OPEN VOTING CONSORTIUM
9560 Windrose Lane
Granite Bay, CA 95746 USA
Phone-916-791-0456 Fax-916-772-5360
www.openvotingconsortium.org

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Contacts

Alan Dechert	916-791-0456	Jan Kärrman	+46 18 509 507 (Sweden, 10a-1p Pac.)
Arthur Keller	650-424-0202	Fred McLain	206-679-2198 (Washington)
Doug Jones	319-335-0740 (Iowa)	David Mertz	413-863-4552 (Massachusetts)
Laird Popkin	917-453-0700 (New York)	*all can be reached via email: firstname@openvoting.org*	

References

Doug Jones's Voting Page:
http://www.cs.uiowa.edu/~jones/voting/
Alan Dechert's talk at UC Santa Cruz:
http://www.openvotingconsortium.org/oct26forum.htm
Paul Andrew's column in the Seattle Times (March 22)
http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2001884976_paul22.html

GRANITE BAY, CALIFORNIA — The Open Voting Consortium will demonstrate a version of its free election software on the 1st of April at 10:00 AM in the Santa Clara County government office building, 70 W. Hedding St., room 157, San Jose. The Open Voting Consortium intends to make free voting software available for use in public elections to begin a process founders hope will transform the voting system from a fraud-prone, blackbox, proprietary, expensive, idiosyncratic, unreliable system to a technically sound, accurate, secure, inexpensive, uniform and open voting system.

An international team of volunteer scientists and engineers developed the demonstration system. Jan Kärrman of Sweden, a senior research engineer at Uppsala University says that the role of the U.S. internationally "makes it important, outside the U.S. as well, that fair elections are being held there." John-Paul Gignac of Canada wrote the software for the graphical user interface. Anand Pillai of Bangalore India, Eron Lloyd of Pennsylvania, and Dr. David Mertz of Massachusetts have been the other main software code contributors. Fred McLain, a noted computer security expert from Washington, has served as the lead developer over the past two months. "I am very pleased with the outstanding contributions of this world wide group of contributers. In a short period of time they have created a ballot system with a paper trail, an outstanding verification system and allow for vision impaired users as well," McLain stated.

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A simulation of the poll-site voting machine is available on the Internet. Users can print the same ballot as with the standalone voting machine, or they can view the ballot on the screen. "We're happy to make this available," says Laird Popkin, a software wizard from New York who developed the user interface for the Internet simulation. "This really helps people to get what we're talking about."

"Voters should not be fooled into thinking their vote is secure with paperless electronic voting machines. We need a system like the Open Voting Consortium is developing that produces a paper ballot that voters can see, touch, and verify before placing in the ballot box," according to Dr. Arthur Keller, who teaches computer science at UC Santa Cruz, and serves as Vice President of the Open Voting Consortium. Professor Douglas W. Jones, a University of Iowa computer scientist and often-quoted expert on voting technology, agrees: "It's too easy to fool with a purely electronic record. We need a physical token to represent the vote so that it can be checked by ordinary human beings. We also want a system where all aspects of the system are open to public inspection so we can be sure everything is above board." Dr. Jones is also the Chief Technology Officer and Vice President of the Open Voting Consortium.

"We are not in favor of having a public process run by private companies that want to keep everything a secret," says Alan Dechert, President of the Open Voting Consortium. "It was wise to commit serious funding to modernize the voting system. But it would be foolish to spend all the money on immature technology that will be obsolete in a few years. We advocate spending a small percentage of this money on a comprehensive scientific research and development project that will give us the best possible voting system." The Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) earmarks nearly four billion dollars for voting modernization. Over $1.5 billion has been appropriated for this fiscal year. "We are working with universities in several states to get this project launched. Iowa State University and the University of California are leading the way, with strong teams developing in Illinois and Nevada, so far."

The Open Voting Consortium is a Nonprofit California Corporation dedicated to the development, maintenance, and delivery of open voting systems for use in public elections.

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