



Senator Feinstein Cosponsors Legislation Requiring
Voting Machines to Produce Paper Ballots
September 8, 2004

Washington, DC – Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) today cosponsored legislation to require all voting machines to produce a paper ballot once voters have cast their votes, thereby giving voters an opportunity to verify and correct their ballots.

“After the election problems in Florida in 2000 and more recently in California, it is clear that we must do more to ensure that citizens’ votes are counted,” Senator Feinstein said. **“This legislation will strengthen public confidence in our electoral process.”**

The legislation, introduced by Senator John Ensign (R-Nev.) and co-sponsored by Senators Harry Reid (D-Nev.), Richard Durbin (D-Ill.), and John Sununu (R-NH), in addition to Senator Feinstein, would require all states to use voting machines that print verifiable paper ballots by July 2006. This system, known as an Accessible Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail, would guarantee that each electronic vote has a corresponding paper record that is available in the event of a recount. Currently, Nevada is the only state in which all voters will have the option of using machines with a voter verifiable receipt printer in this November’s election.

Voting irregularities in several counties during March’s primary elections revealed serious problems with California’s electronic voting machines. In April, California Secretary of State Kevin Shelley decertified touch-screen voting systems and in June set standards for all voting machines in California to have a paper audit trail system in place by July 2006. These standards also require California counties to give voters the option of using paper ballots instead of casting votes electronically in the upcoming November elections.

On August 27, the California State Assembly and Senate approved legislation sponsored by Senator Ross Johnson (R-Irvine) affirming the standards set by Secretary of State Shelley to require all California counties to enact a Accessible Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail system, but moved up the date to January 1, 2006 to accommodate the 2006 primary elections.

###