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From: Alan Dechert [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 29, 2007 8:18 PM
To: Voting Systems
Cc: Open Voting Consortium discussion list
Subject: Comment on your Draft Criteria

Dear Secretary Bowen,

We all agree that a top-to-bottom review of the voting system is an appropriate exercise for a new Secretary of State, especially for one that campaigned on the inadequacies and failures of the current system. We thank you for your diligence.

We are concerned that your proposed review focuses too narrowly on the equipment. Administrative factors have a lot to do with whether or not current systems can be used in a satisfactory manner.

We would like details on how each county has been conducting the one percent audit. Are their written procedures good? Are they following them?

We want a better, more transparent, voting system. We want public oversight of all aspects of election administration. We are interested in seeing your plan to improve the voting system and bring sunlight to shine on the whole apparatus.

Your proposed source code review still says, "trust me."

Testing of accessibility features is very difficult. HAVA is only clear on the need for access for reading-impaired voters. After that, guidelines can become very murky. We recommend that you find out who wants to use -- and has been using -- these systems in order to vote without assistance, but also find out who has been voting with assistance and find out how they feel about it.

Testing all these products (70 listed here, certified since 1/1/05: http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/voting_systems/vs_certified_jan07.pdf) to state and federal standards is very ambitious. We wish you well in this undertaking, and we hope you can proceed with improvements to the whole system as soon as possible.

We are ready to help, if asked.

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