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April 30, 2008

Representative Zoe Lofgren  
Chair, Subcommittee on Elections  
Committee on House Administration  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for H.R. 5803, the "Back Up Paper Ballot Bill"

Dear Representative Lofgren:

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to improving the security, reliability, and accessibility of our voting systems. In an election year that has garnered unprecedented voter interest, it is particularly important to have good policies and procedures in place in advance of the November elections.

For this reason, we strongly support HR 5803, the Back Up Paper Ballot Bill. News reports of machine problems during states' recent presidential primary elections provide a preview of potentially widespread machine failure and disenfranchisement in November. H.R. 5803 would reimburse jurisdictions for costs associated with providing voters emergency paper ballots in the event of machine breakdowns.

In elections past, machine failures have caused long lines at the polls and disenfranchised untold numbers of voters. Encouraging the use of emergency paper ballots will help ensure that every voter may have her vote counted and make it much less likely that voters will be forced to wait on long lines or turned away from the polls because of machine malfunction – these are particularly important considerations for November's elections, when turnout is expected to be high.

Sincerely,



Lawrence Norden  
Counsel