



VOTING IN THE DARK: THE DANGER AND WHAT YOU CAN DO

This video, *Stealing Our Votes And Our Democracy*, [<https://rcpt.yousendit.com/1426349572/1bed1708cda79872123f40da4a28f5cc>] presents just a few of the many computer experts and highly-respected academics who have demonstrated over and over again how easy it is to alter vote counts when electronic equipment is used to count our votes.

To have election outcomes we can trust, the hand-marked paper ballots must be counted in public by human eyes before they ever leave the public sight.

The transition back to hand-counting—the process we used here in America for more than 200 years—can begin by hand-counting the Federal races, of which there are never more than three: Representative, Senator and President. Then, when election officials see how manageable that is, we must add hand-counting of the statewide races and statewide referendum questions.

In that way, we will gradually return to the “tried and true” method of hand-counting all the votes on our ballots. Yes, there has always been election fraud (precisely because elections are such high-stakes affairs) but the scale possible with electronic vote-counting is staggering. When votes are counted by hand, “stuffing the ballot boxes” is very labor-intensive; with concealed electronic counting, hundreds of thousands of votes can be changed electronically in seconds—and leave no trace. Put bluntly, elections can be stolen wholesale and the balance of political power shifted accordingly.

As is said in the video, if we can’t know whether the election results reported by the machines are true and accurate, how can we have a democracy? And if the “inconvenience” of human counting is too much for us, we must ask, “Do we really deserve a democracy?”

SOLUTIONS:

Here are some of the things you can do to help YOUR STATE recover ACCURATE VOTE COUNTING in our elections:

1. Twitter or e-mail your State Senator and Representative the URL [<https://rcpt.yousendit.com/1426349572/1bed1708cda79872123f40da4a28f5cc>] for the film you just watched.
 - a. Ask them to watch this film
 - b. Tell them you feel they must act on this immediately
 - c. Ask them to join with you (and other senators and representatives if possible) to meet with your Secretary of State (or whoever is responsible for elections in your state.)

2. At the meeting, you must show and discuss with the Secretary of State how insecure your vote counting systems are.
3. Emphasize that the burden of proof is on his/her office to show us that the counts can be trusted. (It is all backwards if they say it is up to the citizens to prove fraud.)
4. Then ask to change to hand-counted paper ballots—for the Federal races—before the next election.
5. You can assure your Secretary of State that there are efficient ways to hand count ballots.
 - a. The counting is done in teams made up of members of opposing parties. Representatives of every party on the ballot must be permitted to observe each team during the counting process.
 - b. An average polling precinct/ward has 500 to 1000 ballots. For three races (the maximum number of federal races in any election) counting should take approximately three hours with two teams.
6. On election night when the polls close be at the place where your votes are counted. OBSERVE and DOCUMENT the counting process. Take photos or film the results and then check them against what is posted as the "official" results on your state's election website.
7. Recruit others to do the same.
8. If the ballots are moved to a central location, film them being packed up, transported, unloaded and carried into the central location back into public view. Make clear notes about how many people were in the vehicle transporting them and if there were any stop made along the way.
9. If the posted results are different from those you saw at the close of the counting at your site (and that you photographed), report it to Brad@BradBlog.com (or via Twitter at [@TheBradBlog](https://twitter.com/TheBradBlog)) and to Mike Ferriter at mikeferriter@hotmail.com .
10. If you see (and film) anything that looks out of the ordinary, report that too.
11. Help spread the word about how corruptible our elections are. Since the media has not been willing to cover this hugely-important issue, it is up to us to inform our fellow Americans.
12. Learn more about this issue and join with others who are working on reforming our electoral system.
 - a. Subscribe to Bradblog.com for daily news: <http://mail.cville.com/mailman/listinfo/bradblogger> or follow him on Twitter at @TheBradBlog
 - b. Join the Election Defense Alliance email list for occasional updates: www.ElectionDefenseAlliance.com/join
 - c. Join BlackBoxVoting.org for information on equipment, vendors, and voting mechanics, and to participate in their blog: www.blackboxvoting.org
 - d. Find other information at www.ElectionDefenseAlliance.org/resources including full-length films about our electoral system
 - e. Find or start an election integrity group in your state, county or city.
13. Check other websites for ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE to help TAKE BACK OUR ELECTIONS. Several appear on the Resource List referenced in 12(d) above.
14. Finally, please help support this work. Thousands of hours have been donated by professionals who have given of their time and expertise, but there are operating expenses (e.g., materials; printing; travel; conferences; bulk e-mail service, website; postage) and special projects (independent professional polling, computerized fraud detection traps, etc.) that must be funded. Contributions to Election Defense Alliance are tax-deductible. www.ElectionDefenseAlliance.com/donate.

Our democracy is relying on all of us.

Immediately below you'll find various responses you can expect to hear from your Secretary of State, election officials, the media, etc, followed by the facts with which to answer these disingenuous government/corporate "talking points" (supplied by BlackBox Voting and edited).

NB: "Chain of Custody" refers to who has control of and access to the ballots from the time they leave the public view on Election Night until they are recounted (or eventually discarded.) In the case of Early Voting or Absentee Voting, it means who has had control of and access to the ballots from the time they are received until Election Day when they are counted. Those of us interested in election integrity often point out when the Chain of Custody has been "broken" because the ballots have been out of public sight.

TALKING POINT: What about the machines that have a paper backup, referred to as a Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail?

THE TRUTH: In some states the public is not allowed to examine the paper trail. Some machines produce a paper trail that is on very flimsy paper and is very difficult to read. Furthermore, the computer can print out whatever you might want to see and still do something completely different inside the machine. It is extremely rare that the paper trails are looked at by anyone.

TALKING POINT: In some states, after each election, some random "audits" are done, where the electronic votes are compared to paper ballots or to the paper trail for one or more races, to verify that they match.

THE TRUTH: This is not an audit, it is a spot check, and it is often controlled by the same people who program the system and control Chain of Custody for absentee ballots. These "audits" are usually done a few days after the election and the Chain of Custody has been broken. How does the public know there has been no ballot switching?

TALKING POINT: Our state has very good recount laws to ensure the accuracy of a count in close elections.

THE TRUTH:

a) A recount is only performed after the ballots have been removed from public sight and the Chain of Custody has been broken. No "after the fact" recount can authenticate the original count.

b) In some states recounts are not allowed unless a candidate had "lost" by a very small percentage point.

c) In some states, a "recount" means just running the ballots through the same electronic equipment/computer again.

TALKING POINT: Our elections are run by county auditors using certified voting systems.

THE TRUTH: What this is saying is "Trust us. We will verify the election for you."

That is not the same as allowing the public to see the essential accounting itself. The right to authenticate our own elections is an inalienable right, derived from the right to self government.

According to the US Constitution, our representatives are to be chosen by the people. The People cannot transfer this right to the government. Any election run by the government must also ensure that the public can see and authenticate all essential steps.

The government cannot be in control of choosing itself.

TALKING POINT: The voting systems have been tested by independent test laboratories and when installed, cannot be changed.

THE TRUTH:

- a) Testing labs are paid by the vendors. They keep their reports secret from the public.
- b) These labs test only what the vendor tells them to test. They have also been caught omitting key tests.
- c) Saying "the installations cannot be changed" does not mean "the votes cannot be altered."
- d) Votes and vote totals can be altered whether or not electronic vote counting software is an approved version.
- e) The safeguard against vote tampering is not pre-testing a software specimen. The safeguard is public ability to see the actual vote counting.

TALKING POINT: The machines are certified at the national level, tested and certified by our state and tested by the county.

THE TRUTH:

a) This refers to basic usability tests which have nothing to do with deliberate alteration of vote totals. Basically, they take a prepared set of known ballots, run them through the machine, and verify that the buttons work. But this has no relation to what happens to the votes in any given election.

Imagine this: You work as a teller at a bank. They decide to remove the video camera that shows you counting the cash. Instead, they give you a pretext to "detect whether you might tamper at some point in the future." Pretests can help detect incompetence in the election setup, but there is no pretext anywhere that can predict alteration of the count at a later date and time.

b) Because the software checks out on Monday does not mean that that is exactly the software that is running on Tuesday. We know there are many ways to alter the software without leaving a trace.

There IS a way to detect vote tampering, and it is transparency. The public must be allowed to check whether actual voted ballots match electronically reported counts.

TALKING POINT: After testing, the machines are then locked and sealed until put into use.

THE TRUTH: Maybe they are, maybe they aren't. We always hear this statement and we also regularly see that some machines weren't sealed; that they were accessed by technicians or elections insiders mid-election; or that crucial transactions are missing from or added to the vote-counting computer's audit logs.

Even if machines were sealed, since computers can only do what they are instructed to do by their administrator, locking and sealing has no bearing on inside access or actual manipulation of the count.

Historically, tampering by insiders is the most common form of election fraud.

TALKING POINT: Each election there are random audits to compare the vote counts to the actual paper ballots to make sure they match.

THE TRUTH:

a) When public citizens watch the random spot checks (which are not "audits" at all), they often see that the vote counts do not match. Nothing is done about that, and the spot check is not expanded when the sample does not match.

b) A random spot check is not protective against alteration of the count by someone with inside access. At best, spot checks may detect accidental error, but they do not detect deliberate alteration. Those controlling the spot check also control ballot Chain of Custody.

c) By the time a spot check is done, Chain of Custody is broken. No after the fact audit or recount can substitute for public right to see the original count.

d) Almost all audit laws are woefully inadequate to catch most vote-tampering.

e) No partial count authenticates the whole pool. The public must be able to authenticate the count of the whole, not just a part of the count.

There are all kinds of games with after-the-fact "random" spot checks. The random is not truly random; the ballots were substituted, ditched, altered before the count; the race chosen for counting is hand-picked...

f) The public is not allowed to do the spot check. It is assigned to an entity chosen by the same people who run the election.

Basically, "We will do a random spot check" means "Go away, we will authenticate this for you. You cannot authenticate it yourself."

TALKING POINT: Most voters vote on paper ballots, so do not vote on the electronic machines

THE TRUTH: More than 98% of votes in the U.S. are counted electronically. Even if you mark your vote on a paper ballot, it is almost certain your ballot will be counted by an Optical Scan Machine that is a software-driven.

The public has no method to validate electronic counts of any kind.

TALKING POINT: Many voters vote early or by absentee ballot and those counts are checked each day to verify the number of voters match the number of ballots received/submitted.

THE TRUTH: The public cannot "verify the number of voters matches the number of ballots" with absentee voting. With absentee or early voting, the public can never see who actually put the ballot into the system.

With absentee voting, the public can only see a report generated by the same insiders who control the voting system.

With absentee voting, the count can be altered by adding, subtracting, changing, or substituting ballots before the machine counts them; and also by alteration of the electronic counting process itself, because electronic counting is hidden from the public. So is the storing of the ballots that arrive prior to the election hidden from the public.

TALKING POINT: But out elections are always certified after the results are reported.

THE TRUTH: Since it has been proven over and over again that the machines that count our votes are easily manipulated and we know the counts can be corrupted, unless an election official hand-counts the votes on Election Night (in front of the public, before they have ever left the public view), s/he has no way of knowing that the results spit out by the machine are true and accurate and therefor has no basis on which to certify an election.

TALKING POINT: We are committed to running fair, accurate, transparent and auditable elections.

THE TRUTH: Even though most election officials and poll workers are honest and hard-working, no state is really committed to running transparent elections because almost all the vote counting is concealed and the entire premise is that only the government can validate the election of itself. Beyond even this, in the vast majority of cases even the government is in the dark as to how the votes are really being counted, with only the insiders (corporate vendors) who program and service the computers in the know.

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