

The following resolution was considered by the DNC Resolutions Committee and is recommended for adoption by the DNC at its meeting October 4, 2003. It was passed unanimously.

Submitted by: Donna Brazile, At-Large / District of Columbia
Hartina Flournoy, At-Large / District of Columbia
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Resolution Supporting Election Reform

WHEREAS, President Lyndon Johnson, who signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965, said “voting was the lifeblood of our democracy;” and

WHEREAS, in the 2000 presidential election, millions of Americans were legally disenfranchised by the U.S. Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, in the aftermath of the 2000 Presidential campaign, the Democratic National Committee called on the U.S. Congress and the Bush Administration to adopt and support comprehensive election reform to help restore voter’s confidence in our electoral system; and

WHEREAS, a voter-verified paper audit trail is the only known way to guarantee that an individual’s vote has been both recorded and counted correctly by an electronic voting machine (such as a touch screen); and

WHEREAS, the disabled community has legitimate concerns that improper implementation of a voter verified paper audit trail could deny a vision-impaired voter the same opportunity for access and participation, including privacy and independence, to an electronic voting machine as for other voters, as is guaranteed by the Help America Vote Act (HAVA); and

WHEREAS, the technology exists today to build an electronic voting machine that incorporates a voter-verified paper audit trail that is accessible to vision-impaired voters; and

WHEREAS, on October 29, 2002, President George Bush signed the bi-partisan legislation HAVA to provide states with resources to upgrade its voting systems, set uniform national standards for election procedures, require states to provide for “provisional ballots”, update statewide voter registration lists and to enhance the electoral participation of all citizens; and

WHEREAS, Congress has not adequately funded HAVA or confirmed members to serve on the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) which shall assist states by providing funding to help states meet their deadlines in improving their electoral system; and

WHEREAS, the House Democratic Caucus, under the leadership of Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer, has called on the Republican Leadership in Congress to include \$1.86 billion in election reform funding in order to help states upgrade their voting equipment and implement HAVA; and

WHEREAS, full funding would help guarantee that all the votes are counted in 2004 and this funding will quickly implement the changes needed to prevent another “Florida style” election next year;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the DNC calls on the U.S. Congress and the Bush Administration to help fund electoral reform to replace antiquated and obsolete voting equipment and to urge Congress to confirm members to the Election Assistance Commission; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the DNC goes on record demanding that all electronic voting equipment used in public elections must incorporate an accessible voter-verified paper audit trail as soon as practical, but in no case any later than the November 2004 general election; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the DNC will continue to fight for the vigorous enforcement of the Voting Rights Act and urge state and local Democratic leaders to monitor the implementation of HAVA across the country.