



**Press Release from Verify The Vote Indiana ([www.verifythevote.org](http://www.verifythevote.org))  
Re: Public Testing of Monroe County Voting Machines on October 4, 2006**

*People across the county are concerned about electronic voting machines. Many are asking officials tough questions and participating much more actively in elections. The most important message Verify the Vote has for our fellow citizens is: VOTE! If possible, vote early so that you will get a paper ballot – but whenever you vote, however you vote, be sure to vote! We are working to ensure the accuracy of the vote count because we believe in the power of citizens to shape our nation. We need YOU to VOTE!*

**Verify the Vote expects that today's voting machine tests will be accurate as far as they go, but that the testing will not be complete. We are confident that the tests performed by the Monroe County Board of Elections will meet - and most likely exceed - the recommendations from the voting machine vendor and the state. The recommendations are, however, inadequate. Why?**

Pre-election testing should include all components of the voting system. There will be 36 different ballot styles programmed for the upcoming election (18 ballots for the most common voting machines, the 464s, and 18 ballots for the newer Infinity touch-screen voting machines). Thorough pre-election testing should include 36 voting machines - each with a different ballot - but today's test will not.

At the end of election day, the data from hundreds of voting machines is transferred to a PC at the Clerk's office. A central tabulator program on the PC interprets and totals the votes. Thorough pre-election testing should include transferring the data from each of the 36 test machines to the central tabulator to check that the vote totals exactly match the votes cast. Today's test will not do this.

Computer software engineers have developed guidelines to systematically test the computer programs that capture and count our votes. The tests are simple enough that they can be performed by county election administrators, boards of election, or concerned citizens. The testing recommended by voting system vendors and the state doesn't meet the standards of these software engineers. If we followed the guidelines written to help Wisconsin election officials test voting system software, we would have to cast over 280 ballots on each of 36 test machines. It would take a team of two people over 80 hours – two weeks – to conduct such thorough testing on our electronic voting machines.

**What can we do to ensure that Monroe County votes are counted accurately, exactly as voters intend?** *Verify the Vote* recommends that Monroe County replace our nearly 20-year-old voting machines (the 464s) with an optical scan paper ballot system for future elections. Thorough pre-election testing of optical scan systems is practical: A test deck of 280+ optical scan ballots can be created once and reused on many machines and very thorough testing could be completed in a few days. After the election the voter-verified paper ballots would be available for automatic random audits. Audits are necessary because pre-election testing is designed to uncover defects that are the result of common programming mistakes – it is not designed to detect software installed by a person who wants to swing an election, nor can it guarantee that a voting machine won't shut down during election day causing some votes to be lost.

**We can still take action to increase the likelihood that our current system will provide accurate results in the upcoming election.** *Verify the Vote* has petitioned the Board of Elections to (1.) release to us summary tapes from all voting machines used on election day so that we can double-check the accuracy of the results reported by the central tabulator software, (2.) allow us to conduct realistic election day testing of the voting machines, (3.) allow volunteers to work with County personnel to conduct automatic random audits of paper ballots cast by Monroe residents who vote by mail or who vote early at the Clerk's office. We eagerly await the response of the Board of Elections.