



TESTIMONY
of the
CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE OF MUNICIPALITIES
to the
GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

March 12, 2008

CCM *opposes Section 2* of Raised House Bill 5888 “*An Act Concerning Revisions to the Optical Scan Voting System*”

Among other things, this bill *would require a hand-recount* if a canvass is required in a municipality that used the new optical scan marksense voting machines.

The State of Connecticut recently pushed hard to move our elections from the lever voting machines to these new optical scan voting machines. These machines were touted as safe, reliable, and less able to be tampered with. *If the State is not certain of the reliability of these machines, to the point of requiring a hand-recount, then CCM questions the state-mandated implementation of these machines in all polling places.*

While there may be an instance in which a hand-recount could help to confirm a vote tally, **it should not be the first step**. Rather, the suggestions that were reached in a joint meeting of the Secretary of the State and local election officials should be used. These included doing a physical examination of the ballots; sorting out ones that may be difficult to read by the machine; recounting obvious ballots through the machine; then carefully recounting remaining ballots to ensure voter intent is recorded.

As witnessed in several elections this last fall, hand-recounts are costly and time-consuming. Unless the state is prepared to pay for and staff a hand-recount, no such provision should be required unless as a last resort.

CCM urges the committee to **delete Section 2** of this bill prior to taking any action.

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If you have any questions, please contact Kachina Walsh-Weaver, Senior Legislative Associate of CCM via email kweaver@ccm-ct.org or via phone (203) 498-3026.