

STAND WITH DEBRA BOWEN NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our first newsletter of the **STAND WITH DEBRA CAMPAIGN**. In the coming months, we will be updating you on our efforts to support our courageous Secretary of State, Debra Bowen, as she continues to carry out her constitutional duties to protect our votes.

The three pronged smear campaign to discredit Debra Bowen...and what you can do to stop them...

The assault on that fundamental democratic principle that every vote should be counted as cast, has continued unabated in California in recent months. Electronic voting machine vendors and their partners in crime that litter the state's county registrars have been engaging in a three pronged approach to discredit voting integrity champion - and Secretary of State - Debra Bowen.

Prong one was the continuous drumbeat of attacks* by registrars against Bowen and her "top to bottom review" of the security, accuracy, reliability, and accessibility of California voting systems. Opponents of Bowen have claimed the study's findings were unfair because it didn't include their "security" measures. This, despite the fact that the experts conducting the review found most of those so called "security measures" to be completely useless and inadequate!

Prong two represents lawsuits brought by several registrars, designed to vastly limit Bowen's ability to implement her election reform agenda. This "legal strategy" was highlighted by a recent lawsuit filed against Bowen by the San Diego County registrar - wasting precious taxpayer dollars in the process.

Prong three will be an all out assault on Bowen and her landmark decision to decertify thousands of electronic voting machines in 20 counties before the 2008 presidential primary. Come February 5th we can expect a tidal wave of "the sky is falling" attacks from voting machine vendors and county registrars seeking to capitalize on the fact that election results in some counties - due to Bowen's ruling - will be delayed. These modest delays - to ensure the integrity and accuracy of the election mind you - will be spun as an electoral crisis that Bowen is to blame for, with repeated false claims that the costs and work associated with implementing her ruling are too burdensome.

Bowen's Landmark "Top-To-Bottom Review"

Brad Friedman, journalist, blogger and election integrity stalwart - gives us the backdrop on what started it all: "Bowen's common sense recommendations to improve the likelihood of accurately tabulated elections were made following her landmark, independent Top to Bottom review of e-voting machines in the state. The study, commissioned at the University of California and released in August, found that all such e-voting systems were easily manipulated, could result in the nearly undetectable reversal of election results, and required little more than the aid of common household objects to open the machines."

San Diego County Registrar and former Diebold insider sues Bowen

One would expect the natural response from county registrars to Bowen's decertification of e-voting machines that were proven unreliable and easily manipulated to be one of thanks, certainly relief, and at least compliance, right? Wrong. Instead, three county registrars decided to show their gratitude by suing our Secretary of State! But here's where it gets really spooky. The lawsuit was filed by the current San Diego County Registrar, Deborah Seiler. Ms. Seiler also happens to be a former sales representative for voting machine companies Diebold and Sequoia - where she sold uncertified voting machines to a California county. Her suit alleged that Bowen overstepped her authority in requiring new recount procedures in close races (10% rather than 1%). In case you were having any doubt as to whether the San Diego Registrar's allegiance lies with e-voting machine vendors or voters, consider San Diego's Assistant Registrar, Michael Vu. If you think you've stumbled onto an Oliver Stone conspiracy, try this on for size: Vu left his Cuyahoga County elections director job last year after he stepped down in light of convictions against two of his election workers for rigging the 2004 Presidential Election recount. This, democracy loving friends, is an example of who we - and Bowen - are up against: a former* *Diebold insider and a disgraced elections director connected to the stolen Presidential election of 2004! You can't make this up...

Judge rejects the lawsuit!

Before we pop the champagne, it should be noted that the "plaintiffs" have already vowed to appeal the decision, thus continuing the waste of taxpayer dollars on a baseless lawsuit that if successful, would only serve to further undermine the integrity of our electoral process.

People to Registrars: "Sue Diebold Not Debra"

Why would any Registrar that truly seeks to ensure the integrity of our elections sue the person that exposed the most serious threat to democracy in California history? Instead, why not sue the voting machine companies that used lies and misrepresentation to sell us a product that was full of security holes, prone to tampering, untested, and completely unreliable??

The next crisis: Create post election chaos - claim it's all Bowen's fault...

Since insecure touch screen voting systems have been decertified (except for disabled access), affected counties will use alternate methods that may lead to results being released later - although still within the State mandated certification period - than in previous elections.

Secretary Bowen has already been unsuccessfully attacked, in the press and at hearings in Sacramento. Further, stronger attacks will increase as the importance of the elections increase. These will include:

1. Inflammatory media headlines on "delayed" election results with comments from "citizens" and officials expressing dismay, frustration and anger. (It has begun with articles in the Los Angeles Times <http://tinyurl.com/39h2kx> & <http://tinyurl.com/2xts6a>, and San Francisco Chronicle, dated January 28. <http://tinyurl.com/2783rs>)

2. Some elections officials questioning the usefulness of the top to bottom review since it did not study their existing security mitigations.
3. Some elections officials complaining about the added expense of following the new directives.
4. Claims that Bowen is engaged in political grandstanding.

Our response: “What’s more important – getting the vote count right or getting it right away?”

On that note, since when should “the public” be more concerned with getting election results immediately, rather than accurately? The bottom line is a rather simple one: our democracy depends on the accurate counting of votes, period.

Help DEFEND the Integrity of our ELECTIONS!

What YOU can do to help:

Monitoring for malicious compliance and election code violations:

The deterrent effect of election monitoring can be significant in the coming elections. Implementation of Secretary Bowen’s new conditional certification requirements needs to be monitored. Any problems found could be used to challenge election results, especially upset victories.

Letters to the Editor –It just takes a few minutes to dash off a quick note to your newspaper. The volume of mail they get matters. Even if yours isn't published, you may influence future coverage and editorials. Here is some sample sarcasm you might want to use: <http://www.bradblog.com/?p=5631#more-5631>

We need your Feedback – let us know if you sent a letter. Copy us on any letter that is sent. And while you are at it, send a copy of the letter to your Registrar of Voters and County Board of Supervisors.

"Our democracy isn't for sale...say no to privatizing the vote" Californians must confront what America as a whole has been unwilling to: our democracy is being systematically dismantled by the wholesale corruption of a privatized and partisan-operated computerized vote casting and counting process. In contrast, Secretary of State Bowen represents the people of California, not shareholders. She’s not out to increase her profit margin or share of the “elections market” – only to ensure the integrity of our vote. Please join us in defending Debra Bowen and the people of California, and upholding the notion that in America every vote must be accurately counted and equally valued.

Suggested election integrity websites...all you’ll ever need to know

The Brad Blog – <http://www.bradblog.com>

VotersUnite.org – <http://www.votersunite.org/>

Please email us at standwithdebra@gmail.com with any comments or concerns. We want to hear from you!!!