Summary

HJR 174

Joint Subcommittee to Study the Certification, Performance, and Deployment of Voting Equipment

At the joint subcommittee's organizational meeting, members heard two presentations.

First, Hoyt M. Warren, Jr., CISM, CACI International Inc., described the just-completed study on the Development of Security Policy, Standards and Guidelines for DRE Voting Systems that he conducted for the State Board of Elections (SBE) in conjunction with IFES (International Foundation for Election Systems) representatives.

Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) voting systems are the first completely computerized voting systems and include the touch-screen type of equipment commonly compared to ATM screens. He noted that the DRE equipment is "arguably the most versatile and user-friendly of current voting systems" but also the subject of much public debate concerning the possible manipulation of the equipment and its security vulnerabilities.

The study concludes that the use of DRE equipment must be accompanied by a formal SBE-level DRE voting systems security program and jurisdiction-specific local electoral board voting security programs. The local programs must be formal, documented, and cover risk assessment, security procedures, training, and monitoring. He distributed an executive summary and more detailed outline of the study.

Jean Jensen, Secretary of the SBE, reported that the Board has received the July 23rd report and will be reviewing it to provide for implementation.

Second, Michael I. Shamos, Institute for Software Research International, School of Computer Science, Carnegie Mellon University outlined the pros and cons of DRE voting systems and voter verified paper ballots or trails. He emphasized that DRE systems have been in use for 25 years without a verified incident of tampering. However, he noted that there is a public perception that DRE systems are subject to tampering as a result of well-publicized studies pointing to security problems with the equipment.

He reviewed the pros and cons of the most frequently proposed cure for DRE security problems -- a paper record of each vote that the voter can review and verify. The advantages are that the paper trail will demonstrate to the voter that the machine has captured his votes correctly and will create a sense of security among voters. He described the disadvantages of a paper trail: no guarantee

the vote was counted or that the paper will be secured for a recount; massive paper handling and securing of the paper; slowing the count; accessibility issues; voter confusion and doubt; questioning of the machines when nothing is wrong; and an increased demand for recounts.

His advice is to wait the outcome of the November 2004 election when paper trails for DRE equipment will be used in California, Missouri, and Nevada.

The joint subcommittee took note of several carry-over bills referred to it for study. Chairman Hugo concluded that he and Vice Chairman Mims will confer with staff to circulate a work plan for the joint subcommittee and will have the members polled for the next meeting date.

Chairman:
The Hon. Timothy D. Hugo
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