

Honest Elections U.S.

Working Towards a Fair American Voting System

The Problems With Mail-In Voting

Public trust of and participation in elections, is at a low point. Citizens doubt the outcome of major elections. To create a **trustworthy** system, it must be **transparent**, less dependant on hidden counting by machines, decrease disenfranchisement, and be much more **open** to participation by citizens. The people need to feel that they are true citizens and **part of a functional democracy**. All-mail elections generally go in the opposite direction of these goals.

Colorado Citizens Already Voted NO to All Mail Elections in 2002 - Voters decided directly and resoundingly rejected the proposal by **58% - 42% in 63 of 64 counties**. This alone is reason enough to reject all mail elections.

Centralization Magnifies Errors and the Ability to Commit Fraud - As in Denver's last two elections, errors are greatly magnified in centralized systems and flaw the entire process. Examples are numerous, including, in Denver, the Nov 2006 election, with 20,000+ voters (10%) disenfranchised due to centralized system errors, and the 2007 mail election with centralized counting problems delaying results and causing city to call in police to help with the vote count.

Lack of Transparency - Most invisible of all election types. Ballots are mailed in secret, accepted/rejected in secret, and counted in secret on secret software. Ballots are counted at a central location that makes fraud on a large scale easier and harder to detect. Difficult for a voter to tell if their ballot was received and counted.

Least Secure Method - No secure, consistent chain of custody as ballots go into insecure mail stream. Ballots may be in 1000's of locations with no security for weeks. Ballots handled by many anonymous persons throughout the process. Ballot is neither in the hands of voters nor election official for much of the process.

Unreliable - Legitimate voters sometimes do not receive ballots, post office or contracted company illegally forwards ballots, more than one ballot sent to voters, postal workers put ballots in the trash. By regulation mail carriers do not have to deliver to people they don't know. (All happened in Colorado, 1100 ballots illegally forwarded in Douglas County, 214 voters received two ballots in Boulder County, ballots found in dumpsters at post office in El Paso County)

Questionable Verification - signature check without voter present by SCOREII- can not be fair, may not be reliable

Delayed Remedies - voter can't challenge rejection of ballot/signature as is possible at polling place and before election finish

Extra Voter Effort - if they want to find out that their ballot was received AND accepted

Inconclusive - most voters will not go through effort to check and will not know if ballot was received and/or counted

Unclear Deadline - the last day to mail in ballot is usually approximate and causes confusion on last day to mail

Vote Rejected Due to Late Mail - even though vote was cast and ballot mailed before end of election

Inconvenient and Unclear - if ballot is not received, remedy is not clear or convenient - date of ballot arrival uncertain

Provisional Ballot - above problems essentially make all ballots like provisional ballots - real provisional ballots unknown to voters

Procrastination - because of indefinite and casual deadlines, voters put off voting and may forget to return ballot in time

More Disenfranchised - ballots are sent only to active (previous presidential voters)

Campaign Election Overlap - campaigning continues well after many votes are cast

Postage Problems - with typical large ballot many voters put insufficient postage on them

Voter Fraud - Person signing envelope may not be person to whom ballot was sent. Ballot can be stolen from mail.

Intimidation - Vote Selling - defeats constitutional right to privacy and private opportunity to avoid intimidation

Vote Harvesting - people collect ballots and throw them away Elderly/disabled vulnerable. Part of vote selling, too.

Easy Wholesale Ballot Tampering - unmarked contest on a ballot can be easily marked by anyone with a pencil

Renters Disenfranchised - at 2x rate of homeowners - students too - bags of ballots found in dumpsters at dorms/apartments