



OPEN VOTING CONSORTIUM

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Brad Friedman, Co-Founder
Velvet Revolution
PO Box 9576
Washington, DC 20016

RE: Divestiture for Democracy

Dear Mr. Friedman:

Your letter of 21 February 2005 to voting machine companies expresses very clearly the same goal of the Open Voting Consortium: We want to return to the people the ability to count the vote. "Trust us," is not adequate. As you do, we want the whole process to be clear, transparent, fair, trustworthy, orderly, observable, and auditable.

When certified open voting systems become available from the work of the Open Voting Consortium, you won't have to persuade us to follow your proposal. We have been committed to the same idea since our inception.

A year ago, we publicly demonstrated our prototype of a voting machine, which utilizes open source software and produces a summary paper ballot in the voting booth. The summary ballot reflects the voters' selections in clearly printed text.

We support your efforts to bring these issues to voting machine vendors. They need to hear that people want these transparency and integrity features throughout the voting system. The people want to hear that a better way is possible. Officials as well as vendors need to become a part of this movement toward open voting. Voting is a public process. There is no place for trade secrets in vote recording and tabulation.

The Open Voting Consortium is proud to say we have active support from Republicans, Democrats, Greens, and Libertarians – others as well. We are committed to staying strictly nonpartisan. We are glad to see Velvet Revolution reaching out to people of all political affiliations.

Thank you again for taking a leadership role here. This takes vision and courage. We appreciate that very much.

Sincerely,

Alan Dechert