

I very much appreciate the opportunity we've all had to speak and want to thank

Joyce McKinley for her integrity and hard work on behalf of our elections.

Jon Eich for his steadfast diligence on this issue,

Rich Rogers, if it were not for him we would have the opportunity to speak at this democratic forum

And I also want to say, for the record, that when Steve Dershem cast his vote for the purchase of these machines, we did not have the compelling body of evidence that is available to us now. This is true for Chris Exarchos as well.

Also in 2006, the Commissioners expected the State to step up and pass a bill that was pending at the time, which required a paper ballot in PA.

Who would've thought that after two years, the State would still not have moved on this issue?

It is now clear that we cannot wait for the State to act. The county must take action.

In response to comments last week

–I'd like to share my experience as a poll worker, in that first election when voters could choose to use between the iVotronic touch screen, or the optical scan system.

A woman came in and asked to use the optical scan system.

A poll worker responded, "Oh don't be scared! The touch screen is easy!"

Some poll workers in my precinct even commented to voters, that if they planned to do any write-ins they should use touch screens so that the workers could home earlier! I found that appalling.

Similar comments were reported county-wide, yet only 54 percent of voters that day chose the touch screens -- not a large majority considering how so many poll workers were promoting their use.

At the end of that Election Day, one of our machines displayed a red WARNING, message that said: "PEB Anomaly Detected, Failed operation was Write-in Data"

I followed the machine back the courthouse and waited for almost 2 hours before someone handed me a piece of paper

with the vote totals from our precinct.

I was told that the data was recovered from a back up drive.

--It probably was,

but I saw first hand that these systems are not dependable,

that the collection of our votes is not a simple or a transparent process, and that we are expected to trust a system we cannot see.

There were many other problems that day.

Machines went down, PEBS had problems

and 31 precincts were not able to print their zero tapes.

That was 40% of the precinct!

PA election Code requires that Zero tapes be printed before voting begins in order to prove that no votes have been cast before opening.

One precinct even printed their zero tape just before closing at 7:49 PM!

Please note that no problems were reported with zero tapes or machine malfunctions with the optical scan systems.

While Zero tape problems have improved with every election, They has been a problem in EVERY election since, causing polls to open late, people to leave or allowing voters to vote against election code.

Another problem with our current voting machines is the privacy issue.

Audit logs are available for citizens upon request and by tracing the order in poll book or knowing what time a person has voted, their vote could be determined.

Just today Concerned Voters received a complain in the mail saying:

“A poll worker was looking over my shoulder, which I found quite discomforting. Because I was unsure that my vote would be counted and I would’ve had to ask the judge to look over my votes, I simply left.

Other complaints were submitted to a drop box on election day, in the interest of time, I’ll read some major points:

1. There is no booth, not even a tinted screen. Anyone walking behind me can see my vote.
2. We need to get paper ballots by Nov. 2 or we are wasting our time.
3. In the event of a machine malfunction, there is no way to verify the votes.
4. I talked to the judge of elections who did not like the new machines. She said they are more labor intensive as each voter must be escorted to the machine.
5. We now have 9 poll workers when they used to have 6.
6. The electronic voting procedure is a farce. It is absolutely not private. I can clearly see who anyone else is voting for and they can see who I am voting for as well. This must change.
7. It is outrageous that a paper trail is not available to confirm my vote!! WHY?

You may not hear about it in the news, but there have been many problems with the voting machines in this past Primary Season.

-Subpoenas were issued in six New Jersey counties on April 8, 2008, demanding that officials turn over 60 touch screen voting machines for testing because so many discrepancies were found in the recent presidential primary.

<http://www.theinquirer.net/gb/inquirer/news/2008/04/10/jersey-voting-machines>

A criminal investigation has been launched in Franklin County, Ohio because a candidate’s name didn't appear on some machines, but did appear on others. The machines confiscated there are ES&S iVotronic touch-screen voting machines (the same machines we use here). The audit logs were also turned off.

[http://www.columbusdispatch.com/live/content/local\\_news/stories/2008/03/16/BOEPROBE.ART\\_ART\\_03-16-08\\_B1\\_9F9LIV3.html?sid=101](http://www.columbusdispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2008/03/16/BOEPROBE.ART_ART_03-16-08_B1_9F9LIV3.html?sid=101)

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Also a point worth mentioning  
and repeating is that this is not a partisan issue  
-it IS an issue of power and opportunity.

Last week you heard that Democratic Governor Bill Richardson  
banned DRE touchscreen in his state.  
New Mexico now uses all Optical scan systems.

Republican Governor Charlie Crist, of Florida, has also banned touchscreens in favor of optical scan  
paper ballot systems.

Last week we also heard about vote flipping on the screen.

Vote flipping was widely reported in 2004 when voters claimed they tried to vote for John Kerry but  
George Bush kept appearing.

In Centre County in 2006 we had a reports of this problem from voters who tried to vote for Lynn  
Swann but Ed Rendell kept appearing.

The problem was so prevalent across the State that the Republican State Committee filed a complaint  
with the Pennsylvania Secretary of State that this was happening in the Governor's and State Senate  
races.

Exit Polls we conducted in '06 showed major discrepancies in the Governor's Race and in the PA  
Senate race.  
Penn State's statistical consultant described the differences as "significant and outside the bounds of the  
margin of error"

Because we have no paper record we cannot determine why the results did not match, we are left with  
only questions.

Even with all these problems, as a result of these forums  
I am feeling very hopeful for Centre County.

The speeches last week and tonight have been informative, articulate, and inspiring.  
The people of Centre County understand that  
what is at stake here > is our very democracy.

I am confident that our Commissioner will make the right decision,  
-that they will restore confidence in the election process,  
not just for their voters, but for our county, and for our country!

Thank you,  
Mary Vollero, Chair, Concerned Voters of Centre County