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CITIZEN COMMISSION PROPOSED TO SECURE ALLEGHENY COUNTY'S ELECTIONS

VoteAllegheny, an Allegheny County non-partisan election-integrity organization, strongly supports legislation being proposed by a coalition now circulating petitions in Allegheny County.

The goal of the legislation is the formation of a county commission of citizen experts whose mission will be safe, secure, accessible, auditable, and recountable elections in Allegheny County.

In light of the increasing hazards in elections, this ordinance would empanel a citizen commission, chosen by County Council and the County Chief Executive, to review the County's voting systems and, potentially, to recommend the purchase of a new system. If the Commission does recommend a new system, the voters of the County will have the opportunity to vote the recommendation up or down. Attached is a copy of the proposed legislation.

The ordinance is the product of many minds, and is supported by an increasing number of organizations, experts, and activists, including the League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh and Verified Voting (national).

There will be three simultaneous efforts toward this legislation. First is the opportunity for County Council to introduce it, pass it, and implement it. Second, a petition drive is underway to put the ordinance on the Council's agenda. The agenda initiative requires 500 valid signatures of registered voters in the County to be collected in a short period.

Third, Michelle Zuckerman-Parker, a citizen activist, has organized a campaign to place the legislation directly before the voters in the November election. This requires 22,000 signatures to be collected by early August. The web site for this effort is <http://DontTreadOnMyVote.com>. Dr. Zuckerman-Parker's effort is quickly gaining steam and attracting national attention, with the Twitter hashtag #22KSignatures. The website provides information for volunteers and for voters looking for a signing location.

Whether you believe that our elections have been hacked, could be hacked in the future, or simply might have incorrect results due to flawed software and hardware, we need voting systems that can provide strong evidence of the voters' intended choices. This effort has the goal of providing direction to elected officials so that future voting systems can give the electorate the assurance of fair and accurate vote counts, systems that provide meaningful election audits; that enable actual recounts, instead of the poor substitute we got last November in Allegheny County. This ordinance is designed to help protect Allegheny County voters from the dangers of hacking, computer software and hardware flaws.

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

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