



## **New Mandates**

### **New Voting System Standards**

The Act requires the Secretary of State to create system standards for new technologies. California is already certifying new technologies, and has developed sophisticated criteria for new voting systems.

#### **New technologies, new opportunities and challenges**

New equipment presents new challenges. California must insist on the highest possible standards of accuracy and reliability before certifying any new voting technology.

Touchscreen systems offer unprecedented flexibility. Voters would be able to change type sizes. Voting instructions and information could be displayed in a wide variety of languages. The costs and time-consuming process of printing paper ballots in multiple formats would be greatly reduced.

At least one voting machine per precinct must offer full accessibility to the disabled community, so that they can cast a ballot independently and confidentially. This is potentially very expensive since California has more than 25,000 voting precincts. The cost of the average machine equipped to provide independent access is approximately \$3,000 per voting unit.

Touchscreen systems with an audio recording device would allow blind, visually disabled and illiterate voters to cast their ballots independently and secretly.

Yet computerized terminals must be accurate and reliable. The voting public must have confidence that the machines are tamper-proof. The voting public must have confidence that random audits of vote results could prevent any tampering.

A voter must be able to confirm his or her ballot before casting it. If there is a mistake, a voter must have the ability to correct it.

In addition, the new technologies must provide elections officers with a ballot paper trail for both recounts and random audits of results.