



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Addabbo: New Machines Will Create New Era in Voting Next Year

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR | December 21, 2009

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Press Release

For Immediate Release

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***ADDABBO: NEW MACHINES WILL
CREATE NEW ERA IN VOTING NEXT YEAR***

Queens, NY, December 21, 2009 -- NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr., Chair of the Senate's Elections Committee, today released the following statement on last week's approval of new optical scan voting machines to replace the old lever machines by the State Board of Elections, compliant with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA):

“Nothing is more important to ensure citizens’ confidence in our democratically elected government than the integrity of the ballot and the voting process. The decision on December 15, 2009, by the State Board of Elections to certify new optical scan voting machines is a momentous occasion that marks the beginning of a new era of voting in New York State. The State Board has engaged in a long and meticulous process over a period of almost three years, during which they have examined every aspect of the programming and operation of these machines, including reviewing millions of lines of code, to make sure that they are trustworthy and accurate.”

According to Addabbo, these machines have been tested harder and subjected to more requirements than any system in the nation, and the voters of the State of New York should feel confident that they will produce accurate and reliable results. The Board of Elections in the City of New York invited the public to attend public demonstrations of two poll site optical scan voting systems (ES&S and Dominion) being held December 16-22 in each borough, to evaluate their use in the Fall 2010 primary/general elections and beyond. Price estimates have been requested from each vendor and are due to the Board by December 28.

Addabbo said, “The Elections Committee, in the exercise of its oversight powers, has held hearings and taken testimony from elections commissioners, the machine manufacturers and interested members of the public regarding these machines and their performance in a pilot program in 47 of our 62 counties this past election year. While some concerns have been expressed regarding voter privacy because of the layout of poll sites, as well as difficulties some poll workers have had in operating these machines, these are easily curable election management issues that have nothing to do with the reliability of these machines. As Chair of the committee, I will continue to evaluate the testimony and reports we have received, and the audits of the results produced by the machines to determine the accuracy and security of the machines. The optical scan technology also preserves voters’ ballots, commonly referred to as a ‘paper trail,’ ensuring the ability to conduct a precise recount as necessary.”

“I intend to work on this issue so that by the time the new machines are used next year, that the voters and poll workers are confident that the votes are private and counted accurately on reliable machines,” Addabbo concluded.

Public events are posted on the NYC Board of Elections Web site: www.vote.nyc.ny.us. Public comment is requested at a public hearing (each speaker is limited to 3 minutes) to be held on Tuesday, December 29, from 6-8 PM at the Board of Elections in the City of New York, Commissioners' Hearing Room, 6th Floor, 42 Broadway, NYC. On December 30, the Board's evaluation team will post its findings on the Web site. The Commissioners are expected to make their selection of optical scanning system for use within the City of New York on January 5, 2010. For more information, you can call Senator Addabbo at his Howard Beach district office at 718-738-1111.

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