Internet Voting Timeline – SB-5522/HB-1624

2002 – National Defense Authorization Act of 2002 authorized the Department of Defense to carry out a pilot project that would allow Internet voting.

Early 2003 – The state legislature passed ESB-5463 to allow the state to participate in the DoD SERVE Internet voting project.

Mid 2003 – The DoD brought in eight consultants to do a peer group review of the SERVE program with regards to security and the Internet.

Jan. 2004 – After giving the DoD a couple weeks to review and comment on their report the Peer Review group issued their report to the public. Their report said the Internet is not secure for elections and recommended against all Internet voting schemes.

February 2004 – Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz announced the cancellation of the SERVE program because the Internet is not secure for elections.

2005 – Recognizing the fact that the Internet is not secure for elections Congress, in the Ronald Reagan National Defense Authorization Act of 2005, removed authority from the Department of Defense to carry out a pilot project until after the federal Election Assistance Commission (EAC) could provide guidelines.

June 14, 2007 – GAO issues GAO-07-774 "Elections: Action Plans Needed to Fully Address Challenges in Electronic Absentee Voting Initiatives for Military and Overseas Citizens". This report gives recommendations that the Department of Defense and EAC must follow before using any Internet voting scheme. The report says in part, "Without such plans, DOD is not in a position to address congressional expectations to establish secure and private electronic and Internet-based voting initiatives."

September 2008 – A group of computer scientists and network security experts wrote "Computer Technologists' Statement on Internet Voting". This statement has been signed by 30 scientists so far. Among those signing are PhD's from Stanford, Princeton, UofIowa, Purdue, Rice, UofTexas and two of the top security experts in the world, Bruce Schneier and Peter Neumann. They all agree that the Internet is not secure for elections.

December 2008 – The National Institute of Standards and Technology issued a report on Internet voting that was done for the EAC. This report concludes that the Internet is not secure for elections.

January 6, 2009 – The Pew Charitable Trusts issues "No Time To Vote". This report actually praises Washington State for being far ahead of most other states with regards to allowing time for UOCAVA voters to vote. This report does not support any Internet voting schemes.

February 5, 2009 – Overseas Vote Foundation issues "OVF 2008 Post Election Survey Research Report". This report discusses issues of UOCAVA voters and problems they have with voting. This report does not support any Internet voting schemes. In fact, this report makes suggestions that are appropriate for the state of Washington and that should be discussed and put into this legislation. To Whit:
Seek technical experts, Conduct an independent security evaluation, embrace transparency, consider requiring software disclosure.

NOTE: In building this timeline I tried very hard to find any actions or reports that were in any way favorable to Internet voting. There were none.

With regards to the Overseas Voting Foundation report and the recommendations they make I would like to point out that because this bill removes any Internet voting scheme from the oversight required in RCW 29A.12 you, the state legislature, and we, the people, lose all control. The bill removes requirements for testing of this voting system by an independent test lab. It removes state certification requirements. It removes public hearings. It essentially removes all safeguards and all transparency of the process and removes the voting public from any steps in the process.

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