

## **Correcting Fallacies about Voting Technology Options for New York - - -**

*SEQUOIA voting systems*

### **ACCESSIBILITY OF OPTICAL SCAN TECHNOLOGY**

To date, only DRE equipment has been certified to provide accessible voting required by federal mandates.

While optical scan ballots meet some provisions of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), there is no federally approved equipment that would allow an optical scan ballot system to meet the accessibility requirements mandated by Section 301 of the Act. The only option currently available would be the addition of one accessible DRE in each polling place, effectively doubling the hardware cost. A prototype for a costly machine that would assist disabled voters in marking a paper ballot has been categorically rejected by the America Association of Persons with Disabilities as an unacceptable violation of the HAVA accessibility mandates.

### **COST COMPARISON OF DIM vs OPTICAL SCAN**

DRE systems are considerably less expensive to operate. Optical scan systems require two different types of hardware for each election and require costly printed ballots. Both the upfront hardware costs and the long term recurring costs are less expensive with DRE equipment than they are with optical scan technology.

A DRE machine, used by all voters regardless of disability, would cost roughly \$7500 per ED while an optical scanner (\$5000) and a separate accessible machine (\$7500) would cost \$12,500 per electoral district.

The purchase and operation of a DRE system over a ten year period would be less than half the cost of an optical scan system when accessibility equipment and recurring ballot printing costs are factored into county budgets.

### **PROTECTION AGAINST COUNTING ERRORS**

Electronic voting eliminates the problems of ambiguously marked ballots which led the nation to question the integrity of voting in Florida 2000. The results of optical scan results routinely change between the machine count of votes and a manual hand tally of ballots. In a Washington State gubernatorial recount, the hand count of ballots included 1,717 more votes for governor than the machine count and changed the result of the election.

### **REDUCING AND EQUALIZING RESIDUAL VOTE RATES**

A Cal-Tech-MIT study of residual vote rates in 2004 indicated that the three states with the best residual vote rates in the country were the only three states that used DRE equipment statewide (NV, MD, GA).

A recent University of Missouri study also demonstrated that during the 2000 election, error rates on optical scan equipment doubled in jurisdictions with heavy concentrations of minority voters.

### **EASE OF USE FOR SENIORS**

Some groups have attempted to argue that senior citizens are intimidated by electronic voting systems. Nothing could be further from the truth; in reality, seniors have been among the biggest supporters for electronic voting because of the large, easy to read type and the speed and simplicity of completing the ballot.

### **OPTICAL SCAN LIMITATIONS IN ELECTORAL DISTRICTS**

In an attempt to misstate the higher cost of optical scan voting solutions, some have argued that one

ballot scanner could be used for multiple voting jurisdictions. In practice, each Electoral District must have its own optical scanner staffed by its own poll workers to avoid logistical chaos at the polls on Election Day.

#### DURABILITY AND LONGEVITY OF EQUIPMENT

DRE and precinct-based optical scan equipment were both introduced to the market at roughly the same time. There are several instances of counties replacing optical scan technology with DRE equipment, but very few cases where DRE equipment has been removed and replaced with optical scanners. Because of the flexibility of the software incorporated in the DRE equipment, the electronic voting systems have a much greater level of upgradeability and flexibility to ensure continued compliance with constantly evolving federal voting system requirements.

21 East 3rd Street, Suite 301, Jamestown, NY 14701 ☎ 7677 Oakport Street, Suite 800, Oakland, CA 94621 ☎ 510-875-1200