

# THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK COUNCIL MEMBER SIMCHA FELDER



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## *FELDER AND NYPIRG PROTEST FEDERAL TAKEOVER OF STATE VOTING MACHINE STANDARDS*

**City Hall** - Council Member Simcha Felder and the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) held a press conference on the steps of City Hall protesting a proposal by the Department of Justice (DOJ) that would have federal courts take control of voting machine selection from the state for the upcoming 2008 Presidential Election.

"The DOJ proposal to force New York to use voting machines that have proven to cause problems in other states is outrageous. On top of that, the DOJ wants a replacement of every lever machine in the state in less than a year. The proposal will cause unnecessary confusion and lines at the polls, in addition to security concerns that could undermine confidence in election results" Felder said, "The aim of the Help America Vote Act was to ensure every voter had an opportunity to vote. The DOJ proposal will do more to harm voters than help them."

"DOJ's running roughshod over New York. They seem unconcerned about the chaos and confusion a full scale replacement of our lever machines could mean in the upcoming Presidential Election less than a year away," said Neal Rosenstein, Election Specialist for the New York Public Interest Research Group. "To make matters worse, DOJ is insisting that we use weak voting machine standards that are more than five years old. Who in their right mind would want to buy a five year old computer that's been shown to be hackable and insecure when they could get a newer model tested to higher standards," he added.

"The DOJ proposal is an unnecessary step in the wrong direction. The proposal would only work against all of the measures New York State has taken to ensure that new voting machines are held to the highest standard possible. We have waited a long time for new, secure, voter friendly voting machines and to force the state now to select machines that do not meet our current standards would be a huge disappointment," said Andrea Senteno, Program Associate for Citizens Union. "Making ballot marking devices more available to voters throughout the city and as New York prepares for full implementation of new voting machines that meet current standards would be a much better use of our efforts and resources than placing substandard voting machines in every poll place with less than a year to prepare."

The 2002 Help America Vote Act mandated that states modernize their voting machine standards. Currently, there are no voting machines that meet New York State's standards.

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