

**Florida Voters Coalition**  
**2007 Position Paper on Voting Systems**  
15 March 2007 Revision

The Florida Voters Coalition (FVC) <sup>1</sup>calls on Florida officials to return elections to their rightful owners – the voters – in 2007. Currently, Florida’s elections are unreasonably controlled by private, corporate interests and conducted by secret, unverifiable means. The Governor, Legislature and Department of State all have roles in reversing this unwholesome trend by returning the conduct of Florida elections to transparent, citizen–run, local affairs in the most fundamental traditions of 230 years of American democracy. Florida voters demand that their officials once again actively advocate for them – not vendors, not political parties – but Florida’s voters.

These are the top six measures that The Florida Voters Coalition calls on the Executive and Legislative branches to work together to accomplish, at the very least, during the 2007 legislative session. We look forward to working with the State of Florida and other institutions, private and public, toward these and other positive reforms.

1. Make voter verified paper ballots (VVPB)—hereinafter defined as durable paper ballots, hand marked by the voter or by a certified non–tabulating ballot–marking device—the official record of every vote. Optical Scan VVPB systems with suitable ballot marking devices comply with this standard. Direct Recording Electronic devices (DREs) fitted with printers do not comply.
  
2. Mandate random, statistically significant<sup>2</sup>, manual (hand–to–eye) independent audits of VVPB after every election and before certification, for all voting methods, to verify machine results.
  
3. Rewrite FS §102.166 to redefine manual recounts to include all VVPB instead of only overvotes and undervotes. Expand the events that trigger manual recounts to include the following: discrepancies greater than 1 % or that place the outcome of the election in doubt found in manual post–election audits; official malfeasance; statistical anomalies<sup>2</sup>; and/or voting system failures.

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<sup>1</sup> Florida Voters Coalition (FVC) is a group of Florida voters and organizations working together toward common goals of election reform.

<sup>2</sup>To be defined

4. Facilitate the use of VVPB for all Early Voters by repealing the provision of FS §101.573 requiring precinct-based reporting for Early Voting,<sup>3</sup> unless other practicable methods can be utilized such as Ballot-on-Demand.

5. Follow the mandate of FS §101.015(7), to “ensure that new technologies are appropriately certified in a timely manner for all elections” by proactively soliciting, testing and certifying multi-lingual ballot systems and a variety of innovative, non-tabulating ballot-marking devices as components of state-certified voting systems, thus allowing all votes to be cast on VVPB and providing an equal opportunity for language minorities and disabled voters to cast an unaided and private vote.<sup>4</sup>

6. Extend the deadline for certification of elections to allow adequate time to conduct random, statistically significant audits *prior to* certification.<sup>5</sup>

## *Endorsements – Alphabetical by Organization*

- Howard Simon, Executive Director, ACLU of Florida
- Ellen Brodsky, Executive Director, Broward Election Reform Coalition (BERC)
- Ben Wilcox, Executive Director, Common Cause Florida
- Susan Pynchon, Executive Director, Florida Fair Elections Coalition (FFEC)
- Trevor Harvey, President, Sarasota County Branch, NAACP
- Susan Van Houten, Co-Founder, Palm Beach Coalition for Election Reform
- Brad Ashwell, Florida Public Interest Research Group (PIRG)
- Kindra Muntz, President, Sarasota Alliance for Fair Elections (SAFE)
- Fred Seidl, Coordinator, Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry, Florida
- Pamela Smith, President, Verified Voting
- Dan McCrea, Florida State Coordinator, Voter Action
- Pamela Haengel, President, Voting Integrity Alliance of Tampa Bay (VIA Tampa Bay)

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<sup>3</sup> FS §101.573 adds excessive costs and undue burden on Supervisors of Elections by requiring a multiplicity of ballot styles at every Early Voting site. Precinct based reporting of Early Voting can also compromise voters’ privacy. This law was passed by the 2005 legislature against the recommendation of the State Association of Supervisors of Elections.

<sup>4</sup> This will offer counties cost-effective choices. Thus far the Division of Elections has certified only the AutoMark ballot marker, and that with only one ES&S optical scan system.

<sup>5</sup> Oregon allows 31 days from the date of the election to certification and New York allows 25 days, whereas Florida currently allows only 7 days from a primary election to certification and only 11 days from a general election to certification.