



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE KEVIN SHELLEY

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Secretary of State Kevin Shelley Unveils Historic Paper Audit Trail Standards for E-Voting Machines

First-in-the-Nation Standards Establish Benchmark for Development, Testing of Paper Backups

SACRAMENTO, CA -- Secretary of State Kevin Shelley today adopted state standards for an Accessible Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (AVVPAT) for electronic voting systems. In doing so, California becomes the first state in the nation to establish requirements for the development and testing of paper audit trails for electronic voting machines.

"These standards will be used by voting system manufacturers to develop the next generation of California's electronic voting machines," said Shelley. "These will also establish the baseline for testing those systems to determine if they should be state certified."

By taking this lead, Shelley said, "California is making sure that voters will be able to verify that their votes are being counted correctly. I call upon the federal Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to follow my lead and establish nationwide testing and qualification standards for AVVPAT systems as soon as possible."

On April 30, Secretary of State Shelley announced that no county or city may purchase a new direct recording electronic (DRE) voting system that does not include an AVVPAT. Currently, July 1, 2006, is the date that all electronic voting systems used in California, regardless of when they were purchased, must have a paper trail. However, the Legislature is now considering moving up that date to January 1, 2006, in order to accommodate the Primary Election.

"I want to stress that the paper trail systems we are requiring will be fully accessible to disabled voters," Shelley said. "These requirements will ensure that California polling places are in full compliance with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), which requires at least one voting machine per polling place be accessible to individuals with disabilities by the 2006 election."

The standards establish minimum levels of performance for the components required, and establish requirements to ensure privacy, readability, and accessibility. The requirements are outcome-based, ensuring that manufacturers meet basic requirements without stifling innovation. These standards will be used during state testing of electronic voting systems. Conformance to these standards is required for a system to be certified for use in state elections.

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One key component of the standards is that the paper copy of each vote must be displayed securely under plastic or glass so that voters can see how they voted, but cannot physically handle the paper. This guarantees that each electronic vote has a corresponding paper record that is available in the event of a recount.

The Secretary of State's office developed the standards with input from county elections officials, voting machine manufacturers, technical experts, poll workers, advocacy groups, and others. An earlier version of the standards was made available by the Secretary of State's Office for public comment. There were 122 individuals and organizations that formally submitted comments and many of their suggestions were incorporated into the final version.

To view the Standards For Accessible Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail Systems in Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) Voting Systems, please visit
<http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/touchscreen.htm>.