

____-____ Initiative Petition for a Law Implementing Hand-Counted Plain-Paper Ballots

Initiative Wording: All voting in any public election in the Commonwealth shall be by hand-counted hand-cast plain-paper ballots whose election totals are publicly verifiable.

Recommended implementation:

Precinct Voting: In each voting precinct, there is a Voting Room where votes are privately cast (as currently done now). Voters are verified and checked in at the beginning of their vote, and verified and checked out at the completion of their vote. Ballots are accumulated in a locked ballot box, verified to be empty at the start of the election, except for the Totals Sheet with the totals of early voting. The ballot box is placed on a table and constantly monitored to prevent ballot stuffing. Votes are placed in the box, and a running total is maintained, verified by the poll watchers. At the end of the election, the Voting Room becomes the Counting Room where the process is transparent, where ballots are publicly counted and monitored by video broadcasted real-time over the Internet. Where a precinct does not have streaming Internet service or equipment, this monitoring could be done by someone with a cell phone.

Personnel: It is recommended that high school students make up the personnel counting the votes in the counting rooms as a way of providing the needed personnel, and as a means of providing a high school civics lesson. Poll watchers should keep their own totals that can be verified against each other, the retained ballots, and against the Internet results.

City/Town/District/State: Vote totals from each polling place would be sealed in a locked brief case transported by poll watchers from the different parties traveling together to a place in each city and town where the vote totals are publicly totaled and verified by video broadcasted real-time over the Internet (again a cell phone could be used, if there is no streaming Internet service). Those would be sent in the same manner would be sent to their corresponding districts, then their congressional districts, and then likewise to the state election offices. Anyone having watched over the Internet can verify the results at each stage, making anyone and everyone a poll watcher.

Ballots and Totals: It is recommended that printed ballots and vote total sheets be printed from PDF files on to plain paper from the state and city/town web sites prior to the election, be embossed with the relevant town/district/county/state seal, and be verified by the poll watchers. Ballots should have the date of the election, the district and location of the voting precinct, along with office titles, candidate's names, addresses, party affiliation, check-off space, write-in space, and applicable instructions. Vote Total sheets should also have the number of votes and the totals from the early election and the election. Any additional spare ballots and vote total sheets existing immediately after the election should be verified to be shredded by the poll watchers. Ballots and total sheets should be retained at least one year from the date of the election.

Early Voting, Absentee, and Mail-In Ballots: Our Republic will only work properly if there is only one person/one vote, such that only those who should be voting are allowed to vote once each in secret, and their votes are properly and transparently counted, including the precinct, city, district, and state totals. Those who vote can only really be verified by in-person voting with proper identification of the voters to make sure they should be voting; however, since this ballot petition can only be about a single issue, this ballot initiative only requires that all early voting be in accordance with this initiative with early voting totals included on the precinct totals sheet. This ballot initiative can only recommend voter

identification and the elimination of absentee and mail-in ballots, which would have to be taken up by other ballot initiatives.

Other Details:

Costs: So that no costs would be required to implement this ballot initiative, any cost savings for not requiring voting machines and not having to pay for their upkeep could go directly into maintaining the infrastructure of public transparency. This includes the cost savings from not having to print machine-readable ballots. Any extra cost savings left over could also go to the students.

Federal Laws: This ballot initiative is subject to the Constitution of the United States of America. At any place where this initiative violates the Constitution, the Constitution takes precedence. At any place where this ballot initiative violates federal law that is not expressly stated in the Constitution, according to the Tenth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America, this initiative takes precedence over any such federal law, as passage of this ballot petition is the will of the people of the State of Massachusetts, for which the Tenth Amendment expressly states that, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

Enforcement: This ballot initiative shall be enforced by all state, county, and local officials as applicable. Any fines or punishments that are applicable to the proven violation of the current election laws would be applicable to violations of the law proposed by this ballot initiative.