

## Clinton camp to support push for ballot recount

Written by Taipei Times

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Democratic candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton speaks at a campaign event in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on March 28.

□ **Photo: Reuters**

About three weeks after the US presidential election, Democratic candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton's campaign on Saturday said that it would participate in a recount process in Wisconsin incited by a third-party candidate and would join any potential recounts in two other closely contested states, Pennsylvania and Michigan.

The Clinton campaign held out little hope of success in any of the three states and said it had seen no "actionable evidence" of vote hacking that might taint the results or otherwise provide new grounds for challenging US president-elect Donald Trump's victory.

However, it suggested it was going along with the recount effort to assure supporters that it was doing everything possible to verify that hacking by Russia or other irregularities had not affected the results.

In a post on Medium, Marc Elias, the Clinton team's general counsel, said the campaign would take part in the Wisconsin recount being set off by Green Party candidate Jill Stein and would also participate if Stein made good on her plans to seek recounts in Michigan and Pennsylvania.

Clinton lost those three states by a total of little more than 100,000 votes, sealing her Electoral College defeat by Trump.

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The Clinton campaign had assailed Trump during the election for refusing to say he would abide by the results if he lost.

On Saturday, Trump responded to the campaign's decision to join the recount with a statement calling the effort "ridiculous" and "a scam by the Green Party."

He said that most of the money raised would not be spent on the recount. "The results of this election should be respected instead of being challenged and abused, which is exactly what Jill Stein is doing," Trump said.

In Wisconsin, Trump leads by 22,177 votes. In Michigan, he has a lead of 10,704 votes, and in Pennsylvania, his advantage is 70,638 votes.

Elias suggested in his essay that the Clinton campaign was joining the recount effort with little expectation that it would change the result.

However, many of the campaign's supporters, picking up on its frequent complaints of Russian interference in the election, have enthusiastically backed Stein's efforts, putting pressure on the Clinton team to show that it is exploring all options.

Elias used his essay to describe an intensive behind-the-scenes effort by the campaign to look for signs of Russian hacking activity or other irregularities in the vote count.

Stein filed for a recount in Wisconsin on Friday afternoon, about an hour before the deadline. She has raised more than US\$5 million for the effort, which would now turn to Michigan and Pennsylvania, where there are deadlines in the coming week.

In his post, Elias sounded less enthusiastic than the recount's many supporters.

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“Because we had not uncovered any actionable evidence of hacking or outside attempts to alter the voting technology,” he wrote, “we had not planned to exercise this option ourselves.”

“Now that a recount has been initiated in Wisconsin, we intend to participate in order to ensure the process proceeds in a manner that is fair to all sides,” he added.

If Stein pursues additional recounts, “we will take the same approach in those states as well,” he wrote.

However, he said that the “number of votes separating Trump and Clinton in the closest of these states — Michigan — well exceeds the largest margin ever overcome in a recount.”

The Clinton campaign will not contribute financially to the effort, which has been funded by small contributions.

However, it will pay to have its own lawyers present at the recount, campaign officials said.

The administration of US President Barack Obama on Friday issued a statement to the New York Times in response to questions about intelligence findings related to Russian interference in the election.

In the statement, it said it had concluded that the election was free of interference.

The administration on Saturday issued a second statement saying that “the federal government did not observe any increased level of malicious cyberactivity aimed at disrupting our electoral process on election day.”

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Clinton conceded the race to Trump early on Nov. 9, when it became clear that he would have a large margin of victory in the Electoral College.

However, as her lead in the popular vote has grown — exceeding 2 million votes — her base has increasingly pressured her to challenge the results.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2016/11/28](#)