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**Election Defense Alliance calls for an investigation
into major miscount of the vote in 2006 Election:**

Reported results skewed towards Republicans by 4 percent, 3 million votes

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Election Defense Alliance, a national election integrity watchdog organization, issued an urgent call for further investigation into the 2006 election results and a moratorium on deployment of all electronic election equipment, after analysis of national exit polling data indicated a major undercount of Democratic votes and an overcount of Republican votes in U.S. House and Senate races across the country. “These findings raise urgent questions about the electoral machinery and vote counting systems used in the United States,” according to Sally Castleman, National Chair of EDA. **This is a national indictment of the vote counting process in the United States!**

As in 2004, the exit polling data and the reported election results don’t add up. “But this time there is an objective yardstick in the methodology which establishes the validity of the Exit Poll and challenges the accuracy of the election returns,” said Jonathan Simon, co-founder of Election Defense Alliance. The Exit Poll findings are detailed in a paper published today on the EDA website, www.ElectionDefenseAlliance.org.

The 2006 Edison-Mitofsky Exit Poll was commissioned by a consortium of major news organizations. Its conclusions were based on the responses of a very large sample, of over ten thousand voters nationwide*, and posted at 7:07 p.m. Election Night, on the CNN website. That Exit Poll showed Democratic House candidates had out-pollled Republicans by 55.0 percent to 43.5 percent -- **an 11.5 percent margin** – in the total vote for the U.S. House, sometimes referred to as the “generic” vote.

By contrast, the election results showed Democratic House candidates won 52.7 percent of the vote to 45.1 percent for Republican candidates, producing **a 7.6 percent margin** in the total vote for the U.S. House—**3.9 percent less than the Edison-Mitofsky poll**. This discrepancy, far beyond the poll’s +/- 1 percent margin of error, has less than a one in 10,000 likelihood of occurring by chance.

By Wednesday afternoon the Edison-Mitofsky poll had been adjusted, by a process known as “forcing,” to match the reported vote totals for the election. This forcing process is done to supply data for future demographic analysis, the main purpose of the Exit Poll. It involved re-weighting every response so that the sum of those responses matched the reported election results. The final result, posted at 1:00 p.m. November 8, showed the adjusted Democratic vote at 52.6 percent and the Republican vote at 45.0 percent, **a 7.6 percent margin exactly mirroring the reported vote totals.**

The forcing process in this instance reveals a great deal. The Party affiliation of the respondents in the original 7:07 p.m. election night Exit Poll closely reflected the 2004 Bush-Kerry election margin. After the forcing process, 49-percent of respondents reported voting for Republican George W. Bush in 2004, while only 43-percent reported voting for Democrat John Kerry. This 6-percent gap is more than twice the size of the actual 2004 Bush margin of 2.8 percent, and a clear distortion of the 2006

electorate. **There is a significant over-sampling of Republican voters in the adjusted 2006 Exit Poll. It simply does not reflect the actual turnout on Election Day 2006.**

EDA's Simon says, "It required some incredible distortions of the demographic data within the poll to bring about the match with reported vote totals. **It not only makes the adjusted Exit Poll inaccurate, it also reveals the corresponding inaccuracy of the reported election returns which it was forced to equal.** The Democratic margin of victory in U.S. House races was substantially larger than indicated by the election returns." "Many will fall into the trap of using this adjusted poll to justify inaccurate official vote counts, and vice versa," adds Bruce O'Dell, EDA's Data Analysis Coordinator, "but that's just arguing in circles. The adjusted exit poll is a statistical illusion. **The weighted but unadjusted 7 pm exit poll, which sampled the correct proportion of Kerry and Bush voters and also indicated a much larger Democratic margin, got it right.**" O'Dell and Simon's paper, detailing their analysis of the exit polls and related data, is now posted on the EDA website, www.electiondefensealliance.org.

The Election Defense Alliance continues to work with other election integrity groups around the country to analyze the results of specific House and Senate races. That data and any evidence of election fraud, malicious attacks on election systems, or other malfunctions that may shed more light on the discrepancy between exit polls and election results will be reported on EDA's website.

This controversy comes amid growing public concern about the security and accuracy of electronic voting machines, used to count approximately 80 percent of the votes cast in the 2006 election. The **Princeton University Center for Information Technology Policy**, in a September 2006 study, was the latest respected institution to expose significant flaws in the design and software of one of the most popular electronic touch-screen voting machines, the AccuVote-TS, manufactured by Diebold, Inc. The Princeton report described the machine as "vulnerable to a number of extremely serious attacks that undermine the accuracy and credibility of the vote counts it produces." These particular machines were used to count an estimated 10 percent of votes on Election Day 2006.

A separate "Security Assessment of the Diebold Optical Scan Voting Terminal," released by the **University of Connecticut VoTeR Center and Department of Computer Science and Engineering** last month, concluded that Diebold's Accuvote-OS machines, optical scanners which tabulate votes cast on paper ballots, are also vulnerable to "a devastating array of attacks." Accuvote-OS machines are even more widely used than the AccuVote-TS.

Similar vulnerabilities affect other voting equipment manufacturers, as revealed last summer in a study by the **Brennan Center at New York University** which noted *all* of America's computerized voting systems "have significant security and reliability vulnerabilities, which pose a real danger to the integrity of national, state, and local elections."

The most prudent response to this controversy is a moratorium on the further implementation of computerized voting systems. EDA's O'Dell cautioned, "It is so abundantly clear that these machines are not secure, there's no justification for blind confidence in the election system given such dramatic indications of problems with the official vote tally." And EDA's Simon summarized, "There has been a rush by some to celebrate 2006 as a fair election, but a Democratic victory does not equate with a fair election. It's wishful thinking at best to believe that the danger of massive election rigging is somehow past."

EDA continues to call for a moratorium on the deployment of electronic voting machines in U.S. elections; passage of H.R. 6200, which would require hand-counted paper ballots for presidential elections beginning in 2008; and adoption of the Universal Precinct Sample (UPS) handcount sampling

protocol (see <http://electiondefensealliance.org/files/UPSEndFaithBasedVoting.pdf>) for verification of federal elections as long as electronic election equipment remains in use.

The Exit Poll analysis is a part of Election Defense Alliance's six-point strategy to defend the accuracy and transparency of the 2006 elections. In addition to extensive analysis of polling data, EDA has been engaged in independent exit polling, election monitoring, legal interventions, and documentation of election irregularities.

*The sample was a national sample of all voters who voted in House races. It was drawn just like the 2004 sample of the presidential popular vote. That is, precincts were chosen to yield a representative (once stratified) sample of all voters wherever they lived/voted--including early and absentee voters and voters in districts where House candidates ran unopposed but were listed on the ballot and therefore could receive votes. As such, the national sample EDA worked with is exactly comparable to the total aggregate vote for the House that we derived from reported vote totals and from close estimates in cases of the few unopposed candidates where 2006 figures were unavailable but prior elections could be used as proxy. It is a very large sampling of the national total, with a correspondingly small (+/-1%) MOE. There were four individual districts sampled for reasons known only to Edison/Mitofsky

ABOUT ELECTION DEFENSE ALLIANCE

The purpose of EDA is to develop a comprehensive national strategy for the election integrity movement, in order to regain public control of the voting process in the United States. Its goal is to insure that the election process is transparent, secure, verifiable, and worthy of the public trust. EDA provides resources, strategic planning, and coordination for a nationwide grassroots network of citizen election integrity activists

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Sally Castleman, National Chairperson, Election Defense Alliance. She works to recruit and train attorneys and scientists for election integrity roles. She has a long career in grassroots political activism and comes to EDA from Boston-based Coalition Against Election Fraud. SallyC@ElectionDefenseAlliance.org 781.454.8700