

**MOVING FORWARD WITH THE
BALLOT INTEGRITY PROJECT**

**Core Mission and Building a
National Task Force**

by

Citizens for Election Integrity

March 5th, 2005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. Introduction**
- II. Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles**
- III. National Organizational Structure**
- IV. State Organizational Structure**
- V. Working Groups - Research, Messages & Collaboration**
- VI. Election System Integrity - 2006 Solutions**
- VIII. Manual Parallel Accounting Control Systems**
- IX. A Long -Term Solution Summary**
- X. Summary**
- XI. Appendix A: Ernest Partridge Writes**
- XII. Appendix B: Losing Our Democracy - Saving Our Democracy**

INTRODUCTION

In June of 2004 a group of election integrity activists came together in Washington D.C. to explore the possibility of creating a national organization dedicated to restoring integrity to American elections. The result of the Washington meetings was the creation of The National Ballot Integrity Project in July of 2004 www.ballotintegrity.org .

Two features distinguish this new organization. The first is a commitment to returning all U.S. elections to paper ballots and hand counts. The second feature is the creation of coordinated but highly autonomous state task forces, working groups and a national coordinating committee. This organization structure is described in detail in a subsequent section.

To date, both of these distinguishing features exist as unrealized potential.

A third distinguishing feature emerging from the 2004 General Election, is the need for nonpartisan election boards at the federal, state and local level.

Included in this document are the vision, mission statement, and election integrity principles that have guided members of the National Ballot Integrity Project (NBIP) during its first eight months of existence.

Key to realizing its mission of election system integrity throughout America is the recruitment of thousands of volunteers and election integrity activists. The creation of state task forces with county chapters and specialized working groups provides a long-term organization structure and a place for each volunteer activist.

The specialized working groups that make up each state task force gather key information, summarize their findings into powerful messages and work with other groups on joint initiatives.

Because over 100 county election boards can exist in a single state, it is imperative that thousands of election integrity activists join us in our work in restoring paper ballots and hand counts to our national election system, county by county and state by state.

THE BALLOT INTEGRITY PROJECT
MISSION, VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

BIP Mission

Safeguarding American democracy through election system integrity.

BIP Vision

We see a free and democratic America where all our citizens flourish. We see a democracy founded upon integrity. We see voting systems that are open, transparent and accurate. We see our future.

BIP Guiding Principles

1. Voting accessibility for all citizens of legal age.
2. Public oversight for all aspects of the election system.
3. Accurate recording, counting and reporting of all votes cast.
4. Independent exit polling for all statewide and other key elections.
5. Nonpartisan governance of all federal, state and local election boards.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The National Ballot Integrity Project Task Force (NBIPTF) will consist of a National Central Committee and fifty state task forces.

Each state task force will be comprised of an organizing committee and several working groups (see page six).

To assure election integrity at the county level, each state task force will establish county chapters to monitor local election boards, polling places and local election activities.

The National Central Committee (NCC) will use the same organization structure as the state task forces.

The NCC will support the work of the state task forces and offer suggestions for coordinating efforts around the nation.

This organization structure is envisioned as open, highly interactive and without formal lines of authority.

Presented in the next section is a suggested organization structure for each state task force. Each state task force will be comprised of over a dozen working groups or subcommittees.

It is recommended that the task force organizing committee be comprised of working group chairpersons or facilitators.

It is suggested that working groups coordinate their efforts with counterpart working groups operating in other states and their national counterpart-working group.

To facilitate coordination the National BIP will create and administer a web site providing individual BLOGs for each working group. Each group can share information on important discoveries, lessons learned and ongoing activities.

The web site will also provide a description of the National BIP, state committee contact information and items of general interest.

STATE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

(Working Groups)

The following organization structure is suggested for each state task force as well as the National Central Committee:

- **Organizing Committee*** – Coordinates activities of groups.
- **Legal Options and Strategies Group** – Identifies, recommends and implements legal strategies.
- **Legislative Options and Strategies Group** – Identifies, recommends and implements legislative strategies.
- **Technology Group** – Provides expert information and advice on computer software, hardware and information security issues.
- **Media and Public Relations Group** – Drafts press releases and handles other public communications.
- **Public Education Group** - Organizes public lectures, discussions and video presentations on the threat computerized voting poses to democracy.
- **Vendor Information Group** – Provides information on owners, directors and key employees as well as maintains detailed records of voting machines placed throughout the state.
- **Disability Issues Group** – Identifies voting system issues of concern to disabled voters and recommends effective solutions.
- **Political Contacts Group** – Identifies and communicates with key elected officials including Governors, Secretaries of State, and legislators.
- **Paper Ballot and Hand Count Group** – Identifies nations and other jurisdictions using paper ballots and hand counts, and provides brief descriptions of how they operate.
- **Activists and Labor Outreach Group** – Contacts, informs and enlists support of existing activist groups and labor organizations.
- **Public Demonstrations Group** – Works with other groups in scheduling and organizing public rallies and demonstrations.
- **Elections Research Group** – Studies past elections documenting hardware/software/systems failures and assesses probability of computer and other vote fraud.
- **Voter List Integrity Group** – Monitors maintenance of voter lists by election officials and researches cases of alleged vote suppression.
- **Recount Group** – Researches legal issues, provides historical information and assesses feasibility of election recounts throughout the state.
- **Polling Options and Strategies Group** – Identifies and describes necessary exit polls as well as provides expert information on scientific sampling.
- **Election Oversight Group** – Monitors activities at polls and other election facilities reporting anomalies to press, government and the public.
- **Election Board Governance Group** – Monitors election board governance and actively promotes the creation of nonpartisan election boards at the federal, state and local level.

*Membership may include one or more group representatives

WORKING GROUPS

(Research, Messages and Collaboration)

As the January 1st, 2006 Federal HAVA deadline approaches, thousands of local election boards are seriously considering the purchase of DRE (touch screen) or optical scan computer voting machines. Before finalizing a sales contract, vendors such as Diebold, ES&S, Sequoia insist that county election boards agree to a trade secrets clause. This clause prohibits local election officials from examining or testing software and hardware that comprise the computerized voting system.

Secrecy clauses eliminate public oversight of the recording, counting and reporting of election results. Such clauses privatize the election system and place it under the exclusive control of corporations. Historically, corporate vendors and their key employees have tended favor one American political party.

To prevent the widespread adoption of these democracy destroying election systems, citizen activists must sound the alarm warning government officials, legislators and the public. Effective communication of this serious threat to our democracy will require:

- Specialized research and fact gathering
- Formulation of powerful images, messages and symbols
- Extensive communication with government officials, legislators, organized labor, citizen organizations and individual voters

Due to the massive scope of this initiative **thousands of citizen activists** will be needed.

The working groups and state task forces described above provide the specialized and long-term organizational structure to get the job done. These state task forces, their county chapters and their working groups will:

- Gather the facts
- Formulate a powerful message
- Communicate the danger
- Assure the creation of a secure election system by public officials

Topics needing immediate research, message formulation and widespread communication are:

- The mechanical unreliability of computerized voting systems
- The “hackability” of computerized voting systems (especially by corporate insiders)
- The political, logistical, and financial obstacles that render many ballot recounts impotent
- The widespread use of paper ballot and hand count systems by over ninety percent of the World’s democracies

Effective communication of this research to government officials, legislators and the public in the early months of 2005 is critical.

ELECTION SYSTEM INTEGRITY

2006 SOLUTIONS

The rapidly approaching General Election makes it imperative that multiple solutions be implemented by November 7, 2006.

Following are **eight strategies / solutions** that can be attempted simultaneously:

1. Widespread citizen movement to replace all computer voting machines with paper ballots and hand counts. *
2. Manual parallel accounting control systems (MPACS).
3. Federal court order – paper ballots and hand counts to be used exclusively throughout the nation.
4. Federal court injunction – states to be prohibited from using computerized voting systems.
5. Passage of federal voter-verified paper ballot (VVPB) legislation.
6. Passage of state voter-verified paper ballot (VVPB) legislation.
7. Independent exit polls for statewide and other key elections.
8. National media blitz warning public of rigged, fraudulent and error prone computerized elections in 2006.

The Ballot Integrity Task Force has developed a 2006 solution known as **MPACS** - Manual Parallel Accounting Control Systems (strategy number two).

We believe that **MPACS** offers a number of important advantages (described in the next section). The key feature of **MPACS** is that it is **used in parallel** with computerized voting systems.

* For most states the paper ballot / hand count system is an approved method requiring no new legislation.

MANUAL PARALLEL ACCOUNTING CONTROL SYSTEMS

(KEY FEATURES)

1. Every polling place using computerized voting equipment will install and operate a manual parallel accounting control system comprised of paper ballots and hand counts. Computerized voting machines producing a voter-verified paper ballot may be used in addition to, **but not in lieu of, a manual parallel accounting control system.**
2. To streamline the operation of this parallel accounting system, only federal and state offices would require paper ballots and hand counts. This will generally limit the number of offices covered under the manual system to less than ten. County and local offices can be added to the paper ballot should a local election jurisdiction desire to do so.
3. The **manual parallel accounting control system** will include the following features:
 - a. Paper ballots listing all candidates for federal and state offices.
 - b. Upon close of polling place, immediate hand count of all paper ballots in public view.
 - c. Upon completion of hand count, vote totals recorded immediately in triplicate on official report forms and signed by all election officials present.
 - d. One official report form posted immediately on wall of polling place.
 - e. Two remaining official reports and sealed ballot box delivered immediately to appropriate election authorities.
 - f. All paper ballots retained by election authorities in secure location until statute of limitation expires.
 - g. Publicly funded nonpartisan exit polls conducted and reported on Election Day for federal, state and other key elections.
4. In states granting paper ballots legal vote status hand counts will be legally binding. In states not granting paper ballots legal vote status, hand counts will serve as an accuracy check on computerized voting systems.
5. The **manual parallel accounting control system** will be modeled after the paper ballot / hand count systems used in Canada and New Hampshire. Details of the New Hampshire System can be found in the “New Hampshire Election Procedure Manual: 2004-2005” published by the NH Department of State (pp.104-109).

6. The advantages of **MPACS** are as follows:
- a. Legislation may not be required to institute the supplemental manual accounting control system.
 - b. Lawsuits or court orders may not be required to institute the supplemental manual accounting control system.
 - c. The use of parallel manual and computerized accounting systems follows standard accounting practice used during periods of system transition.
 - d. The paper ballot / hand count system is streamlined, has already been developed and is being used successfully in Canada and New Hampshire. Polling places in these jurisdictions typically take less than four hours to hand count ballots with 10 or fewer open offices.
 - e. The simple paper ballot / hand count system is easy for election officials, the media and voters to understand.
 - f. The cost of implementation will be minimal and well within the budgetary constraints of local election boards.
 - g. Election judges, poll watchers, and citizen volunteers can be quickly trained to track vote counts using preprinted tally sheets.
 - h. The 2006 ESI Solution is well suited to a broad citizen movement. This grassroots movement will demand the use of a **manual parallel accounting control system** in all polling places relying on the use of computerized voting equipment used to record, count and report federal and state election results. Over 50 million U.S. voters will need the protection of a **manual parallel accounting control system** for the November 2006 General Election.

To assure the installation of a parallel election system (for federal and state offices) by the November 2006 General Election, we recommended the creation of an independent commission to rapidly design and coordinate with state election officials its implementation.

A LONG-TERM SOLUTION

American election history has demonstrated the poor reliability of vote counting machines. More serious than frequent accidental counting errors is the threat of intentional vote fraud. Computer technology now makes possible massive vote fraud that is often undetectable. American democracy will never be secure as long as votes are counted inside black box machines.

It is therefore recommended that all U.S. elections be conducted under the following conditions:

1. All votes cast on paper ballots having legal vote status.
2. Upon close of polling place, immediate hand count of all paper ballots in public view.
3. Upon completion of hand count, vote totals recorded immediately in triplicate on official report forms and signed by all election officials present.
4. One official report form posted immediately on wall of polling place.
5. Two remaining official reports and sealed ballot box delivered immediately to appropriate election authorities.
6. All paper ballots retained by election authorities in secure location until statute of limitation expires.
7. Publicly funded nonpartisan exit polls conducted and reported on Election Day for all statewide and other key elections.
8. Computerized voting machines producing a voter-verified paper ballot may be used in addition to, **but not in lieu of, a manual parallel accounting control system.**

SUMMARY

The elimination of unreliable and insecure black-box election systems will require grassroots action on many fronts:

1. State and federal lawsuits requiring election authorities to install election systems with paper ballots and publicly observed hand counts.
2. Repeal of election laws and regulations requiring or permitting black-box voting systems (i.e. computerized voting systems not requiring a voter-verified paper ballot and publicly observed hand counts).
3. Passage of new election laws and institution of new regulations requiring paper ballots and public hand counts of all ballots cast.
4. A massive citizen campaign directed at elected officials demanding election system integrity and the elimination of black-box voting.
5. Creation of nonpartisan election boards at the federal, state and local levels

Achievement of these goals will require citizen action throughout every state and at the federal level.

The National Ballot Integrity Project Task Force provides the institutional structure to quickly launch the massive grassroots campaign that will be needed to create honest and reliable election systems throughout America.

Note: Appendices A and B provide an introduction to the issues and current conditions necessitating the creation of a National Ballot Integrity Project Task Force.

APPENDIX A: ERNEST PARTRIDGE WRITES

www.crisispapers.org

Imagine the following election procedure:

- Paper ballots are marked in secret and deposited by the voters in sealed ballot boxes. (So far, so good).
- The ballot boxes are then delivered to the offices of a private firm, which is publicly known to be a supporter of and contributor to one of the political parties.
- Upon receipt of the ballot boxes, the doors are locked and no one other than employees of that firm is allowed to inspect and validate the counting.
- The ballots are then destroyed, after which the results are announced.
- The firm's favorite candidate is declared the winner. The final results vary radically from pre-election polls.

And yet this scenario is an exact analogy, in all relevant respects, to the "computer screen" voting system that has been rushed into use, following the fiasco of the 2000 presidential election.

Consider:

- There are, in all, thirteen manufacturers of electronic voting machines, of which two, ES&S and Diebold, are predominant. Both are owned and operated by individuals with right-wing political views, who are heavy contributors to the Republican Party.
- ES&S and Diebold machines use "proprietary" source codes (i.e., not available for public inspection and analysis), and leave no "paper record" of their tallies.
- "Exit polling," a reliable validation method which has proven to be much more accurate than pre-election polling, was "withdrawn" soon after the polls closed in the November 2002 election. Voter News Service (VNS), a consortium owned by the major cable and broadcast TV networks, reported that the system "collapsed," due to "technical problems."
- In a comparison of the polling and results of nineteen 2002 election races (by www.scoop.co.nz), fourteen showed a post poll swing to the Republicans (many far outside the margin of error), two showed a swing to the Democrats (all within the margin of error), and three were "close to correct." If the pre-election poll predictions had been correct, the Democrats would now control the Senate.
- "The state where the biggest upset occurred, Georgia, is also the state that ran its elections with the most electronic voting machines." (The "swing" to the Republican was from 9-12 points). ([Scoop](#)). }

Finally, and most significantly: Does all this suggest that "the fix was in"? *Perhaps*. Is there any way of knowing this? *Absolutely not*: The exit polls were cancelled, there is no independent record (e.g., on paper) of the ballots, and the machines and their software are not available for inspection.

APPENDIX B

LOSING OUR DEMOCRACY – SAVING OUR DEMOCRACY

Envision a “democracy” where it is impossible to vote out incumbent members of the dominant political party.

Envision a “democracy” where it is impossible to prevent the dominant political party from installing (at all levels of government) a controlling number of its candidates in key executive, legislative and judicial positions.

Imagine if the dominant political party (DPP) could:

- Secure control of the companies that make the voting machines and vote-counting software.
- Centralize vote-counting systems, and politicize their supervision.
- Legislate for the adoption of such systems throughout the nation, and provide large amounts of money for the purchase of these systems.
- Establish systems of vote counting that effectively prevent anybody on the ground in the election – at a booth or precinct level from seeing what is happening at a micro-level.
- Get all the major media to sign up to a single exit-polling system that it also controls – removing the risk of exit-polling showing up its shenanigans.
- Install a backdoor, or numerous backdoors, in the vote counting systems that enable it to manipulate the tabulation of results in real time as they are coming in.

Such a system would enable the DPP to:

- Intervene in precisely the minimum number of races necessary to ensure that it won a majority on election night. On the basis of polling the DPP could identify the closest races and thus keep its tweaking to a bare minimum.
- Minimize the risks of discovery.
- Target and remove individual political opponents who were too successful, too popular or too inquisitive.
- Accomplish all the above without the public being the least bit aware of what it was doing.

www.scoop.co.nz/mason/stories/HL0307/S00064.htm

Is the United States of America rapidly becoming such a “democracy”?

Listed below are 10 introductory articles/essays describing one of the most serious threats that American Democracy has yet faced – **widespread computer vote fraud**.

Also listed are three web pages identifying several additional sources of information and analyses on the **2002** and **2004** computer vote fraud scandals?

1. The Theft of Your Vote Is Just a Chip Away, By Thom Hartmann, 7/25/03
www.scoop.co.nz/mason/stories/HL0307/S00246.htm
2. Sludge Report #154 – Bigger Than Watergate, C.D. Sludge, 7/8/03
www.scoop.co.nz/mason/stories/HL0307/S00064.htm
3. Inside A U.S. Election Vote Counting Program, By Bev Harris
www.scoop.co.nz/mason/stories/HL0307/S00065.htm
4. A Vote of No Confidence, By Michael Ollove, 8/25/03
www.dangerouscitizen.com/Articles/851.aspx
5. Networks to Dissolve Exit Poll service, By Richard Morin, 1/14/03
www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A51692-2003Jan13?language+printer
6. An American Coup: Midterm Election Polls vs. Actuals, By Alastair Thompson, 11/12/02 www.scoop.co.nz/mason/stories/HL0211/S00078.htm
7. Concerns Over “Serious Flaws” in Electronic Voting Prompt New Examination by Members of Congress, By Christopher Bollyn
http://www.americanfreepress.net/08_25_03/Concerns_Over/concerns_over.html
8. How George W. Bush Won the 2004 Presidential Election, By Sandeep S. Atwal <http://www.infernalpress.com/Columns/election.html>
9. Jim Crow Revived in Cyberspace, By Martin Luther King III and Greg Palast <http://www.gregpalast.com/printerfriendly.cfm?artid=222>
10. Report Critical of Security in Vote Machines, By Jeff McDonald, 8/4/03
www.signonsandiego.com/news/metro/20030804-9999_1m4diebold.html

For additional information and analyses see:

EcoTalk.org – www.ecotalk.org/VotingSecurity.htm

Electoral Integrity- www.crisispapers.org/topics/electoral-integrity.htm

A Very America Coup- www.scoop.co.nz/mason/features/?s=usacoup