

Iowa Voters Deserve a Verifiable Paper Trail

A Brief History

During the last legislative session, the Iowa Senate unanimously passed a piece of legislation – **SF 351** – that called for verifiable paper trails. It was supported by the ICLU, League of Women Voters, Secretary of State, AFSCME, AARP Iowa, Iowa State Education Association, UAW, Laborers, and AFL-CIO. Following passage, it was immediately messaged to the Iowa House (March 24, 2005).

The legislation has been stalled in a sub-committee of the State Government Committee since that time. This is due in large part to the efforts of the House Leadership (republican), Iowa State Association of Counties, and Iowa State Association of County Supervisors.

In May, Secretary of State Chet Culver presented the intention of local county officials in relation to the HAVA (Help America Vote Act). At that time **47 of Iowa's 99 counties stated their intention was to purchase DREs** (Direct Recording Electronic voting machines, touch-screen machines which would not produce a paper trail).



We Need A Paper Trail

Proponents of touch-screen voting systems, such as Diebold Election Systems, are claiming that a simple printout at the end of the day will suffice. A recount in this scenario would not supply any new information, but only an exact representation of what the machine has already reported. In order for DREs to be widely used and trusted, they also need to produce a voting receipt.

One example of this is in Nevada, which became the first state to certify and thereby meet federal qualifications for the voter-verified paper audit trail (V-PAT) printer to be used on touch-screen voting machines. If a voter sees a mistake, the vote can be voided and re-cast. The final printed receipt is then archived as a permanent record of the vote. In the event of a recount, the paper ballot can be compared to the computer tally.

All the advantages of the DREs are maintained and a paper record is produced as a safeguard.

Iowa House Sub-Committee

- Rep. Libby Jacobs (Chair, R) -
H D 60, Polk Co
- Rep. Carmine Boal (R) -
H D 70, Polk Co
- Rep. Mary Gaskill (D) -
H D 93, Wapello Co
- Rep. Sandy Greiner (R) -
H D 89, Washington Co
- Rep. Todd Taylor (D) -
H D 34, Linn Co
- Rep. Linda Upmeyer (R) -
H D 12, Hancock Co
- Rep. Roger Wendt (D) -
H D 2, Woodbury Co

You Can Make A Difference

This piece of legislation – SF 351 – needs to come out of sub-committee and onto the floor of the Iowa House. To the left, you'll find a list of the Iowa Representatives assigned to the State Government sub-committee. If you are a constituent of any of these legislators, please contact them before the next session begins in January and ask they bring SF 351 out of committee.

If you are a member of any of the groups listed above which endorsed this legislation in the Iowa Senate, please contact your group and ask them to also press for the legislation's passage in the Iowa House.

Overall, we need to raise voter awareness throughout Iowa on this issue. **Yes, there will be a cost involved in order to make all machines - especially the newest purchased - produce a verifiable paper trail. The cost to our democracy if we do not, however, will be staggering. If the County Auditors follow through with their plans, roughly 48% of Iowa voters will be casting their votes on machines which do not produce receipts and, therefore, cannot be audited.**

Iowa Voters Need SF 351