



The League of Women Voters of New York State  
62 Grand Street, Albany, New York 12207  
Phone: 518-465-4162 Fax: 518-465-0812  
www.lwvny.org E-Mail: lwvny@lwvny.org

## THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS *of New York State*

### **For More Information Contact:**

*Aimee Allaud, Elections Specialist: 518-482-2617*  
*Barbara Bartoletti, Legislative Director: 518-469-8905*  
*Bo Lipari, Technology Director: 607-387-9308*

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **For immediate release:**

Thursday, December 16, 2010

### **2010 Election Survey: Machines Perform But Privacy Suffers**

The League of Women Voters of New York State (League) today released the results of an online survey of voters' experiences using the new paper ballot optical scanning system that was implemented statewide for the 2010 election cycle.

The online survey of 1,072 respondents, from 47 counties including all 5 counties of NYC, showed that the voting machines indeed did perform well; however, the respondents did make note of several inadequacies that the League feels must be addressed to ensure that voters are guaranteed a secure and private franchise. The League's recommendations for immediate action are listed below; the state Board of Elections should move to implement these recommendations before the next election cycle.

- **Increased Voter Education on the Voting Process**

The State Board of Elections must provide standard template materials which county boards of elections can tailor for their specific needs. Remaining HAVA funds should be used for this purpose.

- **Increased Training for All Elections Personnel**

The survey showed an immediate need for better trained election personnel. Legislation has passed permitting split shifts for election inspectors and recruitment of younger poll workers. These new laws need to be implemented.

- **Revision of the Paper Ballot for Maximum Usability by Voters**

There is an immediate need for improving the design of the ballot. Legislation to address the full-face ballot should be a legislative priority and should be introduced early in the 2011 Legislative Session.

- **Privacy Issues**

Over 20 percent said they did not have sufficient privacy in marking the ballot, scanning the ballot, or were not given a privacy sleeve or instructed how to use it. Poll workers need to be trained that any viewing of the markings on a completed ballot is a violation of the voter's privacy.

As noted by League Elections Specialist, Aimee Allaud, "Improving ballot design, providing better trained poll workers and ensuring privacy in voting are fundamental to our voter electoral system. We must take immediate steps to resolve these problems."

"The League's Voter Survey shows that we need to do much, much more if we're to take full advantage of the State's new voting systems. In particular, the design of New York's ballot must be completely overhauled in order to be fully usable by voters." said Bo Lipari, the League's Technology Director.

The full report is available on the League website: [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org).

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