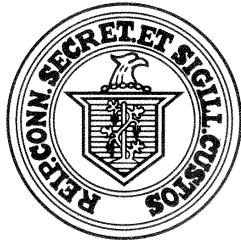


***OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE
STATE***



SECRETARY OF THE STATE
30 TRINITY STREET
HARTFORD, CT 06106

***SUMMARY REPORT OF 2003 DEMONSTRATION
PROJECT OF ELECTRONIC VOTING EQUIPMENT***

*CONNECTICUT PUBLIC ACT NO. 03-7 "AN ACT CONCERNING A
DEMONSTRATION PROJECT FOR THE USE OF ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT FOR
THE CASTING AND COUNTING OF BALLOTS AND PROHIBITING THE USE OF
PUNCH-CARD VOTING MACHINES"*



SECRETARY OF THE STATE
30 TRINITY STREET
HARTFORD, CT 06106

To: Members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee

From: Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz

Re: Summary of report regarding the demonstration of electronic voting equipment and corresponding recommendations

Date: January 30, 2004

Introduction

Public Act No. 03-7, "An Act Concerning a Demonstration Project for the Use of Electronic Equipment for the Casting and Counting of Ballots and Prohibiting the Use of Punch-Card Voting Machines" requires that the Secretary of the State, not later than February first in the year following the use of such equipment, submit a summary of any report issued by the State Elections Enforcement Commission regarding such demonstration and any recommendations the Secretary deems appropriate to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly have cognizance of matters relating to elections.

In compliance with this requirement, I am hereby submitting this report in accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes to the Government Administration and Elections Committee for its review.

History of 2003 Demonstration Project

Public Act No. 03-7, "An Act Concerning a Demonstration Project for the Use of Electronic Equipment for the Casting and Counting of Ballots and Prohibiting the Use of Punch-Card Voting Machines" allowed the Secretary of the State to conduct a demonstration project of electronic voting equipment in at least three towns during the 2003 municipal elections. Below you will find a brief outline of the preliminary steps taken by my office in preparation for the 2003 demonstration project.

- 1) **The Secretary of the State was given authority to conduct a demonstration project of electronic voting machines for the elections in 2003.** Pursuant to Public Act No. 03-7, my office conducted a demonstration of electronic voting equipment in eight towns in November 2003. These towns were West Hartford, Southington, Middletown, Hartford, Cromwell, Wilton, Griswold, and Sharon;

- 2) **The Secretary of the State could only authorize the use of electronic voting machines in towns that had properly approved their use by joint approval from their legislative body and the registrars of voters of the town.** My office sent letters to all registrars of voters indicating the opportunity to participate in the demonstration project. If the registrars of voters were interested in such project, they were instructed to contact their legislative body to obtain approval for such participation. The registrars of voters were also instructed to indicate in such approval how many voting districts would be used during their town's participation in the demonstration project;
- 3) **The Secretary of the State used her best efforts to include towns from different regions of the state and having a range of population levels.** My office first had to gather any towns that were willing to participate in the demonstration project and that had properly authorized such participation by a vote of their legislative body as described above. After such participating towns were identified, my office sorted such towns by corresponding Congressional Districts and chose, by lot, the eight towns that then would participate in such project. All efforts were made to solicit towns for participation that had a range of population and that were from different regions of the state;
- 4) **The Secretary of the State secured sufficient numbers of electronic voting machines for use in the demonstration project.** My office solicited various electronic voting machine companies for participation in the demonstration project. My office required that any electronic voting machine company that wanted to participate in such demonstration project have NASED Certification for the subject machine. NASED Certification is an independent certification process recognized by the Federal Government that ensures that any electronic voting machine used during an election properly functions, records and counts all votes cast on such machine during any election. In addition, each participating voting machine company was required to provide, free of charge, all machines and technicians used for training in each town and during the election;
- 5) **The Secretary of the State provided adequate training to all local election officials involved.** My office contacted the participating electronic voting machine vendors and mandated that they provide all local election officials with "as much training" as necessary to educate the local election officials on the functionality and procedures of the relevant voting system;
- 6) **The Secretary of the State facilitated meetings between registrars of voters and voting machine companies.** My office required that each participating registrar of voters and each participating voting machine company meet at my office in Hartford to discuss upcoming training opportunities and local events to educate the public on the new voting equipment. My office also required that each registrar of voters provide updates on the progress of such training for the general public;

- 7) **The Secretary of the State prescribed specifications for the security, testing, set-up, operation and canvassing of the equipment, the ballots used for the equipment, and the training of election officials in the use of the equipment.** My office produced a unique *Moderator's Handbook* for each town and different voting machine company participating in the demonstration project. Such handbook included provisions for the security, testing, set-up, operation, canvassing and ballot set-up of the equipment. In addition, my office facilitated meetings between the registrars of voters of each town and the participating voting machine companies to ensure that proper training and demonstration sessions would be scheduled for each town;
- 8) **The Secretary of the State conducted an exit poll of electors concerning their experience using the voting equipment.** My office contracted with the University of Connecticut's Center for Survey Research Analysis. The University of Connecticut generated the exit survey and provided personnel to administer such survey. The survey was designed to be self-administered, however, to ensure non-partisanship, my office also provided for representatives of the League of Women Voters to be present to monitor and assist during such polling activity;
- 9) **The State Elections Enforcement Commission reviewed the results of any exit poll and surveyed the volunteers and towns on the use of such equipment and submitted such report to the Secretary of the State.** The State Elections Enforcement Commission submitted such report to the Secretary of the State;
- 10) The Secretary of the State shall submit a summary of the State Elections Enforcement Commission's report to the General Assembly not later than February 1, 2004.**

Summary

The Secretary of the State conducted a demonstration project of electronic voting systems in eight towns during the November 2003 elections. The towns that participated and type of equipment used in each town is as follows:

TOWN	VOTING SYSTEM
West Hartford	Full Face
Southington	Touch Screen w/ Receipt
Middletown	Full Face
Hartford	Touch Screen
Cromwell	Full Face
Griswold	Touch Screen w/ Receipt
Sharon	Touch Screen w/ Receipt
Wilton	Touch Screen w/ Receipt

A Full Face voting system is one that allows the voters to review all candidates and all offices at one time without changing pages. All choices made by a particular voter appear on the ballot screen at once.

Alternatively, a Touch Screen voting system is a system that only shows the candidates for a single office at once. Voters are allowed to make their choices for a particular office and after such selection or selections are made, a new office and new candidates appear on the ballot. During the 2003 demonstration project, Touch Screen Voting Systems with a paper receipt and Touch Screen Voting Systems without a paper receipt were used. Both Full Face voting systems used were not able to print a voter verifiable receipt during the election but were able to produce a verifiable receipt after the polls had closed.

All electronic voting systems used for this demonstration project contained audio and visual components for use by the disabled community.

Overall Voter Reaction

The overall voter reaction to the new electronic voting equipment was positive. The Official Exit Poll Survey Results from the University of Connecticut indicates that 92% of the voters surveyed rate the new technology positively as either “excellent” (65%) or “good” (27%).

In addition, 92% of the voters surveyed were “extremely confident” (51%) or “confident” (41%) in the new technology and that their votes were accurately recorded and cast.

Finally, voters gave the machines an overall ease-of-use rating of 6.23 out of a possible 7. High ratings were also given in the following categories: Understanding how to vote (6.31), seeing all the elections on the ballot (6.32), finding the candidate of choice (6.39), changing the vote (6.25), confirming the vote (6.45), and seeing the party affiliation of each candidate (6.42).

Overall Election Official Reaction

The overall election official reaction to the new electronic voting equipment was positive. Election officials indicated that they were pleased with the instructions that they received from my office and from the voting machine representatives. In addition to advanced instruction, all voting machine representatives that were present on election day were sworn in as election officials for the State of Connecticut. This allowed them to appear in the polls during the election and to assist with any machine problems that may have arisen during election day.

In an unofficial survey conducted by the State Elections Enforcement Commission 64 of 81 election officials indicated that they preferred the electronic voting systems to the lever voting systems used in prior elections, 15 had no opinion and 2 disagreed. In that same poll, 84% of the officials surveyed found the electronic voting systems “easy to

use” and 91% of the officials surveyed felt that the machines provided adequate privacy for the voters.

Finally, 52 of the 62 election officials responding felt that it took “less” or “about the same” time to tabulate the results from the electronic voting systems as it did from the lever voting machines. Ten of the election officials surveyed indicated that it took “more” time to tabulate the results from the electronic machines.

The State Election Enforcement Commission indicates, “It is clear that the election officials expressed a strong preference for the electronic machines.”

State Election Enforcement Commission Report

The State Election Enforcement Commission Report “SEEC Report” was submitted to my office on January 2, 2004. As part of this report, the State Election Enforcement Commission surveyed the volunteers used by my office to administer the exit poll through the University of Connecticut, summarized the results of such report, and created their own unofficial survey that was administered to local election officials. As stated above, the SEEC Report indicated that both voters and election officials were both impressed and satisfied with the electronic voting systems. 92% of voters rated the electronic voting systems as either “excellent” or “good” and 64 of 81 election officials felt the electronic voting systems performed better than any previous voting system used in Connecticut.

The State Election Enforcement Commission raised a few issues that are in need of explanation:

- 1) No survey comparison was made between lever voting systems and electronic voting systems. The reason that my office and the University of Connecticut did not make this comparison is because Public Act No. 03-7 specifically states, “The Secretary of the State may use volunteers to conduct an exit poll of electors concerning their experience using the voting equipment.” I felt that any exit poll performed was to focus on the voter’s experience using the new electronic equipment as indicated by Public Act No. 03-7.
- 2) There was no comparison made between electronic voting systems because the demographics of the voting districts were not similar. Public Act No. 03-7 required that a town obtain joint approval from both the registrars of voters and the legislative body of the municipality before such town could participate in the demonstration project. Therefore, my office conducted such demonstration project in compliance with the Public Act by only choosing from those towns that had qualified for participation.
- 3) The Town of Wilton experienced a computer failure for twelve minutes. My office was aware of this problem on election day. We advised both the local election officials and the voting machine technicians to work on the problem. An acceptable solution was reached in approximately twelve minutes. In comparison, this time period was short when compared to the difficulties experienced by the Towns of New London and Bethel

where the lever voting machines were improperly set-up and shut down for a majority of the day.

Recommendations

As required by Public Act No. 03-7 my office must provide recommendations with regard to electronic voting systems. Pursuant to the Help America Vote Act of 2002 my office would strongly recommend that the State of Connecticut perform a phase-in of electronic voting systems as outlined in the State of Connecticut's Help America Vote Act State Plan. Such phase-in would be complete by 2006 as required by the Help America Vote Act. The phase-in would be conducted as follows:

The State of Connecticut must place one electronic voting system in each polling location in Connecticut. After such initial step, Connecticut would require each municipality to assess the overall condition of their voting equipment and submit a plan to the Secretary of the State indicating whether the municipality will seek to replace all lever voting systems; only a portion of the lever voting systems; or continue to rely solely on such systems for all elections in the municipality. Such plan must also detail the municipality's plan of implementation if lever-voting systems are found to be non-compliant with the Help America Vote Act and ultimately need to be replaced. Upon receipt of such plan, Connecticut would review procurement options for the electronic voting systems and create schedules, work plans and trainings required to implement such plans.

Conclusion

The demonstration project of electronic voting systems went extremely well. 92% of voters rated the electronic voting systems as either "excellent" or "good" and 64 of 81 election officials felt the electronic voting systems performed better than any previous voting system used in Connecticut. The State Election Enforcement Commission stated, "It is clear that the election officials expressed a strong preference for the electronic machines". In addition, in a separate letter issued to my office by the State Elections Enforcement Commission, the Commission stated a preference for electronic voting systems as long as such system had some sort of paper verifiable audit trail.