



Florida Voters Coalition

PRESS RELEASE

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FLORIDA MOVES TO PAPER BALLOTS!

FLORIDA VOTERS COALITION CONGRATULATES GOVERNOR CRIST AND THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE FOR ENDING PAPERLESS VOTING.

TALLAHASSEE: In a historic vote, the Florida House today unanimously passed CS/HB 537, already passed in the Senate, that provides almost all voters paper ballots in time for the 2008 Presidential election, and bans paperless DREs outright by 2012. The bill now goes to the Governor where he's sure to sign it since it's his initiative.

Counties will have the option to pitch DREs immediately and provide ballot marking devices for voters with disabilities. "FVC urges all 67 counties to convert to uniform paper ballot systems without delay and leave no voter behind voting on failed electronic voting machines," said FVC Co-Founder, Dan McCrea.

The bill is funded with \$27.9 million in HAVA funds and there's plenty more money in that account should more be needed next year. Counties will get help from the state to purchase optical scan equipment to count the paper ballots; ballot-on-demand equipment to ease paper congestion problems in Early Voting; and ballot marking devices to serve the disabled.



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While there was talk earlier in the legislative session about retrofitting printers to failed touchscreen DREs, that talk faded as legislators saw it would be throwing good money after bad. Additionally, they are sure to have understood that currently available "VVPAT" printers would not comply with proposed federal legislation which, if passed, will supersede Florida law. (Federal bill HR 811, sponsored by Rep. Rush Holt, currently has 212 bi-partisan co-sponsors in Congress.)

The Florida bill also contains new audit provisions essential to the security of paper ballot voting systems. There was agreement among legislators that the new audit provisions will need further tweaking next year before becoming effective in July 2008. For now, the language requires that after every election, at least 1% and not more than 2% of randomly selected precincts be audited by hand-counting the paper ballots in one randomly selected race. The audit will take place after certification and be reported 3 days before the contest period ends.

"FVC supports 'statistically significant' audits that would yield a far greater confidence level in election results and should be reported before certification. FVC will be working with state and local election officials in the coming year to strengthen Florida audit language," said another FVC Co-Founder, Kindra Muntz, who led the successful charter amendment campaign in Sarasota County that requires both voter verified paper ballots and mandatory random audits in all elections.

"We thank Governor Crist and the Florida Legislature for their vision and diligence in improving Florida voting systems," said FVC Co-Founder, Susan Pynchon, "and for working together in a bi-partisan, bicameral effort. The eyes of the nation have been and still are on Florida elections - and Florida finally got it right! We can now say Florida is leading the nation in election reform."

In addition to the Governor and the Legislature deserving praise, FVC thanks the two dozen co-signers to our 2007 Position Paper on Voting Systems, who are listed below, and who worked very hard together at local, state, and national levels on many different aspects of advocating for this legislation. Thanks to Senator Bill Nelson and other members of Congress who also helped at the national level. We also thank the Florida League of Woman Voters and the Florida Council of the Blind for their vital assistance. Special thanks to Warren Stewart, Policy Director for VoteTrustUSA; Ion Sancho, Leon County Supervisor of



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Elections; Howard Simon, Executive Director of ACLU of Florida; and Pamela Smith, President of Verified Voting for their invaluable contributions to this effort. Additional thanks go to Sam Bell, Doug Bell and Rebecca Sager for their extensive assistance on the ground in Tallahassee. And finally, FVC thanks the thousands of volunteers and citizens who cared enough about Florida's elections to help rally support, send messages to the Governor and Legislature, talk to the media, and make their voices heard. "This was a good day for democracy," said FVC Co-Founder Pamela Haengel.

National Organizations - Alphabetical by Organization

- Ralph Miller, Executive Director, [Latinos for America](#)
- Megan Matson, Director, [Mainstreet Moms](#)
- Pamela Smith, President, [VerifiedVoting.org](#)
- Dan McCrea, Florida State Director, [Voter Action](#)
- John Gideon, Executive Director, [VotersUnite.org](#)
- Joan Krawitz, Executive Director, [VoteTrustUSA](#)

State of Florida Organizations - Alphabetical by Organization

- Howard Simon, Executive Director, [ACLU of Florida](#)
- Jeannette D. Wynn, President, [Florida Council of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees](#) (AFSCME)
- Cynthia Hall, President, [Florida AFL-CIO](#)
- Ellen Brodsky, Executive Director, [Broward Election Reform Coalition](#) (BERC)
- Susan Pynchon, Executive Director, [Florida Fair Elections Coalition](#) (FFEC)
- Ion Sancho, Supervisor of Elections, [Leon County Department of Elections](#)
- Trevor Harvey, President, [Sarasota County Branch, NAACP](#)
- Susan Van Houten, Co-Founder, Palm Beach Coalition for Election Reform
- Brad Ashwell, [Florida Public Interest Research Group](#) (PIRG)
- Kindra Muntz, President, [Sarasota Alliance for Fair Elections](#) (SAFE)
- Sevell C. Brown III, Florida State President, [Southern Christian Leadership Conference](#)
- Jim Pillow, Political Coordinator - [Teamsters Local 385 Orlando](#)
- Fred Seidl, Coordinator, [Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry, Florida](#)
- Gene Jones, [Florida Veterans for Common Sense](#)
- Pamela Haengel, President, [Voting Integrity Alliance of Tampa Bay](#) (VIA Tampa Bay)

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