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Sent: Wednesday, July 03, 2002 2:43 PM
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Subject: update on status of voting system upgrades

I have attended two meetings of the Voting Modernization Board created to disburse the \$200 million for upgraded voting systems authorized by the voters with the passage of Proposition 41 on March 5, 2002. The Board is working on a formula for distribution of the funds.

The Federal Election Reform bill is in conference committee and Federal funding of voting system upgrades appears to be caught in the struggle over Homeland Security funding. The prognosis at the moment is not good.

I am certain that Napa County will qualify for State funds on a 3 - 1 match. However, given the formula most likely to be adopted (at a meeting on July 17, 2002) based on numbers of registered voters, and given the current state and local fiscal crisis, it does not appear at this time that we will be able to afford a full touch screen roll out for March 2004. I will have further information after July 17 and will let everyone know the system parameters that our Prop 41 funding application will be based on.

On a different front, the City of Napa last night decided to hold a precinct municipal election on March 4, 2002. They also approved using touch screen early voting and optech (mark sense where you mark the paper with a pen or pencil not punch out anything) paper ballot technology for both absentee and precinct voting. Optech ballot use will depend on three things:

- 1) a commitment from our vendor, Sequoia Voting Systems, to provide an Optech ballot tabulation machine at no cost for this pilot project election and to provide election backup for Optech ballot creation and counting under their existing contract at no additional expense.
- 2) The concurrence of all entities conducting elections on that date in using the Optech technology as a pilot project (at no additional cost to those entities). If any entity fails to allow use of this technology, we will revert to our normal Datavote cardpunch system which is reliable and familiar to our voters, and
- 3) The completion of a software upgrade to our Integrity election management software so that we can conduct early voting in all entities (Calistoga, St. Helena (City and School District at one location), Yountville and Napa.

I still need to schedule an appearance before the Calistoga City Council, the Yountville Town Council and the St. Helena City Council to get their concurrence in using the new system.

Would the clerks of those entities please contact me soon to schedule a date for my appearance.

Whether or not a countywide forest practices initiative will be placed on the November 5, 2002 ballot or perhaps on the March 4, 2003 ballot is not yet determined. I will keep everyone posted as I learn more.

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JOHN TUTEUR, REGISTRAR OF VOTERS