



**John Bonifaz**  
Democrat for Secretary of the Commonwealth

*Returning  
Voters to Power*

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## **Bonifaz Issues Statement on HAVA Non-Compliance in Massachusetts**

**BOSTON** - John Bonifaz, Democratic candidate for Secretary of State and the first Latino to run statewide in the Commonwealth, issued the following statement today regarding Massachusetts' non-compliance with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA):

"One of the most important aspects of the Help America Vote Act, passed in 2002, is the need for states across the country to have voting equipment that adequately and securely meets the needs of voters with disabilities. HAVA mandated all states to have the equipment ready for the first federal election of 2006. For Massachusetts, that means the September 19 primary.

"We are now five weeks away from that election and, despite HAVA's passage four years ago, Secretary Galvin has no plan in place to meet this requirement and train all poll workers in time for September 19. Other states, like Georgia, gave election officials in cities and towns six months for proper training.

"Secretary Galvin says he does not want to rush into purchasing the new equipment. I agree, which is why this process should have started years ago, after the bill's 2002 passage. Massachusetts is again failing to meet basic federal requirements because of Secretary Galvin's inaction. We've seen voting rights violations and Justice Department lawsuits in Boston and Springfield. Now, it is non-compliance with a critical voter accessibility law.

"Also important is the question of what voting equipment is being evaluated. Apparently, Secretary Galvin is going to make his choice from among the AutoMARK system or one of two electronic voting machines, including a controversial one manufactured by Diebold. Diebold also manufactures the AccuVote machines currently used by many municipalities in Massachusetts.

"We must guarantee the openness and transparency of our elections with verified voting, paper trails, hand-recorded paper ballots, and access to the source codes for, and random audits of, all existing electronic voting machines. It is also essential that we, the people, through our government, control our voting machines - not private companies.

"There is no reason Massachusetts should find itself facing HAVA non-compliance on such a critical and essential right for our voters with disabilities. And it makes no sense, in light of the verifiability problems of electronic voting machines, that Secretary Galvin would even consider bringing these types of machines into Massachusetts."

The first candidate to officially declare his candidacy for Secretary of State, Bonifaz launched his campaign last December. He founded the National Voting Rights Institute in 1994 and for over a decade has been a powerful voice and dedicated leader working with people throughout Massachusetts and across the country to protect the right to vote, demand a full recount in Ohio, overhaul the nation's campaign finance system and broaden citizen participation in the democratic process.

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