



Dean C. Logan  
Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

Testimony to Voting Modernization Board  
February 24, 2011 Meeting

By  
Dean C. Logan

1 Good morning Vice Chair Kaufman and Members of the Voting Modernization Board.  
2 My name is Dean Logan, Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk for the County of Los  
3 Angeles. I am pleased to have the opportunity to address the Board today.

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5 I come before you this morning to make you aware of Los Angeles County's current  
6 efforts to modernize its voting systems, which serve nearly 4.5 million registered voters;  
7 and the challenges we face in this endeavor. Drawing on the experiences of our current  
8 efforts and my observations of the current elections environment nationally and in the  
9 State of California, I am also here to urge this body to consider the relevance and need  
10 for this Board to continue and potentially expand it's work during what is a critical time  
11 for California elections.

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13 Los Angeles County is the nation's largest and most diverse election jurisdiction, with an  
14 electorate comprised of multiple races/ethnicities, national origin groups, age groups,  
15 and socio-economic backgrounds. As an elections jurisdiction we provide election  
16 services in six languages other than English and have more than 500 political districts

17 (from federal and state to municipal and special districts) One of the core principles of  
18 our mission is to provide election services in a fair, accessible and transparent manner.  
19 Our ability to meet that core principle is becoming more difficult.

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21 In response to these needs the County is currently engaged in efforts to modernize its  
22 voting systems to provide fair, accessible and transparent elections to the voters of  
23 today and those of tomorrow. [As part of this testimony, in advance of this meeting, I  
24 submitted to your board a recent plan submitted to the Los Angeles County Board of  
25 Supervisors, outlining the Department's strategy for implementing a new voting system  
26 by 2015. I will be more than happy to respond to any questions regarding the plan.]

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28 As I'm sure you appreciate this task is not easy; especially for a jurisdiction as complex  
29 as Los Angeles County. There are a number of variables that contribute to this:

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31 1) Size and Complexity - Currently, the County has not identified any certified voting  
32 system that would fully meet our needs. The size and diversity of Los Angeles  
33 County make it almost impossible to reasonably consider a Commercial Off-the-  
34 Shelf (COTS) voting system solution. Any solution will entail a significant  
35 development or customization process. It is very likely that a solution for a  
36 jurisdiction as large and complex as Los Angeles may involve the development of  
37 new systems and technologies.

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39        2) Voter Confidence – We are committed to ensuring that new voting systems in  
40        Los Angeles County address voter’s needs. More importantly, that voters are  
41        confident that their needs and priorities were taken into account in the process.  
42        As such, the County developed the Voting Systems Assessment Project (VSAP).  
43        The VSAP is an unprecedented election practice premised on a collaborative  
44        approach that ensures greater citizen input through partnerships within the  
45        academic community, public interest organizations, and policy makers, in the  
46        pursuit of establishing a more participatory model for procuring voting systems.  
47        [Further documentation on the VSAP project has been submitted for the record]

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49        3) Stagnant Voting Systems Market – Development and certification of new voting  
50        systems has been at a near stand-still in recent years; a dynamic impacted by  
51        economic conditions and by the lack of clarity and consistency in the adoption  
52        and application of regulatory requirements for voting systems testing and  
53        certification at the federal and state levels. Federally, only six voting systems  
54        have been certified since the Election Assistance Commission was created. In  
55        California, there are no pending applications for certification and a number of  
56        systems are operating under “quasi” conditional certification. The industry itself  
57        is doing little to expand as a market and provide greater supply. Voting System  
58        companies are not making significant investments in research and development  
59        for new systems. Where such efforts are being made, the timeframes for  
60        seeking testing and approval has become both time and cost prohibitive. These

61 concerns are further exacerbated by legislative proposals currently before  
62 Congress to dissolve the United States Elections Assistance Commission (EAC).

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64 These factors present serious challenges not only for Los Angeles County but for other  
65 counties across this state and throughout the country. Without a robust voting systems  
66 market and an effective regulatory process, efforts to maintain the integrity of our  
67 democracy by providing accurate, accessible, and transparent election will be severely  
68 limited.

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70 Current social and demographic trends that are defining how we act, interact, and  
71 communicate suggest the need for a serious re-envisioning of democracy in the 21<sup>st</sup>  
72 Century. This may mean significant changes to how we conduct elections. Election  
73 Officials will need the tools (in voting systems) to be able to accommodate these  
74 changes.

75  
76 With the passage of the Voting Modernization Bond Act of 2002, the voters of California  
77 declared their clear intent to ensure that California continue to be a beacon of  
78 democracy by modernizing its voting systems to provide every opportunity for all of its  
79 citizens to be able to cast their vote and have it counted securely and accurately. As a  
80 body entrusted by the voters of California to see the update of voting systems through,  
81 the work and oversight of this Board remains important. Los Angeles County as other  
82 counties in this state still need the assistance of this board, the Secretary of State, and  
83 the Legislature to ensure that voting systems in the state can serve the voters of today

84 and tomorrow with integrity and that the funding allocated under Proposition 41 is  
85 preserved and protected until modernized systems that can meet that challenge are  
86 identified and/or developed.

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88 As this Board discusses the future of this body I ask you to consider the current state of  
89 the voting systems environment and the future of elections. The relevance and  
90 importance of this Board has never been greater.

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92 Thank you for your attention. If you have any questions I will be more than happy to  
93 address them or to provide you a future written response.