

Andrea Gyger

From: Marilyn Marks <marilyn@[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, August 05, 2011 11:21 PM
To: Andrea Gyger
Cc: Richard Coolidge; Hilary Rudy; AlKolwicz@[REDACTED]; Harvie Branscomb; Janice Vos; Dwight Shellman; Joe Richey; kathleencurry@[REDACTED]
Subject: Rule-making re: write in vote markings

Ms. Gyger,

I recognize that this submission is coming after the deadline for comments, however I just ran across this information in a program that is being presented next week in California.

See link below.

Note that the Leon County, Florida study showed a 49% rate of failure to fill in the “write-in bubble.”

I have not read the study and cannot attest to anything other than the reasonable sound of that result, given the voters I interacted with in the Kathleen Curry campaign.

I would suggest that the SOS staff obtain the study and take it into consideration before making the rule.

Please distribute to the appropriate people for review.

Thank you.

Marilyn Marks

Aspen, CO

An Analysis of Write-in Marks on Optical Scan Ballots

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Optical scan ballot systems are widely used in elections today. However, deployed optical scan systems may not always interpret write-in votes correctly. For instance, if a voter writes in a name but forgets to shade in the corresponding voting target, an optical scanner may not detect the write-in, which could lead to a lost vote. In this paper, we study methods for automatic recognition of write-in marks. We then apply these methods to ballots from an election in Leon County, Florida and study the kinds of write-in marks that are seen in practice. Our results from this election show that voters frequently (about 49% of the time) do not fill in the write-in bubble when entering a write-in vote. Consequently, votes may be lost in current voting systems.

<http://www.usenix.org/events/evtwote11/tech/techAbstracts.html#Ji>