



League of Women Voters of Delaware County
Comments to Public Forum
New Voting System

Delaware County Council Public Meeting Room

July 9, 2019

I am Marita Green, Voter Service Chair of the League of Women Voters of Delaware County for whom I am speaking. Olivia Thorne, our President, regrets she is unable to attend today but was involved in preparing this statement.

We wish to thank the officials of Delaware County for this opportunity to provide input in this important decision. We commend you for having the foresight to earmark adequate fund for this significant purchase. For more than a year, we have been educating ourselves about voting machines. Representatives attended a February 2018 exhibit at the Montgomery County Community College, spent three days at an event in Allentown, joined an exhibit in Doylestown, and most recently, participated in program in Aston. We have sponsored two presentations on cyber security. With each experience we have heard and seen the public raise specific comments and ask focused questions. We hope this will continue to be the case today.

We have discovered that specific features give the sampled machines an edge over others. These include:

- hand-marked, paper ballots that are readable by voters with no bar codes;
- ballots that can be read and counted by an optical scanner and recounted by hand as needed.
- accessibility for handicapped individuals to use a touch screen machine that provides a printed ballot that confirms their choices without a bar code and read by an optical scanner;
- the ability to continue voting in a power outage with a secure box into which voters can manually slide their ballots;
- maximum security to protect our votes from hacking or other tampering;
- ease of use for write-in voting with a clear, well-defined area for each office; and
- simple mechanisms to open and close as well as operate to encourage people to work at the polls.

As you look to service and maintain voting machines over time, cost consideration should be given to the lack of propriety equipment necessary for machine operation such as batteries and paper.

Officials need to further review logistical matters such as required storage space, ease of transport, reliability records, and susceptibility to heat, cold, moisture, etc.

As with most machines, the greater the technological aspects and complexities, the more likely something will go wrong. We've heard about paper jams, markers that bleed through paper, and difficulties with scrolling down ballots. We trust you have reviewed the feedback from Aston and perhaps have additional glitches that would make certain machines less desirable than others. It would be helpful if the data received from the surveys were made available for public consideration.

As you may be aware, the League continues to promote poll worker training and public education. This is particularly critical to assure a smooth transition to new machines during a year of expected high turnout and increased confusion. The League will be submitting input in the near future regarding public training and education. Of course, we are willing to assist in these endeavors!

In conclusion, we underscore the need for simple, reliable machines that use paper verifiable ballots that allow voters the ability to confirm their choices. Simplicity is valued to provide voter confidence and understanding of the process. We need a system approved by Mr. Rogers rather than the Wizard of Oz – one that values voters as good, responsible neighbors rather than individuals who need to be awed by whistles and bells behind closed curtains or boxes. Our citizens and our elected officials deserve confidence in a trustworthy system in which every vote is counted and every voter has a voice that is his or her own.

Thank you for your on-going consideration.