



## **EAC VOTING ADVOCATES ROUND TABLE: April 24, 2008**

Request that the following comments be entered into the record on behalf of Black Box Voting, by its founder, Bev Harris.

### **To members of the EAC and participants of the Round Table:**

The entire premise of technology-based elections is based on support for the "verifiable voting" concept. But before designing technology for elections, we must first determine how it will empower citizen controls, enabling the counting of votes in public rather than counting them in secret. We do not consent to any form of secret vote counting that is administered and controlled by government insiders and their vendors.

Any system that forces the citizenry to trust government insiders to count their votes represents a change in the original design of this nation. The United States of America was designed to uphold the right of citizen sovereignty over the government. In addition to hiding the counting of votes from public view, computer-counted elections hide the chain of custody of the vote data. Citizens are never allowed to view the original input in order to compare it to the output, and are relegated to trusting circumstantial evidence controlled by insiders. Such a system is, in fact, a transfer of power.

The people were never asked to approve such a transfer of power, have never consented to it, and indeed *cannot* consent, because the right of sovereignty over the instruments of government which we have created is an inalienable right, one which *cannot* be given away, nor can this right be removed through legislation. It is, admittedly, possible for a government to decline to honor this right, but such an act would justify extreme measures by the people subjected to such abuse of power.

It is the public counting that is key to citizen sovereignty, not computer verification. "Verification" of a computer report is not at all the same as public vote counting.

The core of elections was and again must return to the principle of citizen sovereignty over government. Elections can never be based on a requirement to trust government insiders and their vendors to count our votes, nor can elections be dependent on experts to tell the citizenry that the system is okay, nor should the detailed mechanics of elections be impossible for the average citizen to understand. Models which depend on experts and insiders create centralized control, and remove all control from government's rightful owners – the citizens. This represents a violation of the principles laid out in the Declaration of Independence.

Not only does my organization, Black Box Voting, refuse to participate in the design of such systems, but we will do our utmost to inform the populace that such systems must be revoked, by whatever means necessary.

"We do not consent."

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