

JOHN A. GALE

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Audit confirms accuracy of Nebraska election machines

LINCOLN – Sample hand counts of results from the November 2008 general election show that Nebraska’s voting tabulation equipment is extremely accurate, according to Secretary of State John Gale.

Gale ordered an audit of results in 17 randomly-selected precincts (1 percent of the state’s total) to test the accuracy of the equipment. A total of 7,239 ballots were hand counted in three contests – president, U.S. House of Representatives and a community college or natural resources district race.

In 16 of the precincts, there were no discrepancies between the hand counts and the machine counts. The lone discrepancies were found in a Dawes County precinct, where two changes resulted.

“We’ve always had the utmost confidence in our voting tabulation equipment,” Gale said. “But this audit confirms the amazing accuracy of these machines.”

The audit should allay any public mistrust in the accuracy of the equipment, he said.

“Nebraska voters can be highly confident in the integrity of our elections and that their ballots are counted correctly,” Gale said.

Nebraska uses paper ballots to vote, and the ballots are counted by optical-scanning equipment.

Using federal funds, the Secretary of State’s Office purchased new optical-scanning machines for all 93 counties for the 2006 election cycle.

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