

Arizona Citizens for Election Reform (ACER)



P.O. Box, 17136 Phoenix, AZ 85011 • www.aceronline.org • info@aceronline.org

“No election certification without verification.”

***** **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** *****
February 13, 2006

Call for Citizen Support of SB 1557

Please attend the Senate Judiciary Committee on Monday, February 13, 2006. Currently it is scheduled for 1:30 in Senate Hearing Room 1, in the Senate Building at the State Capitol. The Election Reform bill SB1557 that calls for a 5% hand count verification of the electronic vote is on the agenda but Senator John Huppenthal has stated he will not hear it unless it is changed. ACER learned that negotiations were being conducted with representatives from the Secretary of State's office, Senator Karen Johnson and Senator Huppenthal. Please be AWARE that they can CHANGE the agenda at any time, possibly even that day. This is the last hearing date for new senate bills to be heard. Just because it is on the agenda, does not mean it will be heard. Also, this hearing could take several hours; they may not get to this bill until after 5:00 pm or later.

With increasing concern about the security of our voting machines and their effectiveness, Arizona citizens demand that our right to vote be secured and results verified. Problems with electronic voting systems have engendered a loss of public confidence in elections and prompted lawsuits which have been costly both to candidates and to tax payers. Computer security is very difficult to achieve when electronic voting machines are used and requires an independent back-up of the votes.

The proposed legislation SB1557 and HB2859:

- Requires electronic voting systems to produce a paper ballot or receipt that is preserved;
- Requires a manual verification of vote tabulations in a randomly selected set of precincts (5%) that would be expanded to a full recount of the county if sufficient errors are found;
- Permits a vote for "no vote" to make it clear that an "undervote" reflects the voter's intent;
- Keeps precinct populations small enough to avoid long lines;
- Requires open source code of the electronic voting systems; and
- Requires election system testing by independent qualified experts.

The full text of the bills can be viewed in PDF or html format on www.azleg.gov by searching by the bill number. You can also request to speak or make comments using that site or the kiosks at the Arizona Senate Building.

This is a partial list of states that have statutes for hand count audits and the percentage of ballots cast in each: Illinois 5%, West Virginia 5%, Kentucky 3-5%, New York 3%, Washington 4%, Hawaii 10%, California 1%, Minnesota 2%, Maine 2%, Colorado 1%, Alaska 5%, Minnesota 2%, and Connecticut 2 machines per assembly district. With the introduction of Direct Recording Electronic machines (DREs), Arizona doesn't currently meet the HAVA requirements for votes to have a permanent paper record that can be manually counted.

Arizona Citizens for Election Reform is a nonpartisan organization supporting efforts to ensure every vote is counted accurately and encouraging transparency in the elections process. We do not support or oppose candidates for public office.