

**Illinois Ballot Integrity
Poll Watcher Report
November 4, 2008 Presidential Election(DRAFT REPORT)**

IBIP conducted several poll watcher training sessions prior to the November 4 Presidential Election, in DuPage County, Cook County and the City of Chicago. DuPage county uses Premier Election Systems (formerly Diebold) Touchscreen voting equipment and both Cook County and the City uses Sequoia Touch Screens and Optical Scanners. Melissa Urda will issue a separate report from DuPage county.

Pollwatchers in the City and Cook County visited approximately 50 precincts. The goal of the pollwatching project was to monitor and report:

- 1) How the voting process worked to ensure that all eligible voters were allowed to cast their ballot and were confident in their experience that their votes would be counted as cast.
- 2) Adherence of election judges to the court order to give each voter the flyer with the correct language of the Constitutional Convention referendum.
- 3) How voting equipment and other election procedures functioned.

This summarizes poll watcher observations and makes recommendations based on their reports, with specific citations of issues which appear to be prevalent throughout Cook County and the City.

1. Voter Experience

1. Many precincts were multiple precincts and experienced long lines during morning rush, which created confusion. Precincts and Maps should be posted clearly along with maps of the precinct boundaries.
2. Many election judges were not checking map boundaries, or calling Board of Elections to check for correct precinct, or supplemental voter lists, if application was not in binder. Consequently many voters were given provisional ballots. Also, most provisional voters were not informed of the requirement to submit voter ID to Board of Elections within 48 hours.(1)
3. Privacy of the voting experience was compromised in several precincts where voting booths were placed against the wall which allowed other people to see their vote. Another disturbing practice was noted where voters sat around a table and marked their ballots in a group.(2)
4. It was observed that paper ballots accommodated the increased voter turnout on election day better than touch screens. Voters who used paper ballots completed the voting process in four or five minutes compared with eight to ten minutes on the touch screen.

2. Election Judge Practices

- a) Many election judges were not checking the early voter list to ensure people were not voting more than once. This procedure needs to be strictly adhered to, to guard against either the perception or charges of ballot stuffing.(3)
- b) More than 50% of precincts were not complying with the court order that each voter be given the flyer with the correct wording of the Constitutional Convention referendum ballot. Some precincts had the stack on the table, but did not make any effort to inform the voter of the correct wording. People who did receive the wording were confused about what it all meant. (4)
- c) In a few precincts, judges failed to monitor the ballots being scanned into the optical scanner or provide the privacy shield.
- d) Judges were observed routinely over-riding the optical scan ballot when the scanner rejected the ballot for over-voting instead of giving the voter the option of spoiling the ballot and issuing a new ballot.

- e) In one precinct there were 88 provisional ballots cast. Longtime voters were removed from the voter rolls (5)
- f) 90% of precincts observed in the City had less than 10 voters using the touch screen machines. Some judges were pushing the touch screen instead of giving voters the choice of “paper or plastic”.
- g) Several new judges complained that their training was rushed, most of their training dealt with the equipment and not enough time was devoted to voter eligibility, provisional ballots, and ID requirements.

3. Voting Equipment

- a) Two precincts experienced problems with the screen freezing, card ejected or the vote flipped with touch screen after a provisional ballot was cast. A judge in one precinct decided the solution was to issue a regular ballot with a note for Board of Elections that it was a provisional ballot. (6)
- b) Two voters in different precincts were issued Federal Ballots in error. When they complained –one voter was told by Election Board that the ballot could not be spoiled. Another voter was allowed to cancel the touch screen vote and was given a paper ballot.(7)
- c) A total of 8 precincts out of 50 or 16% experienced problems with either the touch screen or optical scanner or both.(8)

(8) Evanston Township Ward 2, Precinct 5, and 7, Ward 9 Precinct 4: City of Chicago, Ward 13, Precincts, 11 and 13.

(2) City of Chicago, Ward 39, Precinct 46: Ward 37, Precinct 37.

(3) City of Chicago, Ward 50, Precincts 32, and 19.

(4) **Early Voting Sites** – Budlong Woods Library, Edgewater Library,
Election Day

Niles Township, Precinct 2.

Rolling Meadows

City of Chicago,

Ward 13, Precincts 11,39,

Ward 27, Precinct 5,

Ward 36 Precinct 43,

Ward 37, Precinct 21,

Ward 39, Precinct 46,

Ward 40, Precincts 4,10,11,13,19,27.

Ward 48, Precincts 1,30

Ward 49, Precincts 2,5

Ward 50, Precincts 19, 32.

(5) Ward 13, Precinct 11. Illinois States Attorney to investigate?

(6) Ward 40, Precinct 27 and 47.

(7) Ward 49, Precinct 2, Ward, Ward 40 Precinct 47.

(8) Evanston Ward 2, Precinct 5, Chicago Ward 40 Precincts, 3,11(both tc and optical) 27(both tc and optical scan) 47: Ward 39 Precincts, 43 and 46. Ward 49 Precinct 2.