



**Date:** October 18, 2011  
**To:** Honorable Mayor and City Council  
**From:** Councilmember Robert Garcia, Chair, Elections Oversight Committee  
**Subject:** PROCUREMENT OF VOTING SYSTEM TECHNOLOGY THAT WILL ALLOW PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO VOTE PRIVATELY AND INDEPENDENTLY

The Elections Oversight Committee, at its meeting held Tuesday, September 27, 2011, considered communications relative to the above subject.

It is the recommendation of the Elections Oversight Committee to the City Council to the authorize the City Clerk to procure voting system technology that will allow persons with disabilities to vote privately and independently, at City Hall, during the 29 day early voting window period for the April 2012 Primary Nominating and June 2012 General Municipal elections.

Respectfully submitted,

ELECTIONS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

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Councilmember Robert Garcia, Chair

Prepared by:  
Gloria Harper



**CITY CLERK DEPARTMENT**  
*Long Beach, California*

LARRY HERRERA  
*City Clerk*

**ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION**

*Monique De La Garza*  
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**LEGISLATIVE BUREAU**

*Merianne Nakagawa*  
*City Clerk Bureau Manager*

October 18, 2011

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
City of Long Beach  
California

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Recommendation to concur in the recommendation of the Elections Oversight Committee authorizing the City Clerk to procure voting system technology that will allow persons with disabilities to vote privately and independently, at City Hall, during the 29 day early voting window period for the April 2012 Primary Nominating and June 2012 General Municipal elections.

**DISCUSSION**

In our City's municipal elections, the City Clerk Department uses assisted voting and curbside voting services to meet the needs of disabled voters. On Election Day and during the early voting period, assisted voting takes place in the voting booth, while curbside takes place at the voter's vehicle.

In contrast to the assisted and curbside voting approach used in municipal elections, each voting system used in an election for federal office must be accessible for individuals with disabilities in a manner that provides the same opportunity for access and participation (including privately and independently) as for other non-disabled voters. This requirement was contained in the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002.

In California, upon purchase of a voting system using federal and state monies, counties are mandated to provide blind and visually impaired individuals with access that is equivalent to access provided to individuals who are not blind or visually impaired. This mandate includes the ability of the voter to cast and verify all selections made by both visual and non-visual means. As a result, and since 2002, California counties have upgraded their voting systems to provide at least one voting unit for individuals who are blind or visually impaired at every poll.

When the City upgraded to the Hart InterCivic voting system in May 2007, federal and state disabled access mandates were not applicable to the City of Long Beach because neither federal nor state funds were used for system procurement.

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After five years of successful execution of our City's municipal elections with the Hart InterCivic voting system, it is staff's conclusion that the time has come to enhance the system's capacity to offer private and independent voting to the City's disabled voter community.

As envisioned, private and independent voting for disabled voters can be achieved with the use of eSlate voting devices.

The eSlate voting device allows all voters to cast their ballot privately and independently; and it is compliant with federal and state accessibility requirements. The accessibility features of the eSlate voting device and its appearance are shown in Attachment 1.

Use of eSlates will be as follows:

1. During the early voting period (29 days before Election Day), the City Clerk Department will host two eSlates at City Hall for use by disabled and non-disabled voters, during regular business hours;
2. All eSlate voting activity will be supervised and kept secure by City Clerk Department full-time and part-time staff;
3. Each eSlate will be wheelchair accessible and have assistive devices; and
4. The City Clerk Department will work with non-profit organizations to promote awareness of the eSlates and the opportunity to vote at City Hall.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

Approval of the above recommendation will permit the City Clerk Department to prepare a purchase order with Hart InterCivic, Inc. for eSlate equipment and related training support.

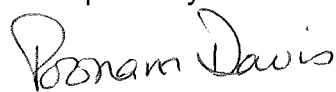
FISCAL IMPACT

Cost for procurement and use of eSlates in the April and June 2012 elections is estimated at \$24,107. Staff will manage its FY 2012 election appropriations to absorb this cost and the eSlates will be used in all future municipal elections.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



POONAM DAVIS  
ACTING CITY CLERK

Attachment

## Attachment 1 eSlate and Access Voting Booth

eSlate accessible features include: [1] low height for wheelchairs; [2] larger font and higher contrast screen for visibility; [3] jelly switches for the mobility impaired; [3] ability to accommodate sip-and-puff devices; [4] Braille keyboard; [5] headphones and audio that is a human versus digital voice; and [6] six distinctly shaped keys with specific functions.

