

## POLL CLOSING OBSERVATION PROJECT

### THE WHY'S, HOW'S AND WHAT'S

#### -Why do we need your help?

1. Fair Elections start at the polling place – this is where the votes are first **TABULATED!**
2. Tabulation is not just about knowing how many votes go to each candidate. Perhaps the most important part about tabulation is knowing that the total number of recorded votes actually matches the total number of **PEOPLE WHO SHOWED UP TO VOTE**. If you have more votes than voters, you might have ballot stuffing. More voters than votes? You might have vote suppression or the canceling of votes.
3. How do you figure out whether the numbers match? Easy. During the tabulation that is part of every poll closing, the clerks and poll workers are asked to keep track of the following sets of numbers: **THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO SIGNED IN TO VOTE**. This is done by observing pollworkers as they count up the number of signatures from the Certificates to Vote. **THE NUMBER OF VOTES CAST**. Here, we are asking you to track the clerks as they tally up the total number of votes from the number displayed on the Voting Machines at the closing of the polls. This is called the **TOTAL PUBLIC COUNT**.
4. If these two numbers do not appear to match, or you observe that the clerks make them match (forced matches), we want to know about this so please record this.

#### -How does an Observer go about observing?

1. As you will see from the copies of statutes that we are providing to you, **OBSERVING A POLL CLOSING IS THE RIGHT OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**. This is not just the privilege of political interests. Therefore, no need to rely on candidate or party credentials. Because **WE** are non-partisan, we ask that you not wear any buttons, hats or t-shirts with political or candidate logos.
2. **BE AT THE POLLING PLACE A FEW MINUTES BEFORE 7:00 P.M. AND ADVISE THE PERSON AT THE DOOR THAT YOU WANT TO GO IN TO WATCH THE TABULATION**. You should be allowed to enter the polling place after the last voter has voted after 7 pm. Watch out! The clerks might try to close the door on you if you are not in front of their face at exactly 7:00 p.m.
3. Be polite. Introduce yourself to the clerk. Tell them you are a citizen who has come to watch the closing of the polls. *See Florida Statutes attached*. **TAKE THE STATUTES WITH YOU** in case you need them.
4. Do not interfere with the process of closing the polls. **BUT KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!!!** You are allowed to witness the counting process. However, you are not allowed to touch the machines or interfere with the process in any way.
5. You have a right to record totals. If they are not calling out totals, ask politely what the total counts were. Remember: You are a witness!

**-What is the Observer looking for?**

COUNTING OF THE VOTERS AND THE BALLOTS

Each voter does two things at the polls that will be counted at the end of the day. WE ASK THAT YOU KEEP TRACK OF THE TOTALS FOR BOTH.

1. Sign the Precinct Register
2. Vote
  - a. On an Electronic Voting machine, or
  - b. On a Provisional Ballot, which may be on an electronic voting machine

COUNTING THE PROVISIONAL BALLOTS

Voters who arrive at the polling place without identification, voters whose eligibility cannot be verified, and voters who are challenged, are all required to vote a PROVISIONAL BALLOT. While provisional ballots may be cast either electronically or on paper (or both), the information relating to the fact that a certain voter was given a provisional ballot, is all done on paper. Therefore, WE NEED YOU TO TRACK THE NUMBER OF PROVISIONAL BALLOTS GIVEN TO VOTERS. If at all possible, we also need you to track the reason(s) that voters were given provisional ballots.

COUNTING OF THE CHALLENGES

Changes in Florida Statutes Section 101.111 make challenges easier to carry out.

What does the change in the challenge law do?

1. It allows challenges to be interposed up to THIRTY (30) DAYS prior to the election.
2. Challenged voters will lose the ability to present evidence at the precinct to prove they are eligible and requires them to present WRITTEN EVIDENCE of their eligibility.
3. ALL challenged voters will be forced, merely because they are challenged, TO VOTE A PROVISIONAL BALLOT.

Who can Challenge? Any elector (meaning any voter); Any poll watcher (meaning party or issue affiliated poll watchers, including poll watchers working with single issue PACs). This also includes poll workers hired by the county to work the election.

LIKE PROVISIONAL BALLOTS, CHALLENGES ARE DOCUMENTED ON PAPER. THEREFORE, PLEASE KEEP TRACK OF THE NUMBER OF CHALLENGES

**-How do we record our observations?**

1. Each observer is given a form to record the data. Each of you should fill in separate forms, BUT please be sure that you AGREE on the totals on the SIGNATURE COUNTS from the Certificates to Vote.
2. This form should be turned in to: **Pamela Haengel, telephone: 727-821-1116, fax: 727-896-4132; email: gemzztoo@aol.com**
  - How do I know where to go and observe? .
3. What if there is a PROBLEM (such as a BIG difference in the count), or if you are DENIED ACCESS? Call **Pamela Haengel, telephone: 727-244-9064 or 727-821-1116; or Lisa Fletcher, telephone: 727-821-4363 or 727-698-3049**