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Coalition Releases 2nd Post-Election Audit Report: Procedures Alone Insufficient For Effective Election Audits

Coalition report on post-presidential-primary audits finds inadequate adherence to procedures and recommends additional changes in the law.

Hartford, Connecticut –Today, the Connecticut Citizen Election Audit Coalition released its report summarizing the observations of more than 51 impartial citizen observers at 34 state-mandated post-election audits conducted by local officials following February’s presidential primary election. The Coalition recommended additional steps to a more effective and meaningful post-election audit process for all future elections in the state.

Observers found that many audit teams of election officials followed procedures. However, other audit teams failed to follow procedures in one or more ways. The report cited lack of understanding of procedures, lack of understanding of the principles behind the procedures, lack of attention to procedures, and apparent lack of ability for some election officials to follow the procedures.

Coalition spokesperson Luther Weeks noted, “With improved procedures we are able to identify additional inadequacies in the law. Many of the audits, as observed, leave us uncertain if an error or fraud would have been detected in an audited race where we were not present to observe. We also question the security of the chain of custody to protect the integrity of ballots such that audits and investigations can be performed effectively.”

The Coalition’s previous post-election audit observation was conducted after the November 2007 election, that report provided 18 recommendations to improve procedures and the law. Observers found that procedure changes recommended by the Coalition after the previous report, implemented by the Secretary of the State, improved the results. The new report adds recommendations and updates progress on the initial recommendations.

Tom Swan, Executive Director, Connecticut Citizen Action Group said, “A chain is only as strong as its weakest link. Election confidence and integrity is dependent on the integrity of each municipality and district involved”.

Coalition members include: The Connecticut Citizen Action Group, Common Cause Connecticut, and Connecticut Voters Count.

The coalition’s reports are available online at <http://www.CTElectionAudit.org>