





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

For Immediate Release: February 2, 2010

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

Coalition Finds Unsatisfactory Improvement In Election Audits Across The State

Citizen observation and analysis show the need for more attention to detail by officials, improvement in counting methods, and ballot chain-of-custody

Hartford, Connecticut –Today, the Connecticut Citizen Election Audit Coalition released its report on the November 2009 post-election audits. This is the fifth major post-election audit observation report by the Coalition since the adoption of optical scanners and paper ballots statewide.

The Coalition noted significant differences between results reported by optical scanners and the hand count of ballots by election officials across Connecticut. Compared to previous audits, the Coalition noted small incremental improvements in the attention to detail, following procedures, and in the chain-of-custody. Many towns improved over their past performance and overall the largest differences and level of failure to follow procedures was less than in previous post-election audits.

Coalition spokesperson Luther Weeks noted, “We acknowledge some improvement, yet there is still a long way to go to provide confidence in our election system that the voters of Connecticut deserve.”

From the report:

In this report, we conclude that the November post-election audits still do not inspire confidence because of the continued lack of

- *standards for determining need for further investigation of discrepancies,*
- *detailed guidance for counting procedures, and*
- *consistency, reliability, and transparency in the conduct of the audit.*

We find no reason to attribute all errors to either humans or machines.

Cheryl Dunson, League of Women Voters of Connecticut’s Vice President of Public Issues, stated, “We continue to support our past recommendations to the Secretary of the State and the Legislature for improvement in the post-election audit laws, counting procedures, and chain-of-custody.”

Tom Swan, Executive Director, Connecticut Citizen Action Group, said, “Among our greatest concerns are the discrepancies between machine counts and hand-counts reported to the Secretary of the State by municipalities. When differences are dismissed as human counting errors, it is unlikely that an audit would identify an election error or fraud should that occur”

Cheri Quickmire, Executive Director, Connecticut Common Cause said “There needs to be training and accountability. Election officials need to be familiar with the procedures, follow the procedures, and the procedures must be enforceable.”

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>**