

**Testimony Before The Government Administration and Election Committee
(GAE)
Monday, February 11, 2008
Norwich, CT**

I am testifying as a resident of the 2nd Congressional District concerning what happened in my hometown, East Hampton, at the last municipal election. The results of the election required a recount effort, which ended up necessitating 3 recounts. Each recount delivered differing results from the initial count after the November 6 election. Those who were in attendance reported these irregularities.

- At the first recount, the moderator walked into the main counting room carrying 70 ballots in his arms and UNSECURED
- At the second recount, envelopes were already open and distributed without the public present
- At the third recount the same moderator came in with 117 ballots, again in an UNSECURED envelope
- I understand from the law all ballots must be secured after the vote, prior to and after any recounts and audits
- While they counted the ballots in the room with the public audience
- 1) no members of the public were allowed to observe the actual ballots including the hashing or counting process and
- 2) when it came time to total each candidates' vote hashes, the moderator (D) and the Republican registrar went into a back room outside of public observation. I repeat, totaling of votes was done out of the public eye
- We voters want to be sure the people who were actually elected by the voters of our town are sitting on our Town Council.
- Finally ballots were impounded because of citizen complaints filed with the SEEC due to irregularities observed.
- All of the above information is part of several citizen complaints one filed with the Secretary of the State, emails to Attorney Michael Kozik dated November 12, 13, and 14; and a second one filed with the SEEC dated November 19, 2007.

I was also a member of the public in attendance in Hartford, CT for their audit process as part of the group CtVotersCount. I observed the ballots come in within SECURED duffle bags before the start of the audit. After the audit, all ballots were replaced in those duffle bags and RESECURED in full view of the viewing public. However, the public was not allowed to actually see the ballots and to observe the counting process. We were made to sit far away from the counting activity. There was confusion concerning 1) what is a questionable ballot and 2) the formula to determine if the hand counted votes equaled the tape total.

I wish to observe that whether an audit or a recount, my conclusions and recommendations apply to both situations. Securing of the ballots and transparency in full view of the public apply to both

Conclusions and Recommendations:

1. Members of the public observing recounts or audits **MUST** be able to see each ballot as each official makes their decision and must be able to observe the actual recording of the hash/count mark. This is to be able to verify that the votes being counted are as they are represented on the ballot and to give the public confidence in the process.
2. No part of the procedure for the recounting or auditing **MUST** ever be removed from the view of the public for the same verification and confidence reasons mentioned in #1.
3. Mandatory and complete and comprehensive training for moderators and all who will take part as an auditor or as part of the recount process. I would also suggest a sheet, like a cheat sheet, that succinctly sets out the rules for easy reference.
4. To promote objectivity, and based on the irregularities in my town, have moderators and audit/recount volunteers come from another town, and not from the same town as the election being audited or recounted, or use independent auditors/recouters.
5. Any elections official or volunteer that violate the rules of this procedure of our sacred voting rights, **MUST** have stiff penalties invoked, including fines and jail time. I mentioned the infractions in East Hampton stated above, to one of the auditors in Hartford, who is also a head moderator, and the first words out of her mouth were: That's jail time. To date, nothing has happened to rectify what happened in East Hampton. We are still waiting to hear from the SEEC.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Angel
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