



For Immediate Release: November 20, 2012

Contact: Luther Weeks, 860-918-2115 or Luther@CTElectionAudit.org

Coalition finds 31% of Official Audit Reports Lack Critical Data

Municipalities failed to report data critical to audit evaluation. Increasing numbers choose paper only elections, avoiding scanners and audits.

Hartford, Connecticut –Today, the Connecticut Citizen Election Audit Coalition released its report on the August 2012 Primary post-election audits.

The report highlighted concerns with two increasing trends:

- *An increase in missing and incomplete official reports. There are 16 of 52 (31%) reports with errors making it impossible to determine if machines had functioned properly. What basis is there to trust audits, with this significant level of error in reporting?*
- *Up up to 19 towns avoided optical scanners and audits by conducting paper only elections. Such voting is not audited, not transparent, and error prone based on past observations of hand counts.*

We conclude, based on our observations and analysis of official audit reports submitted to the Secretary of the State, that the August post-election audits still do not inspire confidence because of the continued:

- *Lack of integrity in the random district selection and race selection processes.*
- *Lack of consistency, reliability, and accuracy in the conduct of the audit.*
- *Weaknesses in the ballot chain-of-custody.*
- *Missing or incomplete reports, lacking critical information.*

Cheryl Dunson, League of Women Voters of Connecticut’s President, stated, “When officials submit reports missing basic data such as the number of votes counted by hand or by optical scanner, it defeats the purpose of the audits - on what basis can we determine the accuracy of optical scanners without such information?”

Luther Weeks, Coalition Executive Director, stated, “In the past, many officials argued that their staffs cannot accurately count ballots by hand in the ideal conditions afforded by audits, yet now an increasing number choose to forgo optical scanning and report results based on unaudited hand counts performed in the more trying conditions of election night”.

The report found little change from past observations and conclusions and little progress by officials in improving post-election audit integrity. Because of ongoing shortcomings in the performance of post-election audits, the Coalition continues to urge our state election officials to offer more guidance to local personnel and to require more consistency in the conduct of the audit.

Weeks noted, “Once again as a public service we are providing online images of the official audit reports from local registrars, along with our digitized data so that anyone can audit our work.”

This is the tenth major post-election audit observation report by the Coalition. Volunteer 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 and data are available online at: <http://www.CTElectionAudit.org>