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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 30, 2007 10:45 AM
To: Voting Systems
Subject: FW: PAI recommendations re: Secretary Bowen's Draft Criteria for Top to Bottom Voting System Review

Lowell, I received the following comments from Protection & Advocacy, Inc. Debbie

-----Original Message-----

From: Hillary Sklar [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 30, 2007 10:31 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: PAI recommendations re: Secretary Bowen's Draft Criteria for Top to Bottom Voting System Review

Protection & Advocacy, Inc. has reviewed Secretary Bowen's "Draft Criteria for Top to Bottom Review of Electronic Voting Systems (EVS) for Use in California Elections." We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments. We are mindful that ensuring security, access for voters with disabilities and for minority language voters, and usability is a delicate balance. Overall, we are concerned that the Top-to-Bottom review proposal could result in decertification of voting systems without providing safeguards for disability access by some other means.

Here are our recommendations:

We recommend maintaining current EVS options until new EVS systems with improved technologies are available. We are concerned that decertification of an EVS, even if the reason is to ensure total HAVA compliance, could result in losing the EVS accessibility gains already made to this point. Access to an EVS that provides at least some accessibility features, even if not fully yet compliant, is preferred over no access at all. We do not want to lose the precious ground already gained.

We also recommend adding criteria that comports with the HAVA requirement that voters with disabilities shall be able to vote independently and without assistance if the voter so chooses. Again, if a particular EVS fails to meet this standard, there may ways to ensure compliance in the interim without decertifying an EVS which may provide the only accessible means to vote.

Lastly, we agree that people with disabilities should be part of the EVS review process. This is a critical part of evaluating and ensuring HAVA compliance in a constructive manner.

Thank you for your consideration.

Hillary Sklar

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