Open Source Voting

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To:Commission, Elections (REG) <elections.commission@sfgov.org>;

Dear Commissioners:

As a member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 2007, along with Supervisor Ammiano, I led an effort to cancel the contract with Sequoia Voting Systems. It seemed to us the Sequoia system lacked the quality, security, transparency, accessibility, and flexibility we wanted to have in a new voting system.

It was a great opportunity to move to true open source voting. Unfortunately, the City ended up staying with Sequoia.

The Secretary of State's top-to-bottom review in 2007 showed Sequoia was the worst of the lot, as we feared.

In 2008, I attended the Linuxworld conference at the Moscone Center and had a chance to try out the open source voting system developed by Open Voting Consortium (OVC). I was favorably impressed.

The recent RFI issued by your Department shows a basic lack of understanding about open source. Why would anyone buy open source software when, by definition, it is free?

A different development model is needed. I felt that OVC had worked out a good model, and we should have supported that.

Thank you.

Chris Daly