

21 Reasons To Support A Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) Component To Our County Voting Systems

1. The Hart Intercivic Voting Machines are vulnerable to both software errors or malicious tampering with individual voting machines (9,000 in number in Harris County) and JBC central counting levels.
2. This vulnerability to the integrity of our voting process has been well documented by Dr. Dan Wallach, Rice University electronic voting expert as well as Compuware, Chicago, Illinois and other widely publicized hacking demonstrations run throughout the USA, including Harris County, Maryland and California.
3. CNBC TV ran a live hacking demonstration on national television prior to the 2004 election.
4. Incidents of “vote flipping” from one Party to another were documented in both the 2002 and 2004 elections here in Harris County; ie: Ron Kirk and John Kerry, attributed to an unrepaired “glitch” documented in the Hart maintenance manual.
5. The current Hart voting system does not allow for a recount process. The systems simply regurgitates the count recorded by the JBC counters from the first run. **The city has statutory responsibility for recounts.**
6. Current “Logic and Accuracy” tests run prior to the distribution of machines in an election do not involve random selection of machines or third party oversight. It is simply a “smoke and mirrors” mock “demo” of the system with no testing elements. **The city has statutory responsibility for these tests.**
7. The Texas Democratic Party as well as the Texas Republican Party platforms both call for the provision of a paper ballot/trail component to any DRE system in use in Texas.
8. The League of Women Voters calls for a Voter Verifiable Paper Trail as do a dozen or more national voting rights advocacy organizations.
9. 21 states have passed legislation requiring a voter verifiable paper ballot/trail with similar legislation pending with 15 other states.
10. Several Federal Senate and House bills are currently in process proposed both by Democrats and Republicans.
11. The election administrators professional association in Texas is on record supporting a voter verifiable paper ballot/trail where DRE machines are in use.
12. An ELECTION CENTER NATIONAL TASK FORCE FOR ELECTION REFORM committee on which Beverly Kaufman served recently published a recommendation favorable to voter verifiable paper audit trail.
13. Both leaders of the Baker/Carter Commission have made public statements favorable to a voter verifiable paper trail and now the Commission Report endorses it.
14. Legislation for a voter verifiable paper ballot/trail made it all the way to the Calendars committee controlled by the Republicans in the last legislative session, where it was allowed to “die”.
15. Hart Intercivic has the technology available to provide a voter verifiable paper ballot/trail; the Republican Secretary of State is refusing to certify it or any other vendor’s variation on paper trail.
16. The County was disbursed \$21 million in 2005 for such purchases under federal HAVA legislation.
17. 1,218 voting machine complaints were filed in Texas during the 2004 election with the People For The American Way Election Protection division. 2,400 voting machine complaints were filed with a national group called EIRS during the 2004 election.
18. The Electronic Frontier Foundation and the Verified Voting Foundation, two leading non-partisan public interest organizations received more complaints on voting machine problems in Harris County than any other voting jurisdiction in America in the 2004 election. Among the sites for complaints in Harris County were Rolling Isaac Elementary, Harris County Court House, Scenic Woods Church of Christ, Doerne Intermediate School, Cthaise on Pech Road and precinct 566, to name a few.
19. Every significant Corporation in America using computers has instituted a “security” division within their organizations, now a multi-billion dollar industry. Our elections usage of computers have no such security function.
20. Machine complaints were filed in the 2004 elections in Collin, Travis, Bexar, Harris and Wichita Counties using DRE machines, including vote transfers, lost votes, machine failures and memory card failures.
21. American consumers demand ATM, gasoline pump and store cashier receipts to verify the accuracy of the transaction. We are entitled to the same for the most important transaction we make in our democracy, our vote.

Summary: The problem is well identified; Hart has a solution at hand; Harris County has the money. What are we waiting for? No one is satisfied with “faith based voting” as described cynically by County Clerk Beverly Kaufman, nor “black box voting” in the hands of Republicans whose intent to subvert our voting system is well established.

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