

0 Connecticut Citizen Election Audit

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Citizen Group Cites Flaws in Official Election Audits

Again accuracy declined and write-in votes handled incorrectly

Hartford –The Connecticut Citizen Election Audit has released its report on its observation of the November 2015 official post-election audits. The audits, required by state law, are intended to verify the accuracy of elections at the municipal level.

Citizen Audit spokesperson Luther Weeks stated, “After 9 years of official audits, voters should expect accuracy. Yet the audits have gone from poor to worse.”

The group's observers found that official audit results do not inspire confidence because of continued:

- ▼ Discrepancies between machine counts and hand counts of votes reported to the Secretary of the State by municipal registrars of voters.
- ▼ Lack of investigation of such discrepancies, and the lack of standards for triggering investigations.
- ▼ Lack of consistency, reliability, and transparency in the conduct of the audit.
- ▼ Weaknesses in ballot chain-of-custody and security.

The group’s report noted:

- ▼ 28% of official audits cited “Human Error” in counting ballots and votes. Registrars of voters should be expected to take the necessary effort to count accurately.
- ▼ Significant decreases in audit integrity, and accuracy.
- ▼ In three towns audits detected districts where officials fed write-in ballots through scanners a second time on election night.
- ▼ If the group's recommendations from last year had been mandated and followed, all write-in ballots would have been counted accurately.

“Problems discovered counting write-ins two years in a row shows the value of the official audits. But the report also reveals the decline in official attention to the audits, demonstrating that independent citizen observation and reporting are essential to election integrity.” Weeks emphasized.

The non-partisan Connecticut Citizen Election Audit has organized volunteer observers and provided independent post-election audit reports since the adoption of optical scanners statewide in 2007. All reports and backup data are available online at:

<http://www.CTElectionAudit.org>.

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