



MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD SIX

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District Manager

December 22, 2006

Hon. Eliot J. Spitzer
Governor Elect
120 Broadway, 25th Fl.
New York, NY 10271

Dear Gov. Spitzer:

At the December 13th Full Board meeting of Community Board 6, the Board adopted the following resolution:

Re: Resolution urging the New York State Board of Elections to promptly certify Precinct Based/Optical Scan voting systems for procurement by the local Boards of Elections and urging the New York City Board of Elections to select a Precinct Based/Optical Scan system as the new voting technology for the City of New York.

Whereas, honest, observable, and easily-verified public elections constitute the foundation of representative democracy; and

Whereas, public confidence in the outcome of elections depends on voting technology that is reliable, secure, and easy to use; and

Whereas, the Federal Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) was intended as a response to the concerns that surrounded the outcome of the Presidential Election of 2000; and

Whereas, HAVA requires states to modernize elections and undertake measures to increase voter participation; and

Whereas, New York State enacted the Election Reform and Modernization Act (ERMA) in order to comply with HAVA; and

Whereas, ERMA requires local Boards of Elections to select new voting technology to replace the mechanical lever machines which are currently used throughout the state; and

Whereas, under ERMA, local boards may select either a Precinct Based/Optical Scan (PB/OS) voting system or a Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) voting system; and

Whereas, under ERMA, the New York State Board of Elections has the responsibility for certification of the various models that will be available to the local boards; and

Whereas, the New York City Board of Elections must work diligently to select and begin planning immediately to make a transition to the use of a new voting technology; and

Whereas, the additional advantages to paper ballots are that they can be used by disabled voters through accessible ballot-marking devices and can also be easily used by those for whom English is not their primary language; and

Whereas, paper ballots avoid issues with fraud detection, prevention, correct errors and tampering because they can be securely stored and handled, which enables election observers to meaningfully witness election procedures and vote-counting; and

Whereas, paper ballots facilitate easy and observable recounts; and

Whereas, Optical scanners in the polling site would detect errors in ballot-markings such as overvotes, undervotes, and stray marks, and enable voters to correct such errors before their ballot is cast; and

Whereas, optical scanners have proven their reliability by being successfully used in elections nationwide for over thirty years, and are currently used by thirty-five percent of American voters in forty-six percent of American jurisdictions; and

Whereas, optical scanners have been successfully programmed, operated, and maintained by public employees in New York State in agencies such as the Division of the Lottery, the New York State Education Department and the Department of Motor Vehicles, as well as by our county Boards of Elections in all boroughs of the City of New York for use in counting absentee ballots; and

Whereas, optical scanners can easily be programmed by bipartisan, technical staff at the New York City Board of Elections without the need for ongoing involvement of vendors; and

Whereas, PB/OS systems will be significantly less expensive than DRE systems; and

Whereas, it should be noted that optical scanner equipment is less delicate than electronic voting equipment and has a longer lifespan; and

Whereas, PB/OS systems can provide the advantages of quick election-day results and accessibility without the risks associated with electronic voting; and

Whereas, voter and public confidence would be lowered by the use of electronic ballots which are recorded in a way that no voter or observer can actually witness; and

Whereas, DRE voting systems make errors and tampering difficult to detect, prevent, or correct; and

Whereas, the use of wireless communications capability would open an electronic ballot box to tampering by anyone in the world; and

Whereas, other jurisdictions have experienced severe problems with electronic voting systems which have depressed voter confidence and prompted lawsuits by candidates and voters as a result of the many irregularities experienced with such systems; now,

Therefore be it

Resolved, that Community Board 6 urges the New York State Board of Elections to promptly certify Precinct Based/Optical Scan voting systems for procurement by the local Boards of Elections and urges the New York City Board of Elections to select a Precinct Based/Optical Scan system that provides a paper trail backup as the new voting technology for the City of New York.

VOTE: 40 in Favor 0 Opposed 3 Abstention 0 Not Entitled

Yours truly,



Toni Carlina
District Manager

Cc: Hon. Michael Bloomberg
Hon. Betsy Gotbaum
Hon. William Thompson
Hon. Scott Stringer
Hon. Carolyn Maloney
Hon. Tom Duane
Hon. Liz Krueger
Hon. Jonathan Bing
Hon. Richard Gottfried

Hon. Christine Quinn
Hon. Dan Garodnick
Hon. Jessica Lappin
Hon. Rosie Mendez
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