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VOTEALLEGHENY CHEERS DEF CON HACK

PITTSBURGH, PA. VoteAllegheny, a non-partisan election integrity organization, of which some officers and members are professionals in computer technology and security, applauds the recent DEF CON hack of voting machines.

DEF CON did a good job calling further attention to a serious issue. Machines that had been “federally certified” and used by voters were cracked by a few smart security persons with a budget of zero dollars in under a day. A motivated, well-funded actor such as a large political organization or a hostile foreign nation could do much more.

The early-2000's certification rush put many flawed machines in front of voters, including the UniLect Patriot, which lost thousands of votes, the WinVote, hacked recently at DEF CON, and the iVotronic, which contains security vulnerabilities uncovered by the Ohio Secretary of State in 2007. Allegheny County uses the iVotronic, and the software has never been updated here.

The government certification process has been proven to pass machines with dramatic flaws, so storing our votes inside government-certified software is not safe. We should store our votes on paper that voters can check, with strong chains of custody, with machine totals being audited by the human eye, publicly. We should replace these machines here for the same good reasons that so many other jurisdictions have been replacing theirs.

Citizens are fairly shouting for this security. The general public understands, and initiatives are everywhere. In addition to our colleagues local and national, mentioned previously, Patricia Arquette and Matthew Cooke have been active in this and related efforts, and have recently posted a video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lra4tySjCcM> which clearly states exactly what this legislation

would address: having our systems publicly and openly vetted by persons who know security and accessibility in elections and how elections run, and whose only stake in the game is having one person / one vote, accurately cast and counted.

Patricia Arquette has expressed support of our effort. Elected officials have signed our petitions. All we need now is for County Council and County Executive Rich Fitzgerald to pass the legislation.

Petitions are being signed which would get the legislation directly on the ballot as a referendum. All Allegheny County registered voters can sign Dr. Michelle Zuckerman-Parker's petition for the coalition's ordinance, and we encourage them to do so. We need a voting system that doesn't depend on invisible software. See DontTreadOnMyVote.com for a list of signing locations.

DEF CON has put the public on heightened awareness. We and our colleagues have been working on this for over a decade, and we applaud DEF CON. We want better, safer, more secure, more accessible elections.

VoteAllegheny is a non-partisan volunteer election integrity organization which advocates secure, accessible, recountable voting for all.

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