



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **KEVIN SHELLEY**

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Secretary of State Kevin Shelley Bans Diebold TSx for Use in November 2004 General Election

Also Decertifies All Touchscreen Systems in California Until Security Measures are Met

SACRAMENTO – Secretary of State Kevin Shelley today banned the use of touchscreen voting systems in four counties and decertified all touchscreen systems in California until security measures are in place to safeguard the November vote.

“We are taking every step possible to assure all Californians that their ballots will be counted accurately,” Shelley said.

Shelley decertified one type of touchscreen system, the Diebold TSx system, banning its use in the four counties where it is installed: Kern, San Diego, San Joaquin, and Solano. He took the additional step of requesting the Attorney General to investigate criminal and civil actions against Diebold in this matter based on what he called “fraudulent actions by Diebold.”

These actions were detailed in a report issued April 20 by the Secretary of State’s office. The report indicated Diebold’s persistent and aggressive marketing led to installation in a number of counties of touchscreen systems that were neither tested, qualified at the federal level, nor certified at the state level – and that Diebold then lied about it to Secretary of State officials.

“We will not tolerate the deceitful conduct of Diebold, and we must send a clear message to the rest of the industry: Don’t try to pull a fast one on the voters of California,” Shelley said.

In the remaining 10 counties using touchscreen systems, Shelley said he would require the counties to either install a voter-verified paper trail before November, or to meet 23 security measures before he would recertify those systems.

“I was proud to be the first Secretary of State in the nation to call for a voter-verified paper trail on touchscreen systems, and today I am taking immediate actions that will allow us to get there,” Secretary Shelley said. “But I understand the financial constraints counties are under right now and they will not incur any additional cost as a result of the measures I have announced today.

“I want to state clearly and unequivocally: there will be a paper trail for every single vote cast in the state of California, and it will happen on my watch,” Shelley said. “By May 30, the state of California will have standards in place for Accessible, Voter-Verified Paper Audit Trail (AVVPAT). I call on the federal government to move immediately on this issue as well, and just this week I have received positive indications from the chairman of the newly formed Federal Elections Assistance Commission that it will do so. These actions will clear the path for every county in the state using touchscreen systems to put a paper trail in place.”

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The Secretary of State's orders follow and expand upon recommendations issued by a state Voting Systems and Procedures Panel (VSPP) this week and last.

Shelley said he understood that his actions on Friday would face criticism both from some county officials, who have resisted his proposed upgrades, and from some activists, who want to ban all touchscreens until a voter-verified paper trail is in place.

"We are acting boldly and responsibly to improve and to secure these systems in time for November. I will make sure we have a voter verified paper trail on every touchscreen system. But I'm also going to make sure we can conduct an orderly election in November," Shelley said.