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VOTING RIGHTS ADVOCATES AND CYBER-SECURITY EXPERTS
RAISE ALARM OVER INTERNET VOTING

US ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION CHARGED WITH VIOLATING
FEDERAL LAW IN PROCEEDING WITH INTERNET VOTING PLANS

“The Newest Threat to the Integrity of US Elections”

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Voter Action, a national voting rights and election integrity organization, has charged the federal agency overseeing US elections with violating federal law in moving forward with proposed guidelines for Internet voting systems. The federal agency, the US Election Assistance Commission, seeks to start certifying Internet voting systems for use in the upcoming November election.

“If allowed to proceed, the US Election Assistance Commission will place at risk the votes of hundreds of thousands of military and overseas voters,” says John Bonifaz, the legal director for Voter Action. “Internet voting represents the newest threat to the integrity of US elections.”

Voter Action released today a letter it issued to the commission on April 26, 2010, documenting the agency’s rushed process for public comment on the new guidelines and its decision to bypass the technical committee responsible for reviewing such regulations. The letter stated the proposed guidelines “do not comply with federal law and, if adopted, would illegally impair the fundamental voting rights of uniformed, overseas and other voters to vote and have their votes counted as cast.”

The commission’s action comes in the midst of renewed concerns about cyber security, including the revelation that Internet intruders recently hacked into Google’s computers and stole the company’s password system. Richard A. Clarke, a cyber-security expert who served as the counterterrorism chief for former Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, has told the New York Times he remains skeptical about ballots being sent over the Internet.

Voter Action states that it supports measures allowing military and overseas voters to access their blank ballots via electronic means, but it says the submission of completed ballots using the Internet is dangerous and insecure. Voter Action’s letter to the commission can be found here: http://voteraction.org/files/2010-04-26%20Final%20Voter%20Action%20Letter%20to%20EAC_0.pdf