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CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF  
CLERKS AND ELECTION OFFICIALS

Attachment 6

April 14, 2003

Honorable Kevin Shelley  
Secretary of State  
1500 - 11<sup>th</sup> Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento CA 95814

Subject: SOS Ad Hoc Touchscreen Task Force

Dear Secretary Shelley:

On behalf of the California Association of Clerks and Election Officials (CACEO), I want to express our appreciation for the opportunity you have provided to foster discussion of the concerns raised by Professor David Dill and others with respect to the use of DRE touchscreen voting systems in California.

A compelling amount of evidence has been accumulated, not only for the benefit of the Task Force's deliberations, but for 20% of the Nation's counties which have already converted their paper-based voting systems to DRE touchscreens. The reality is the equipment has significantly improved the electoral process. Over the past 15 years, DRE voting systems have not experienced **any** of the perceived problems expressed by a few. In fact, these systems continue to enjoy overwhelming acceptance and confidence of the voters.

It is this confidence that we need to build upon with the imminent 2004 Presidential Elections. One-half of Californians will be voting on new technology as a result of the decertification of prescored punchcard voting systems. Yet, California is in a precarious position and at a critical juncture with few months remaining to adequately prepare for a successful transition. We cannot afford to impose greater risk and complexity for our pollworkers and voters when there is no much at stake for California. Imposition of unwarranted paper ballots at the polls will result in longer lines and delays. The electorate placed its faith in the authors of Proposition 41 and approved \$200 million to modernize our voting systems. CACEO believes that regressing to paper ballots, which were the catalyst for election reform, would be a great injustice to California's voters.

We recognize there are improvements that can be made in processes and procedures which will not place California in jeopardy or potentially in banner headlines nationally. We are confident that the Task Force will formulate recommendations and the Secretary of State will pursue policies that will strengthen oversight, including quality standards and regulations, without incurring significant on-going operational costs among the cities and counties which can least afford such a fiscal burden.

Your recent support of Registrars of Voters in both Alameda and Riverside Counties while delivering Proposition 41 funds was an encouragement to all California election officials. Those preparing to transition into new voting systems share the confidence you expressed in such statements as:

- "This new technology will give voters in Alameda County an easier, more efficient trip to the polls and confidence that their vote will be counted as intended." April 9<sup>th</sup> SOS Press Release
- "Riverside's smooth transition to touch screen voting serves as a national model for county election officials to consider as they undertake similar transitions." March 28<sup>th</sup> SOS Press Release
- "We're not going to change horses in the middle of the stream." March 31<sup>st</sup> San Diego Tribune

California Election Officials agree with you and are relying upon the currently certified DRE systems to ensure that this major transition to modern voting technology in March 2004 will be smooth and serve its intended purpose of full enfranchisement of California voters.

Sincerely,

Ann Reed, President  
CACEO

cc: SOS Ad Hoc Task Force