



## POSITION PAPER

### HONEST AND VERIFIABLE ELECTIONS

The U.S. Constitution, supported by U.S. Supreme Court decisions, guarantees that all American Citizens have a right to vote and be heard on the issues. Historically, in order to avoid voter intimidation by unscrupulous politicians and their supporters, the secret ballot was introduced into our elections in the late 1800's. A paper ballot was placed in a receptacle of some sort and was hand counted at the local polling location after the polls were closed, usually in full view of the local citizens.

As the population grew, election officials turned to mechanical voting machines to help them count the ballots. Unfortunately, virtually all voting systems in use today, including electronic voting systems, punch-cards, lever machines and even hand counted paper ballots, are subject to some degree fraud and error. Significant constitutional questions arise when election officials remove the ballots or computerized record of the ballots from the machines and take them away from the public areas to count the votes in private. At the very least, the removal of the ballots from public view before counting them, gives corrupt election officials, or private election equipment vendors, the opportunity to tamper with the ballots.

Recent instances of voter fraud and miscounts, particularly involving the computerized systems, have shown that the security of the ballot box and the integrity of our election process may be in trouble, mainly because we are now counting the votes in secret and/or using machines with private proprietary software to do the counting. Currently, there are only four mega-computer companies that tally over 90% of the vote in the USA. Many local counties have delegated the "counting of the votes" to these private computer companies, who in turn conduct the vote count away from public view, in the name of security. There are computerized systems in use today that leave virtually no paper trails from which to audit the vote. Referring to the importance of counting the votes, former Russian Communist Dictator Joseph Stalin said: ***"The people who cast the votes decide nothing. The people who count the votes decide everything."*** The possibility definitely exists that corrupt people counting computerized votes in future elections in the USA could very well decide who wins certain elections, regardless of the actual vote count.

For the reasons stated previously, the United States must have an election process that is as close to machine-free and computer-free as possible, because in all computer and machine systems the ballots disappear from the sight and custody of the people before they are counted and posted in public. The only way the voters can tell for sure that their votes are recorded correctly and can't be changed is to see the ballots, with their own eyes, indelibly marked on a durable paper ballot. New Mexico recently transitioned to an all paper-ballot system using optical scanners to count the vote. Paper ballots are the least expensive, most secure form of voting available. Optical scanners quickly and accurately provide results. In the event a recount of votes is required, the ballots themselves are a permanent, verifiable record of the peoples' votes, not a private company's computer program.

With paper ballots we will have a permanent record and the fundamental principle of one person, one vote is safe. I support the "Voter Confidence and Increased Accessibility Act" (H.R. 550), to safeguard our nation's elections. Passage of H.R. 550 will mean that all voting systems must provide a voter-verifiable paper record so each voter can verify that their votes have been accurately recorded and so every elections official can conduct meaningful manual recounts and audits of election results. Without hard-copy records of the actual vote, neither election officials nor voters and candidates can be sure of the accuracy of the outcome. I also believe that the following amendments should be added to H.R. 550:

1. COUNT THE VOTES IN PUBLIC: Every Ballot cast in an election must be hand-counted immediately upon the polls closing, at the ballot box by the named poll watcher/officer and volunteer citizen witnesses acting as agents of any Candidate, or any Issue on that ballot. No ballots may be removed from the respective polling/counting site until a public posting has been made.
2. ENGLISH ONLY BALLOTS: all ballots must be in the English language.
3. REPEAL OF MOTOR-VOTER LAWS: - Motor-Voter Registration laws and all other laws, which enable illegal aliens and other non-US citizens to register to vote must be eliminated.

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