

August 20, 2008
Comments and Questions
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Regarding the Commissioner's Reports, item 6 July 16 Elections
Commission meeting:

Questions that should be posed to the Director of Elections regarding the
1600 ballots mailed to voters with the wrong precinct, party, or ballot type:

1. How was it discovered that these incorrect ballots were sent to voters?
2. How does the Director know that they caught them all?
3. What was the breakdown, by precinct, of these 1600?
4. RE: staff looking at additional ballots to discover other errors and deciding there were few other problems: what were these few other problems and how many ballots were involved?
5. How many were checked by staff in the manner described by Commissioner Matthews?
6. Logistically, what safeguards could be implemented to prevent this from recurring?
7. Is staff salaried or hourly? If they are salaried, how can it save money to outsource this function to Sequoia, when Sequoia obviously makes money itself by performing this?
8. What if the department had not caught this mistake?

Mailing absentee ballots is not a function that should be outsourced. It is difficult to see how this would save money, and more importantly, delegates control over voting. This, as we have just seen, has the potential for serious error, or manipulation, which can result in disenfranchisement of voters and/or loss of the secret ballot. These responsibilities must remain within the Department of Elections, and under the control of the Director of Elections.