

Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton
125th Assembly District
555 Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York 12248
(518) 455-5444



Assemblywoman Sandy Galef
90th Assembly District
641 Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York 12248
(518) 455-5348

**“Scan and Be Sure” Campaign
A Campaign to Require Optical Scan
Paper Ballot Voting in New York State**

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Contact: Assemblywoman Sandy Galef 518-455-5348
Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton 518-455-5444

Assemblywomen Sandy Galef and Barbara Lifton continue to promote their statewide “Scan and Be Sure” Campaign, A.5170 of 2007, regarding the adoption of paper ballot/optical scanner voting with ballot marking devices. Paper ballots will ensure a paper trail and ballot markers will provide assistance to those with disabilities.

“It all started with the faulty election in 2000. Working within the time frame to obtain funding towards new voting systems under the Help America Vote Act, Florida found itself purchasing Direct Recording Electronic voting machines [DREs]. Now, the Governor of Florida, Charlie Crist, has discovered that the wrong choice was made, recommending all of Florida to switch to paper ballot/optical scan voting machines,” said Assemblywoman Galef, 90th Assembly District. “Let us not make the same mistake as Florida and other states and let us purchase optical scan from day one. It is imperative not to waste taxpayers’ dollars on poorly operating voting machines.”

Numerous states, such as New Mexico, Maryland, Ohio, and recently Florida as mentioned above, have decided to change from DREs to optical scan/paper ballot voting devices. This voting system provides a secure, simple, accessible, verifiable, transparent, and economical approach. Furthermore, the optical scanning machines can be coupled with AutoMARK, a technology enabling those with special needs the ability to vote more independently.

“It is clear from troubling reports from around the country that DREs are not accurately recording votes and do not have the transparency and accountability we need in our elections. The only system to assure that accountability is the optical scanner with the original paper ballot marked by the voter,” Lifton said, of 125th Assembly District.

“Voters can be assured that their ballots will be counted with a paper based system because they are marked directly by the voter. DREs cannot provide that kind of transparency,” said Aimee Allaud, Elections Specialist, NYS League of Women Voters.

According to Bo Lipari, Executive Director of New Yorkers for Verified Voting, “New York must avoid the expensive mistakes made by other states who have invested millions in failed touch screen voting technology. The Legislature must do the right thing and require paper ballots, optical scanners, and accessible ballot markers in every polling place. It is the only choice that makes sense for New York.”

“Computerized ATM style voting machines have been nothing but trouble, and this legislation would make sure the state doesn’t waste huge sums of money on their purchase” said Neal Rosenstein, Government Reform Coordinator of the New York Public Interest Research Group, (NYPIRG). “Optical scan is a tested, reliable alternative that results in fewer lost votes,” he added.

"After studying electronic voting systems with the nation's leading usability experts for nearly two years, the Brennan Center has come out strongly for the use of optical scan machines throughout New York," said Lawrence Norden, Counsel for the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law. "Put simply, the kind of DREs that New York is considering are confusing and will likely result in the loss of hundreds of thousands of votes every election. That's reason enough to support the purchase and use of optical scan machines."

This press conference was joined by Galef’s and Lifton’s assembly colleagues, and New Yorkers for Verified Voters, NYS League of Women Voters, NYPIRG, Independent Living Center of the Hudson Valley, and Sierra Club.