



CANDACE J. GRUBBS
COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER/REGISTRAR OF VOTERS
25 County Center Drive, Suite I
Oroville, CA 95965-3375

Laurie Cassidy
Assistant County Clerk-Registrar of Voters

March 27, 2008

The Honorable Debra Bowen
California Secretary of State
1500 - 11th Street, Suite 600
Sacramento, CA 95814
e-mail: votingsystems@sos.ca.gov

Dear Secretary Bowen:

**RE: Response to Draft Criteria, Top-To-Bottom Review of Electronic Voting Systems
Certified For Use in California Elections**

As the elected County Clerk-Recorder/Registrar of Voters, with 20 years of election experience, I take pride in my office for conducting fair, accurate, secure and accountable elections. In those 20 years, my office has instituted four changes in voting systems from Votomatic, Datavote, Mark-A-Vote to AccuVote TSx. Each change was done to improve the voting process. Our number one concern was the accuracy of the vote count. I can unequivocally state that more votes are counted accurately on the touch screens than on the paper-based systems.

In a short timeframe and despite regulatory disruption, Butte County successfully implemented a new voting system in 2006 and met the sweeping changes and rigorous standards mandated by the "Help America Vote Act of 2002" (HAVA). Butte County is proud of its success in implementing an electronic countywide DRE system which met with overwhelming voter approval. Conditions were implemented for use of the system as established by the State, such as, "chain of custody" and "tamper evident seals." This office is dedicated to ensuring that all Butte County eligible voters will have equal access to voting.

The staff and I know that voter and poll worker confidence in the integrity of our voting system was vital to our success. By working cooperatively, the Secretary of State and county registrars can ensure continued success and transparency of the elections process in California as we prepare for three major statewide elections in 2008. The integrity of all voting systems is fundamental to public confidence in elections.

I believe the approach the State should take is to review all systems currently certified, to set standards for training, logic/accuracy testing, and security that are consistent. **The review should set valid standards for improvements to the systems, rather than cause decertification of systems.**

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Response to Draft

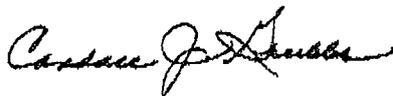
During the 2006 primary and general election, 53,633 voters cast ballots using the AccuVote TSx system in Butte County. Voters overwhelmingly responded positively to ease of use and clarity of the voting process. County management employees (who participated in both the primary and general elections and assisted in running large polling place locations) consistently reported that once the morning opening process was conducted, the remainder of the day was smooth and that voters responded positively to the use of the system. The general success of the election, overwhelming voter acceptance, and ability to implement the new system in a short period of time reflects a tremendous effort by the county.

I fully support the position of the California Association of Clerks and Election Officials (CACEO) as stated in their March 26, 2007 position paper regarding the Draft Criteria for a Top-To-Bottom Review of Electronic Voting System.

Further, the short time frame to respond did not give adequate time for a response from the Butte County Board of Supervisors, members of Butte County Grand Jury, League of Women Voters or local disability organizations, all of whom supported our change in to an electronic touch screen voting system.

I look forward to your response to my concerns as well as those raised in the CACEO position paper and by the individual California election officials. I trust that you will give your highest consideration to the suggestions and concerns of election professionals, many of which are elected public officials.

Sincerely,



Candace J. Grubbs
Butte County Clerk-Recorder/Registrar of Voters

CJG:jm

Cc: Butte County Board of Supervisors
Butte County League of Women
Independent Living Services of Northern California



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Laurie Cassady
Assistant County Clerk-Registrar of Voters

March 29, 2007

REVISED

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1500 – 11th Street, Suite 600
Sacramento, CA 95814
e-mail: votingsystems@sos.ca.gov

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