



USACM
U.S. PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE OF
THE ASSOCIATION FOR COMPUTING MACHINERY

April 29, 2004

The Honorable DeForest Soaries, Jr.,
Chairman
U.S. Election Assistance Commission
1225 New York Avenue, NW
Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Chairman Soaries:

The Help America Vote Act (Public Law 107-252) creates a Technical Guidelines Development Committee (TGDC) to make recommendations on voting system standards to the Election Assistance Commission. These involve technical standards pertaining to computer security, computer networks, computer data storage devices, registration lists, methods of detecting and preventing fraud, privacy, human factors in ballot presentation, and a variety of components of remote access systems.

We recognize the challenges, technical and non-technical alike, the TGDC faces in effectively carrying out its mandated activities. In our communications with the U.S. Congress and other policymakers, we have recommended that additional funds be provided for the TGDC's standards activities and related efforts of the National Institute of Standards and Technology. We have also urged that additional funds be provided to conduct research and development to improve the quality, reliability, accuracy, accessibility, affordability and security of voting equipment, election systems, and voting technology.

Many areas of expertise and skill are needed to assess voting standards and technology. In appointing members to serve on the TGDC, we urge you to include individuals with proven expertise in the technical domains of software program correctness and verification, software engineering, security, high reliability systems, and human factors. Your leadership in assembling competent and dedicated people to the TGDC will substantially facilitate the accuracy, reliability and integrity of our nation's public elections process. We have many of the nation's leading experts in this area among ACM's members, and would be pleased to refer them to you to assist in your efforts.

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Comprising computer scientists, engineers and other professionals from industry, academia and government, the mission of the U.S. Public Policy Committee of the Association for Computing Machinery (USACM) is to provide non-partisan scientific data, educational materials, and technical analysis to policymakers.

Please contact the ACM Office of Public Policy Office at (202) 659-9711 if we can provide input or be of assistance to the Commission.

Sincerely,

Barbara Simons, Ph.D.
Eugene H. Spafford, Ph.D

Co-Chairs
U.S. Public Policy Committee of the ACM
Association for Computing Machinery

