

**Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law
League of Women Voters of New York State
New Yorkers for Verified Voting
New York Public Interest Research Group, NYPIRG**

NEWS RELEASE

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New York Moves Towards Optical Scan Voting for 2008 Elections Civics Applaud Decision by State Board of Elections

Civic groups applauded a move by the State Board of Elections today that would place accessible optical scan ballot marking devices alongside existing lever machines in each poll site across the state for this fall's elections. With more than 8,000 poll sites across the state, the decision represents a significant investment by the state in optical scan technology.

Technically, the Board only rejected the use of computerized touch screen systems for this year's elections. However, while counties may still be given a choice on whether to adopt optical scan or touch screen systems when the state's lever machines are slated for replacement in 2009, most consider it highly unlikely that counties would switch from their preliminary investment in optical scan technology to touch screens.

"New Yorkers have every reason to be pleased today. New York will be a paper ballot optical scan state. Finally the BOE has done the right thing and rejected failed DRE technology," said Bo Lipari of New Yorkers for Verified Voting.

"Bravo. After years of delay and indecision, New York is finally on the road to a secure, accessible and auditable voting system. This is an all-too-rare case where common sense won out over the lobbyists," said Barbara Bartoletti of the League of Women Voters of New York State.

"Public confidence in elections where votes were cast on touch screens has plummeted across the country. But today, New York has taken steps to ensure that our voting system remains secure and transparent," said Neal Rosenstein of the New York Public Interest Research Group. "This is a major victory for voting integrity, accessibility and accuracy in New York," he added.

"The Board's decision today should mean fewer lost votes," said Larry Norden of the Brennan Center for Justice. "The Board must now ensure that the ballot marking devices approved are fully accessible and don't use an interface that will lead to confusion by voters," he added.

The groups commended Elections Commissioner Doug Kellner who had refused to vote in favor of authorizing computerized touch screen machines at a tumultuous Board meeting yesterday.