

Private and Independent Accessible Voting by use of an Integrated Optical Scanner and Ballot Marking Device

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A B S T R A C T

The Help America Vote Act calls for voters to be able to cast their ballot in a private and independent manner. This is a challenge to voters who do not identify as disabled; and more so for voters who do identify as disabled. In legacy voting systems, where a ballot marking device is a separate unit from the vote tabulation device, voters with mobility, dexterity, or vision impairment are hampered by the need to manipulate their paper ballot. This manipulation occurs when the ballot marking device has finished marking the voter's selections on the paper ballot. The paper ballot must then be transported to the tabulator (an optical scan unit) and fed into a slot for scanning and eventual voter review and tabulation. The ImageCast Evolution is an integrated ballot marking device and optical scanner that does not require the voter to manipulate their ballot between the marking and scanning/tabulating steps in the voting process. It is also a universal machine, meaning that voters who identify as disabled and voters who do not identify as disabled vote on the same voting machine. Marks made by the ballot marking device portion of the unit are made to look like hand-made voters marks. The marks are not rectangular as with other ballot marking devices. The basic workflow for all voters is similar; and those voters who utilize personal assistive technology can attach those devices to the unit then select from a menu of available machine behaviors to accommodate the use of those devices. All voters review their ballots via that paper ballot's actual scan, not from memory or some lesser method.