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BYSIEWICZ RELEASES REPORTS ON INDEPENDENT AUDIT OF ELECTION RESULTS AND MEMORY CARDS

SECRETARY OF THE STATE OUTLINES LAST MINUTE PREPARATIONS FOR SUPER
TUESDAY AND HER PLANS TO BOLSTER VOTER PRIVACY

HARTFORD: Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz and Dr. Alex Shvartsman of the University of Connecticut's Voting Technology Research Center (VoTeR Center) announced the results of several reports that confirmed the security and accuracy of Connecticut's November 2007 elections.

"My office entered into this historic partnership with the University of Connecticut VoTeR Center so that we could receive an independent, unbiased accounting of Connecticut's new voting machines," said Bysiewicz. "The results of the three studies confirm that the new optical scan voting machines performed well in the November elections. Voters should feel confident that their votes were secure and accurately counted."

Audit of Election Results

Proposed by Secretary Bysiewicz and approved by the General Assembly in 2007, the purpose of post election audits is to ensure that the optical scan voting machine(s) used in the election or primary accounted for all votes properly. 10% of municipal races were chosen by the Office of the Secretary of the State at random for a hand count audit to be conducted by local election officials.

As part of UCONN's report, 783 records or races that were reviewed by the VoTeR Center following the local audit process. Within that sample, 31 or 4% showed a discrepancy in election results by 10 or more votes.

“Overall, I am pleased to see that the audits were conducted successfully and accurately, and thank all of the local election officials, poll workers, and others who participated in this effort. Moving forward, my office will continue to simplify the audit procedures used by election officials when conducting the audits, while maintaining the integrity of the process. We are also working with UCONN to conduct further analysis regarding any discrepancies found during the review.”

Pre and Post Election Audit of Memory Cards

As part of an agreement with UCONN, before and after each election, computer scientists at the university will test a sample of all memory cards used in the optical scan voting machines to ensure that each card is programmed correctly. The purpose of the pre-election scans is to detect evidence of tampering, programming errors or any irregularities that might affect the voting process or election results. Pre-election testing of memory cards has made Connecticut a national leader in voting security.

Before the election, UCONN tested 378 memory cards. Results demonstrated that none of the memory cards tested showed evidence of tampering. 96.6% of the cards tested were found to have been properly programmed prior to the election. 3.5% of the memory cards were found to have contained “junk” data meaning they were unreadable. As such, the tabulators would not have accepted them for use in the election.

Following the election, UCONN tested a sample of 100 memory cards. Testing, once again, showed that none of the memory cards were tampered with and that they performed correctly.

“Overall, I’m pleased that our first pre- and post-testing procedures with UCONN demonstrate the security of our office’s chain of custody practices with election officials,” said Bysiewicz. “However, the percentage of unreadable cards is unacceptable and we will work with our vendors to ensure that all cards in the future are programmed correctly.”

February 5th Primary

Connecticut, in advance of the February 5th primary, has experienced a surge in voter registration. Since November 1, 2007, nearly 16,000 Connecticut residents registered to vote and enrolled in a party. Democratic registration outpaced Republican registration 11,139 to 4,608 since November 1, 2007. In the last four weeks, 7,552 newly registered voters enrolled with the Democratic Party and 2,751 newly registered voters enrolled in the Republican Party.

In order to be eligible to vote on February 5th, new voters must have their registration forms postmarked by January 31st. Unaffiliated voters must have their forms received by their local registrar of voters on January 31st. Connecticut residents who are unable to

meet the January 31st deadlines have until February 4th at 12:00 pm (noon) to register in person at their local town hall. Polls will be open from 6 AM to 8 PM.

As part of a year-long effort, the Office of the Secretary of the State has continued to conduct intensive training sessions with election officials and poll workers. These sessions have been invaluable to local election officials and others to train on the new optical scan and vote-by-phone technology.

In anticipation of heavy turnout on February 5th, the Office of the Secretary of the State will once again deploy Election Day Rapid Response teams to towns across the state in order to assist local election officials with any potential questions or problems that arise. The Rapid Response teams were used during the September 2007 primary and the November 2007 general elections.

“Our Election Day Rapid Response teams have proven to be a valuable asset in previous elections,” said Bysiewicz. “Having them out in the towns will allow us to immediately respond to questions and find solutions.”

Legislation to strengthen voter privacy

After conducting more than 200 town hall meetings across the state and more than 20 debriefing sessions with local election officials, poll workers and voting advocates, Secretary Bysiewicz is asking that the legislature enact the following language concerning voter privacy into law during the upcoming legislative session:

- **(Voters zone of privacy)** Registrars of voters shall ensure that each voting booth is placed so that they are in plain view of all election officials and electors waiting to vote and so that there is at least three feet between each voting booth. Each voting booth shall be so placed so that no person outside the booth can determine how an individual voted.
- **(Zone of privacy around tabulator)** The voting tabulator shall be placed at least three feet from any wall, partition or guardrail and at least four feet from the checkers' table. The registrars of voters shall place a guardrail or other marking device around such tabulator so as to prevent electors waiting in line from encroaching upon an elector who is submitting their ballot into the tabulator. Such guardrail or other marking device shall be placed at least three feet from the tabulator and shall be arranged in such a manner as to prevent voters from determining the votes cast on each ballot submitted to the tabulator.
- **(Privacy sleeve)** The registrars of voters shall ensure that each ballot clerk offer every voter a privacy sleeve into which the ballot can be inserted so that the markings on the ballot cannot be seen or it may be placed in every voting booth for the elector's use. The voter shall not be required to accept a privacy sleeve.

“Every time voters cast a ballot it is a learning experience and an opportunity to improve the way elections are administered,” said Bysiewicz. “My priority this legislative session is to enhance voter privacy in future elections. I look forward to working with the members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee and the legislature to enact my recommendations into law.”

For the full text of the UCONN Voting Technology Research Center please visit:

<http://voter.engr.uconn.edu/voter/News/News.html>

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