

April 15, 2013

Dear Members of the House State, Veterans and Military Affairs,

I hope to testify today about bill HB13-1303. There is little time to mention more than a couple of concerns about this overly-long, secretly-developed bill. Because of these concerns, I would ask for a NO vote on HB13-1303.

#### MAIL BALLOTS:

One concern is about going to all-mail ballots elections. Voting by mail is <sup>an</sup> example of remote voting, as opposed to in-person voting. Remote voting necessitates breaking the chain of custody of ballots possible in the polling place, where election officials can more easily be held accountable for keeping voted ballots safe until they are counted and tallied. In-person voting also offers the opportunity for citizen oversight of the election process, as a check on the considerable power of election officials such as our county clerks and recorders. It also presents greater opportunities for a truly secret ballot, which remote voting does not. Remote voting allows voter coercion and bribes, especially in Colorado, which allows voters to give their ballots to anyone they choose to take to officials for counting --- and in large quantities, without registering either the name of the carrier or of the voters who have relinquished their ballots.

Mail ballot elections make fraud easier, which reduces the value of honest votes, and betrays the trust of the honest voter.

Hence, I believe that remote voting should be reserved for voters who cannot vote in person. There used to be protections for elections in this regard; but these protections are being undermined by the lobbying of special interests.

(If you want an example of a suspect use of mail ballots, go to [www.vimeo.com](http://www.vimeo.com) and search "Mail Ballots". That should turn up a 40-minute video, a documented case study titled "MAIL BALLOTS AND DIRTY TRICKS: Citizens vs Monied Interests in a Colorado Town".

#### LESSENING OF CITIZEN OVERSIGHT

Recent changes in our elections that stretch out not only the casting of ballots but also the receiving and counting of votes make it more difficult for citizen oversight of the various processes. Such oversight can provide a check on the clerk's power as well as a source of expert advice on procedures.

#### RISK-LIMITING AUDITS

These audits should not be put off for another three years. Such audits are badly needed, as they would be an important check on the accuracy and integrity of elections. Whatever the excuses, they are not good enough. The delay suggests there are those who find checks on the accuracy of election results unwelcome.

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