

Dear Secretary of State Bowen,

I hereby present, personally and on behalf of Safevote, Inc. of San Diego, Calif., our testimony for the "Public Comments" section of the ongoing hearing on the Future of Voting in California.

Respectfully, I recommend that California revisits in earnest the issue of online voting for public elections in California and also for the military and voters overseas.

This request is substantiated and discussed in a technical paper (invited by and scheduled for publication by Springer Verlag) that provides all the necessary scientific evidence and framework for our assertions below. A copy is available online at [http://safevoteonline.com/doc/TTES\\_edgerck15.pdf](http://safevoteonline.com/doc/TTES_edgerck15.pdf)

Since 1999, we have been participating in the dialogue on the future of voting in California. Our work included the influential technical newsletter "The Bell" on voting technology, available online at [www.thebell.net](http://www.thebell.net), and an official shadow online election organized by the Calif. SoS in 2000. We have run hundreds of elections worldwide, further improving the Safevote technology, including technical verification by experts abroad, such as with the Swedish Ministry of Justice.

Still, we know that ten years on after 2000, old viewpoints are frequently rehashed on the limitations of online voting. However, technological change and advances have been so rapid that the "beta" critique of online voting is no longer correct .

I speak in the interest of an accurate, accessible, logical and fair-minded view on improving voting, where the current SoS position should be updated, specially in regard to previous opinions such as:

*"Email can be intercepted, and voting Web sites can be hacked or taken down by malicious attacks. There are not even agreed-upon standards for what safety measures are necessary."*

*"In many cases, it is not possible to ensure a secret ballot when votes are cast online or by e-mail."*

Whereas other technologies indeed showed these limitations, this information has been incorrect since 2000, when a more advanced engine, Safevote, was used and tested in California, including a public hacker test that captured the world media attention. In fact, in the national election of 2000, in the official online shadow election organized by the State of California, Safevote contradicted

all the negative points mentioned above.

Today, and since 2004 by adding the ZSentry technology, Safevote can also provide a secure solution of online voting using email, where ballot return by email that can neither be intercepted nor hacked into, and that ensures a secret ballot even more strongly than paper ballots can. The anonymity of vote content can be maintained throughout yet authentication of the voter is available for the authorities.

The inability to hack is, inter alia, because the Safevote/ZSentry technology uniquely does not have a data target.

Coercion is often mentioned against online voting. However, we have demonstrated several solutions, with or without precinct voting, where coercion can be avoided by the voter having the opportunity to vote again with only the last vote counting. With active server verification, the voters' computers can be used at home, and/or online voting can also be provided at polling booths. Independent audit trails can also be implemented in a transparent manner.

For further information, we refer to the study at [http://safevoteonline.com/doc/TTES\\_edgerck15.pdf](http://safevoteonline.com/doc/TTES_edgerck15.pdf)

We are at your disposal to demonstrate that online voting can now be a legitimate and exciting voting option, in California and the United States, irrespective of the size of the constituency, at a fraction of the cost of current elections.

Best regards,  
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