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### **VotePA COMMENDS PAPER BALLOT DECISION IN CENTRE COUNTY**

Statewide election integrity organization VotePA has announced its strong support of the Centre County Commissioners decision to purchase an optical scan voting system and to replace unverifiable touchscreens with voter-marked paper ballots in time for the upcoming November election.

The choice of paper ballots and scanners was made in lieu of adding more Direct Record Electronic (DRE) iVotronic touchscreen machines to those that had been in use in Centre County. On Tuesday (July 11), the Centre County Commissioners voted 2-1 in favor of replacing the county's touchscreens with a new paper ballot based system. The iVotronic touchscreen terminals will be replaced by one scanner and one accessible ballot marker in each precinct. The new system will provide both a fast electronic initial count and a true, permanent record of each voter's intent preserved on a paper ballot.

Commissioners Jon Eich and Rich Rogers, who ran for office on a platform based largely on the need for verifiable and recountable voting machines, voted in favor of the new system. Steve Dershem, who was on the Board of Commissioners that originally purchased the paperless iVotronic machines in 2006, voted against replacement. The decision was undertaken after a process of study that included multiple public hearings and opportunities for citizen input over a period of months.

"Optical scanners, ballot markers, and paper ballots are proven technology," said VotePA Executive Director Marybeth Kuznik. "Compared to touchscreens, they last longer and provide

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more auditable and recountable results. Over half of our United States citizens now vote on optical scanners, so this new system will be around for some time. We commend the Centre County Commissioners' decision and look forward to its serving as a model for other counties.”

Centre County's move means 17 counties now have some form of voter-marked paper ballot in the Keystone State. But voters in 50 Pennsylvania counties, including Philadelphia, Allegheny (Pittsburgh), and many of the larger suburban areas, will still be facing paperless touchscreen or pushbutton machines in November, with no way to conduct a meaningful recount or to recover votes in the event of machine failure.

VotePA is a statewide nonpartisan alliance of groups and individuals dedicated to voting rights and election integrity in Pennsylvania. For more information on the organization and its activities, visit [www.VotePA.us](http://www.VotePA.us) .

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