



Text File

Introduced: 6/23/2009

Bill No: 2009-1577, **Version:** 1

Committee: City Council

Status: Adopted

WHEREAS, in 2005 and 2007, this Council passed resolutions supporting the highest standards in voting machine technology; and

WHEREAS, in 2006, under a federal mandate, states and counties across the country purchased new voting machines; and

WHEREAS, many of the machines purchased do not live up to the original rules of the federal mandate, nor to the subsequent standards set forth in those regulations, nor even to the rules of common sense in terms of voter-verifiability, accessibility, security, transparency, and recountability; and

WHEREAS, many of the machines purchased by states and counties are opaque in software and hardware design, provide only unrecountable voting, and many are produced in sweatshops in third-world countries; and

WHEREAS, here in Allegheny County, as in most of the counties in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, we vote on systems which do not provide voter-verified recountable paper records nor a high level of accessibility nor any sort of transparency such that we may trust that our votes will be counted as they were meant to be cast; and

WHEREAS, a majority of Pennsylvania counties use touchscreen or push-button voting systems (DREs) such as the ES&S iVotronic used in Allegheny County, which systems provide no voter-verified paper ballot or other independent record that allows the voter to verify a correctly cast vote and provides for audits or recounts to take place; and

WHEREAS, studies conducted by the University of Pennsylvania and Pennsylvania State University demonstrated that these systems suffer from a number of security problems including a susceptibility to viruses and deliberately inserted backdoors; and

WHEREAS, these systems also lack adequate accessibility features for individuals with motor disabilities, which is particularly problematic for Pennsylvania's aging population; and

WHEREAS, voter-verified paper ballots are more cost-effective - according to a study conducted in Miami-Dade County, Florida, they could provide an estimated savings of \$13 million over five years, in addition to the potential for using union labor to produce the paper ballots; and

WHEREAS, Representative Rush Holt of New Jersey has introduced H.B. 2894, the Voter Confidence and Increased Accessibility Act of 2009, which would effectively address all those issues and more, and would also provide states and counties with funding to rectify the most egregious violations of the original intent of the

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legislation; and

WHEREAS, once passed, this act would provide funding for Pennsylvania counties to replace our existing unauditible and inaccessible systems with models that citizens can trust, models that are more secure, more accessible, and more cost-effective;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the **Council of the City of Pittsburgh** does hereby support U.S. Representative Rush Holt's bill, H.R. 2894; and

RESOLVED FURTHER that the **Council of the City of Pittsburgh** conveys this Sense of Council Resolution to the members of the United States Congress to encourage their positive and immediate action in helping to pass this bill.