Questions to Ask About Voting Systems

Ask yourself and vendors these questions when you try out voting systems.

Ask about voting and verifying your vote:

✓ How do I know that my vote has been registered electronically inside the computer in the way I registered it on the screen?

✓ Do you feel sure your vote was accurately recorded and will be on a *usable* paper record in case of a recount?

✓ How is a recount done if necessary?

✓ How will persons with disabilities vote?

✓ What about those who need to vote in a different language than English?

✓ What will be the process for absentee, military, and provisional voting? How are these votes counted?

Ask about voter verified paper ballots (VVPB):

Current NYS legislation requires touch screen or pushbutton style voting equipment (DRE) to have voter verified paper ballots (VVPB). With DRE+VVPB, the voter confirms the DRE printout is correct before leaving the booth. The VVPB is a paper record of the vote, and can be used in recounts.

✓ Is the vendor demonstrating a *fully working, accessible* model of the DRE+VVPB being sold?

- If not, why not?
- If not, when will a working model be available?
- It takes a lot of time to design, build, test, debug, retest and certify DRE+VVPB equipment. How can it be ready for the 2006 election if it doesn't exist yet?

✓ Is the voter verified paper ballot feature accessible to disabled voters?

✓ How much additional time will the process of voter verification take each voter to complete?

✓ What type of paper is the ballot printed on? How long will the printed paper ballot last and be readable? Will the ballot be easy or difficult to read during recounts?

✓ How comfortable were you with the process for voter-verification? Was it easy? Do you think most people would take time to do this?

Ask about the current status of the machine:

✓ Is the machine being demonstrated the one that will be sold in this state?

✓ Is this machine that will be sold in this state federally certified as compliant with the Help America Vote Act?

✓ Are all accessibility features installed and functional?

Ask about testing and programming the machines:

✓ How are these machines tested for accuracy?

✓ Who programs the machine for each election? How is that done?

✓ Will the persons setting up the computers for each election be able to modify software and hardware?

✓ Will the persons setting up elections be local officials or vendor technicians? Will those persons understand computers thoroughly?

Ask about repair, storage, transportation and other costs:

✓ What will poll workers and election commissioners do if a machine breaks down during an election?

✓ How much climate controlled space will this equipment need for storage?

✓ How easy is it to move these machines? How heavy are they? How carefully must they be handled?

✓ Will election workers be able to move these machines or will professionals need to be hired?

✓ How much will the machine cost when fully equipped with disabled accessibility and voter verification features?