



# NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **BRUCE McPHERSON**

BM06:167

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Tuesday, October 31, 2006

Contact: Nghia Nguyen Demovic  
916-653-6575

## **Secretary of State Bruce McPherson Announces Enhanced Election Day Security Measures and Encourages Eligible Voters to Participate in the November Election**

*Secretary McPherson Joined with San Diego and Los Angeles County Elections Officials to Unveil Two Election Day Programs to Further Protect the Integrity of Each Vote Cast*

Secretary of State Bruce McPherson today joined with elections officials in San Diego and Los Angeles Counties to announce that he will be partnering with local elections officials statewide to conduct two additional on-site programs to ensure the integrity of every vote cast on Election Day.

The two programs are in addition to the ongoing security measures and use procedures currently required by Secretary McPherson. The additional programs are Parallel Monitoring and the deployment of Election Day Observation Teams. Both programs are designed to ensure that security measures and use procedures are followed on Election Day and that votes are accurately counted and recorded throughout the state.

“As Secretary of State, I want to assure all California voters that their vote will be counted and recorded accurately,” said McPherson. “I have developed the strictest standards for certification of voting machines in the nation. Voters should have the confidence of knowing that we will closely monitor these machines to ensure their integrity and reliability.”

### **Parallel Monitoring**

The Parallel Monitoring Program is designed to monitor the performance of randomly selected electronic voting machines in counties throughout California. The tests will be conducted in selected counties where each of the following electronic voting systems will be used: Diebold AccuVote-TSX, Sequoia Edge, Hart eSlate and the ES&S AutoMARK.

In each selected county, a set number of machines will be pulled from use and pre-marked ballots will be fed into the system to ensure the machines are accurately counting and recording votes. To ensure the reliability and accuracy of the testing and auditing, the exact locations of testing in the eight counties will not be disclosed prior to Election Day.

-more-

### **Election Day Observation Teams**

As part of the Election Day Observation Program, 33 Election Day observers will be deployed to polling places in 31 counties throughout the State to be sure all Election Day procedures are carried out. Observers will monitor polling places to ensure that all necessary security measures and use procedures are being followed. In addition, observers will provide on-site observations of poll workers' handling and voters' usage of voting machines.

This program will be in place in the following counties: Alameda, Butte, Contra Costa, Del Norte, Fresno, Humboldt, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Lassen, Los Angeles, Madera, Marin, Mendocino, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Riverside, San Diego, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Shasta, Siskiyou, Solano, Stanislaus, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yolo. A similar program was in place during the June Primary Election, where observers were in place in 23 of California's 58 counties.

Conny McCormack, Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk said, "The new voting equipment in use in Los Angeles County provides each voter with a second chance to make a correction to the ballot before casting it. Voters have expressed their appreciation when the new equipment alerts them if they made a mistake, such as voting for two candidates in the same contest. Our goal is to educate voters about their options to cast their ballot in the November Election."

Under Secretary McPherson's leadership, California has adopted the strictest voting system certification standards in the nation. Voting machines certified for use in California must meet rigorous federal, state and local certification requirements, including a first in the nation volume test that simulates Election Day conditions. Additionally, once systems are certified, rigorous checks and balances ensure that the machines are performing accurately on Election Day. All voting machines used on Election Day will have a paper record to ensure that the vote cast is the vote counted. That papertrail will be used to conduct a 1% manual audit of the votes cast.

See the attached fact sheet: "Electronic Voting: What's it all about?" for a full list of Election Day and voting system security measures and use procedures.



## **Electronic Voting: What's It All About?**

Secretary of State Bruce McPherson's top priority is to ensure the integrity of every vote cast. He has established the strictest voting system certification standards in the nation and a rigorous set of checks and balances to protect the integrity of every vote cast, no matter what kind of machines are used.

*"California has been a national leader in implementing innovative and comprehensive security measures for electronic voting machines, many of which represent the best and most effective that we have identified, to secure the integrity of each vote. In doing so, the state has taken important and necessary steps to ensure that each Californian's vote is accurately recorded and protected," said Lawrence Norden, Chair of the Brennan Center Task Force on Voting System Security.*

## **The Benefits of Electronic Voting Systems**

- Electronic voting machines allow voters with disabilities for the first time, to cast their ballots privately and independently.
- The easy to use machines result in fewer voter errors compared to other voting systems.
- They can easily accommodate multiple languages, a federal requirement.
- They make voting simpler and allow voters to catch errors such as inadvertently voting for too few (under voting) or too many (over voting) candidates in a single race.
- Electronic voting reduces the costs and environmental effects of elections by reducing the need for expensive paper ballots.
- Their use assists California in complying with the federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) requirements.
- All electronic voting machines used in California elections are equipped with voter verified paper audit trails (VVPAT) to ensure the integrity of every vote cast.
- They can easily accommodate multiple ballot types for use in various kinds of elections (i.e. primary, general, special, etc.).

## **The Strictest Voting System Certification Standards in the Nation**

Secretary of State Bruce McPherson requires that any voting system used in California meet the strictest standards in the nation.

- Systems undergo a thorough 3-tiered certification process (extensive testing at the federal, state and local levels).
- A complete review of the system's firmware, hardware and software is conducted at the federal and state levels.
- All systems must meet 10 strict standards, including California's first-in-the-nation volume test to ensure the systems can withstand Election Day levels of activity. (visit [www.ss.ca.gov](http://www.ss.ca.gov) for a complete list of all 10 standards)
- Once systems have met federal and state requirements, counties conduct additional testing, again testing the hardware and software.

## **A Rigorous Set of Checks and Balances**

---

As a condition for use of the machines, county election officials must adhere to a specific set of use procedures and security measures leading up to, on and after Election Day.

### **Pre-Election Day Security Measures**

---

- For those systems with removable memory cards, each voting system's memory card is serialized and inserted into the system in the presence of at least two elections officials at the county level, and a tamper evident seal with a serial number on it is applied to the protective case covering the memory card.
- The tamper evident seals with serial numbers will indicate if the system's internal mechanisms have been exposed at any point leading up to Election Day.
- The county must maintain a written log recording which memory cards and tamper evident seals, along with serial numbers are assigned to each machine.
- Additionally, the county must maintain a written log that accurately records the chain of custody of each memory card and unit from the point of programming the memory card for use in the election through the time of completion of the official canvass.
- Prior to a county deploying a system to the polling places, counties conduct logic and accuracy testing (L&A) to ensure that the systems are operating accurately and reliably, and are correctly programmed for the election.
- Only after these steps have been completed and recorded will the system be placed under the control of the poll inspector, who is instructed to keep machines in a secure location until needed on Election Day.

Poll Inspectors are paid county election workers who are subject to training and certification, sign an oath as an election inspector, are responsible for the oversight of election in the polling place (including opening, closing and certifying results) and oversee other poll workers.

### **Election Day Security Procedures**

---

- Secretary McPherson has established a parallel monitoring program that will test electronic voting systems while in use on Election Day. The program is designed to ensure votes are being recorded accurately. On November 7<sup>th</sup>, testing will be conducted on the following systems, in two counties for each system: Diebold AccuVote-TSX, Sequoia Edge, Hart eSlate, and the ES&S AutoMARK.
- In addition to parallel monitoring, Secretary McPherson has implemented an Election Day observation program in 31 counties. The observers will be ensuring that election procedures and security measures are being followed and that equipment is operating properly. They will also be checking accessibility of both facility and equipment, voter privacy, and if the election is running smoothly.
- Prior to a system being used on Election Day, a review of the system and the tamper evident seals is conducted by at least two election officials at the county level.
- If any of the seals are broken or have been tampered with, the system must be removed and a complete inspection of the system must be conducted. Additionally, a full report must be done and submitted to the Secretary of State's office.

- Prior to the system being used on Election Day, a report must be run on each voting system to ensure that no activity has occurred on the system. The “zero tape” must be established prior to use.
- All electronic voting systems in California are required to have a voter verified paper audit trail, which allows the voter to confirm his or her selections prior to finalizing his or her vote at the polling place. California was among the first states in the nation to require the VVPAT and many other states are following suit.

### **Post Election Day Procedures**

---

- The mandatory paper audit trail will be used for a **full** recount if necessary.
- These paper records are used for the mandatory 1% manual recount that occurs in every county and for every election. This recount will ensure that the votes recorded on the systems match with what is displayed on the paper trail record.
- In addition, after each election, the county elections officials conduct post election logic and accuracy testing to ensure, once again, that the systems have operated accurately and reliably on Election Day.