

Willard W. Bunnell
2 Strathmore Lane
Madison, CT 06443
wwb@mindspring.com

GAE Committee
Public Hearing
February 14, 2005

Regarding S.B. 55

Good Morning Madam/Mr Chairman and members of the committee. My Name is Willard Bunnell. I am a resident of and voter in Madison, and add, a constituent of your colleagues Senator Ed Meyer, and, Representative Deborah Heinrich. Ms Heinrich is a Co-Sponsor of S.B. 55. I thank them for their help with our efforts to assure that future elections in Connecticut will be conducted using voting systems that are able to provide each Voter with the confidence that their Vote has been recorded as they intended it to be. Because I believe it can assure the implementation of a meaningful verification process, I strongly support Bill S.B.55.

When read, the experience of the Elections of last November provide lessons which should not be ignored. Dr. Fischer earlier cited one. The loss of 4,438 votes in North Carolina. Cause? One DRE machine, with no voter verification process installed, was being used in an early voting period. That machine had missed completing an upgrade of its software. The DRE after processing some 3000 votes thought its storage unit was full. The system then assumed it was finished, and stopped counting and recording votes. Voters continued to vote, but their votes were never recorded, never counted. Result, the loss of 4,438 votes, and a whole lot of national attention.

There is now an active RFP through which the State expects to buy 771 DRE voting systems with no Voter verification process installed. Voting systems equivalent to the machine in North Carolina that loss 4,438 votes.

As recently described by the Stamford based Gartner Group, a highly respected computer technology consultancy, the installation of a voter verification process simply corrects a weakness in the DRE technology. These systems if delivered on the basis of the State's RFP, will not incorporate any voter verification process.

The timely passage of S.B. 55 appears to be the way by which the Legislature may be able to assure that the State does not proceed to squander \$5M or more of Federal funds through the procurement of inadequately configured voting systems.

Willard W. Bunnell
2 Strathmore Lane
Madison, CT 06443
wwb@mindspring.com

GAE Committee
Public Hearing
February 14, 2005

Regarding S.B. 55 - cont.

Of recent note is the introduction by US Senator Dodd of a new bill, S 17 that indicates no reservations as to the need for voter verification. 3 other new pieces of proposed federal legislation have appeared. All, in some way, incorporate a requirement for verification capability equivalent to that contained in S.B. 55.

Last week, The Election Assistance Commission (EAC) testified in its Annual Report to Congress that its Technical Development Committee will deliver an initial set of voluntary voting system standards to EAC in April 2005 for consideration and adoption.

Of possible interest to the GAE was the statement, "... each State retains the prerogative of deciding whether to adopt these standards for the procurement of voting systems."

At the last GAE hearing of 2004 testimony was heard that expressed concern as to the State's possible loss of HAVA funds if those funds were used to acquire voting systems that exceeded the voluntary voting system standards as adopted by the EAC. The probability of that scenario developing is now seen as having been removed as a concern that should limit the GAE, or the Legislature, in proceeding to adopt S.B. 55.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support for the passage of S.B. 55. - quickly.

If members have any questions I would be happy to try to answer them.

- END -

