

December 12,2007

The Honorable Judge Gary Sharpe
US District Court
James T. Foley Building
445 Broadway
Albany, New York 12207

Your Honor

As a Voting Machine Technician for Washington County (contractual basis) I am one of the two people in the county who are most intimately involved with these devices, even more so than the Commissioners of Elections. The current impasse concerning replacing the lever style voting machines as you know needs to be rectified.

We are at this juncture through the insistence of the New York State Board of Elections that we must have a paper trail feature incorporated into the new machines. Unfortunately this was not the state of the art at the outset and try though they may, the manufacturers of the D R E machines have yet to come up with a satisfactory system. The Federal Law does not require this feature, so the other States have been able to comply with the Law using the various machines on the market.

Pursuing the stopgap measure of placing one Optical Scan vote counter plus one A D A compliant Ballot Marker at each polling site will mean that counties like Washington County will be totally and permanently committed to these (plan "B") devices. These ES&S Automarks are causing big problems in Florida and California.

The New York State Board of Elections and the County Boards of Elections have, for the past several years, been asking each other to decide which machines will be suitable. The State can not come up with a list of machines to choose from and yet they want the County Boards to make a choice.

I suggest that both the State Board of Elections and (to expedite matters) the County Boards of Supervisors be removed from oversight of selection and purchase of voting machines in New York State. The County Boards of Elections will find great relief in being empowered to do the job that they can do best. They have studied the machines currently being offered and stand ready to order. A great deal of training and preparation work must be done prior to the election in the fall of 2008.

Please act decisively, it will benefit all concerned. Thank you.

Sincerely



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