





0	Connecticut Citizen Election Audit Coalition	
0	 League of Women Voters of Connecticut	0  Connecticut COMMON CAUSE <i>Holding Power Accountable</i>
0	 Connecticut Citizen Action Group	0  CTVotersCount.org because Connecticut voters count

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Connecticut's November 2008 Post-Election Audits Report Large Differences From Optical Scanner Totals

Coalition Calls On Legislature To Act

Hartford, Connecticut –Today, the Connecticut Citizen Election Audit Coalition released its report on the November 2008 post-election audits.

The Coalition noted large differences between reported results by electronic voting equipment and the hand count of ballots by election officials across Connecticut. In some cases as many as twenty-four (24) fewer ballots were counted by hand than recorded by optical scanners. For individual candidate races, vote counts between hand counts and scanner tapes varied by as much as three-hundred-sixty-six (366) votes in one race or as much as 46% in another. Most officials attributed the widespread differences to the inability to count votes accurately by hand.

Coalition spokesperson Luther Weeks noted, “Given the variation in the counting procedures used, there is no way to distinguish when officials or machines counted accurately or inaccurately. When differences are dismissed as human counting errors, it is unlikely that an audit would identify an election error or fraud should that occur.”

From the report:

We conclude, based on our observations and analysis of audit reports submitted to the Secretary of the State that the November post-election audits still do not inspire confidence...Among our greatest concerns are the discrepancies between machine counts and hand-counts reported to the Secretary of the State by several municipalities. In many cases, these discrepancies are not thoroughly and reasonably explained. We believe that the ad-hoc counting procedures used by many municipalities were not sufficient to count ballots accurately and efficiently.

Cheryl Dunson, League of Women Voters of Connecticut’s Vice President of Public Issues, stated, “We have reorganized our recommendations to the Secretary of the State and the Legislature. Along with improvements to laws, and audit procedures, we recommend that an Independent Audit Board be established.”

Cheri Quickmire, Executive Director, Connecticut Common Cause said, “Gaps in ballot chain-of-custody, election accounting, and the post-election audits must be addressed to assure integrity and provide confidence to the voters of Connecticut”

Tom Swan, Executive Director, Connecticut Citizen Action Group, said “This is our fourth report showing similar weaknesses in the post-election audits. After these reports and five public hearings around the state, it is time for the Legislature to act.”

Observers came from the membership ranks of the coalition partners -- The League of Women Voters of Connecticut, The Connecticut Citizen Action Group, Common Cause Connecticut, and Connecticut Voters Count. The coalition’s reports are available online at: <http://www.CTElectionAudit.org>