.

[00:05:25] **Speaker 1** Alright, well we leave it there and we wish you luck with attending to the many duties that you have on top of all of this. Rock County Clerk Lisa Tollefson, thank you. Well, I appreciate you explaining it to us over...