Comments on the EAC 2008 Election Day Survey

In general, I do not see how the information gathered in this survey will help to "promote the effective administration of Federal elections." Responses will provide only the type of data that makes interesting statistics but has little application to the administration of elections.

Voter Registration Information. Your coverage is extremely detailed, comprising over forty separate items of data requested from election officials, but not one question about problems encountered or how they were (or could be) resolved.

UOCAVA Ballots. Your coverage here is also extremely detailed, comprising over twenty-five separate requests for data. Again, no questions were asked regarding problems or administrative procedures for resolving them.

Election Administration. Similarly, your coverage of election administration issues is very detailed, for example, requesting election officials to indicate the number of absentee ballots rejected for each of 19 separate reasons and the number of provisional ballots rejected for each of 13 reasons.

However, you do not ask any questions about errors in the voter registration database — a problem that has been prevalent in the primaries. It is crucial to determine the extent of the problems that have occurred with voter registration databases, so these problems can be addressed and corrected.

A. **Please ask the developer of the database, as well as how many people were turned away from the polls, and how many were required to vote provisionally, because they were not listed as registered even though they claimed to be.**

Electronic Pollbooks. You ask detailed questions about the use of electronic pollbooks, but nothing about their performance during the election or administrative procedures for managing problems. Further, your survey falsely assumes all electronic poll books are essentially the same.

B. **In order to assist election administrators in determining which e-pollbooks perform best, and help them anticipate and manage problems they may encounter with each type of e-pollbook, please add at least the following questions to determine how well the electronic poll books performed, and which performance issues were encountered with which manufacturer's system:**

♦ Type, manufacturer, and version number

♦ How many problem reports of each of the following did you receive:

E-Poll books were out of sync.	
E-pollbook(s) were taken out of service.	
E-pollbook printer(s) were not working correctly.	
Errors looking up polling places.	
Errors during voter sign-in.	
Errors in voter history.	
Other (please explain)	

Voting Equipment. Your coverage of voting equipment is also limited to the quantity of each type used, and here, too, the survey fails to distinguish between equipment provided by different manufacturers. Problems with the equipment have been prevalent in every election, and election officials need to have information to assist them in making purchasing decisions and to assist them in anticipating and managing problems that arise with different types of equipment. Perhaps the reason you received so few responses to your 2004 survey was that the same systems had been in use in most jurisdictions for many previous elections, and they had learned administrative workarounds for the problems that inevitably arise with the use of any equipment.

In 2006, you omitted questions about voting system performance entirely, despite the fact that thousands of jurisdictions were using completely new equipment and the 2006 primaries had unprecedented numbers of malfunctions on the very machines purchased to meet the requirements of HAVA.

C. **In the 2008 survey, please take the opportunity to find out how the newly acquired voting systems are performing for election officials, so your report can truly promote the effective administration of elections. I recommend the following questions.**

1. Please indicate any machine malfunctions, the type of machine, and how you managed the problem.

Problem Type	# of Reports	Make/model/version
Machine(s) were taken out of service.		
Battery/electrical problems.		
Machine failed to power up for other reasons.		
Machine crashed and/or shut down.		
Refused to print zero tapes		
Printed the wrong time on the zero tapes		
Refused to print end of day summary		
For DRE machines only:		
Machine timed out or locked voter out		
Screen blanked or froze		
Flipped votes to other candidate when voting		
Review screen was incorrect		
VVPAT printer malfunctioned		
Other (please explain)		
For optical scanners:		
Ballot feeding problems		
Paper jams		
Rejected valid ballot		
Accepted blank or overvoted ballot		
Other (please explain)		

2. If you received problem reports from voters or poll workers, please indicate what happened, the number of reports received, the type of equipment, and how you managed the problem.

Problem Type	# of Reports	Make/model/version
Voter access card ("smart-card") problems.		
Incomplete ballot (races or candidates missing).		
Incorrect ballot (wrong candidates for jurisdiction).		
"Review Screen" was incorrect.		
Flipped votes to other candidate on the screen		
Review screen was incorrect		
Language selection problems.		
Translation problems (ballot unclear).		
Disabled voter accessibility problems.		
Lack of assistance with machine.		
Text "size-changing" problems.		
Write-in vote problems.		
Lack of privacy; other voters can see selections.		
Other voting problems (please explain below)		

At the very least, include the vague and incomplete questions you asked in the 2004 survey (reproduced below).

VOTING EQUIPMENT: Please respond to the following questions by attaching a file in any of the following formats: .doc, .txt, or .csv.

13. Provide a listing of the types of voting equipment in use in each county of the State including the type of voting system, manufacturer, number of units used in each county/local election jurisdiction, the software version (if applicable), and an indication as to whether the voting system has or has not previously been used in a Federal election in that jurisdiction.

14. Identify by county and precinct, if available, where any of the following voting machine malfunctions occurred. Please identify if the voting machine was returned to service in the November 2, 2004 election.

14a. Power failure

14g. Modem failure

14b. Broken counter

14h. Scanner failure

14c. Computer failure

14i. Ballot encoder/activator failure

14d. Printer failure

14j. Audio ballot failure

14e. Screen failure

14k. Other (please specify)

14f. Fatal damage to machine