



# New Yorkers for Verified Voting

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## Does the “Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail” Resolve Worries about DREs?

New Yorkers are being told that they should not worry about the numerous failures on the part of direct recording electronic voting machines (DREs) around the country, because NY law requires a “voter verified permanent paper record.” New York law allows two kinds of paper records: one is called a Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) and is “generated by a printer attached to a DRE voting system.”<sup>1</sup> The other is a Paper Ballot that is “marked by the voter, either directly by hand or indirectly using a ballot marking device.”<sup>2</sup> The choice between two voting systems facing NY counties is a choice between: (1) the Paper Ballot-Optical Scan system, with its paper ballot and (2) DREs, with their paper trails.

## Why should we choose a Paper Ballot instead a Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail? <sup>3</sup>

- **Direct recording electronic voting machines are UN-VERIFIABLE and UN-AUDITABLE. With DREs, votes are recorded and counted electronically and cannot be directly observed.**

Paper trails are only partial correctives designed for the paperless touch screen machines already purchased in some places. Computer scientist Dr. Rebecca Mercuri has said, “Any programmer can write code that displays one thing on a screen, records something else, and prints yet another result.”<sup>4</sup>

In addition, a study done in Nevada showed that only 31% of voters actually compared the audit trail to the screen upon which they voted.<sup>5</sup>

**Note: The paper-ballot-plus-ballot-scanner system provides direct verification for all voters,** either visually as the ballot is marked by hand, or through having the ballot marker read the choices back through assistive devices before printing. The same ballot is retained in a locked ballot box after being counted by the scanner, providing a direct record of the voter’s intent for audits and recounts.

- **Printers have had high failure rates when tested under conditions approximating a real election.** In tests designed to approximate an actual election, there were ten paper jams requiring the machines to be re-booted for every 10,000 votes. The California Secretary of State reported, “Many of the printer jams caused a loss of VVPAT records. In total there were 21 lost VVPAT records, out of a total of 1535 ballots cast on those particular machines.”<sup>6</sup> **Every vote is important, especially in an era of close elections.**
- **The full-face DREs with a voter verified paper audit trail will NOT be tested in real elections before NY counties must buy them.** For example, the Sequoia Advantage and LibertyVote only began to demonstrate their VVPAT in late February, 2006. In March 2006, Sequoia acknowledged that its full face DRE is still a prototype and not in production.

**Note: BALLOT SCANNERS HAVE BEEN USED IN AMERICAN ELECTIONS FOR 20 YEARS.**

**CHOOSE REAL VOTER VERIFICATION! CHOOSE PAPER BALLOTS!**

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<sup>1</sup> It is very important to notice that this is NOT a receipt that the voter ever touches; it is seen through a window.

<sup>2</sup> Aviel D. Rubin, Testimony, U.S. Election Assistance Commission, <http://www.eac.gov/docs/EAC.June30-05.testimony.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> A full answer to these questions would present the evidence about reliability, accuracy, security, accessibility, failure rates, comparative costs, etc. that has been discussed extensively in documents available at [www.nyvv.org](http://www.nyvv.org). Here we discuss only the level of verification provided by each system.

<sup>4</sup> Testimony by Rebecca Mercuri, Ph.D., US House of Representatives Committee on Science, Subcommittee on Environment, Technology, and Standards, May 22, 2001.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.lombardoconsultinggroup.com/docs/nvotersurvey.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> California Volume Tests, [http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/voting\\_systems/vstaab\\_volume\\_test\\_report.pdf](http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/voting_systems/vstaab_volume_test_report.pdf)