

**WASHINGTON** — The Committee on House Administration, led by Chairman Vernon J. Ehlert, R-Mich., held a hearing to review the security, accuracy, verification, and paper records for our nation's electronic voting systems. Chairman Ehlert's intention to further investigate voting systems was made clear after the Committee's July 19 hearing on the development and implementation of modern voting systems throughout the country.

During the hearing, the Committee heard from several highly qualified election experts, including county election officials, computer science and research professionals, and a representative from the American Association of People with Disabilities.

The participation of election experts from Georgia and Ohio proved extremely helpful in revealing efforts at the state level to solve voting machine issues. Keith Cunningham, Election Director in Allen County, Ohio, testified to the complications caused by Voter Verified Paper Audit Trails (VVPAT) due to printer errors. Said Cunningham, "Because the paper record in Ohio was the 'official' vote, it now disenfranchised voters because their votes were lost to the process even though we could faithfully retrieve them from the electronic record."

Ehlert noted the value of the testimony from local and state experts on their experiences with voting systems, saying, "We often say that the states are the experiment stations that test ideas. The federal government then can select from the best of what the states have learned."

Several technology experts also provided valuable insight into the security of the voting machines, though some cautioned against treating paper trails as a solution to minimizing the risk of tampering with voting

technology. In response to an inquiry questioning the security of electronic systems, Michael Shamos, Professor of Software Research at Carnegie Mellon University, stated, "I am not minimizing the possibility that people are out there trying to hack into the systems. My point is that the response is not to throw the machines into the ocean and go back to what we had in 1890. If it is a technical problem, then there is a technical solution."

"We have to recognize that there is still a lot of work to be done, and the American public's confidence will return because we will build better systems," Ehlers concluded. "We want to ensure every voter that their vote will be counted accurately, and that it will not be negated by fraudulent votes."

Today's hearing is available via webcast on the Committee's website, <http://cha.house.gov/>

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