

## **Reasons to Eliminate the undervote provisions in Illinois Election Law**

### **Voters intend to undervote.**

There is no reason to think that people undervote unintentionally. New optical scan ballots are easy for people to understand. Few people (less than 1%) fill in their ballots with marks that will not be accurately read by the machines.

### **Rejecting for undervotes will increase lines at the polls**

The time it takes for a voter to understand why the tabulator beeps at them is going to be no less than 30 seconds, and probably more in the neighborhood of 2 minutes. If this happens at the busiest times, it will cause longer lines in the polling places. It is absurd to think that a voter, with little to no awareness of the operations of the machine, is going to understand what they need to do when they get an error message and beep.

### **Voter Frustration**

There will be anger on the part of voters when they are told that they have made an error on their ballot when in fact there was no error and they in fact wanted to undervote for a particular office.

This frustration will be increased if the voter is instructed to take their ballot back to a booth that may not be empty anymore, requiring a longer wait. Also, there is some chance that the voter actually did make an error in another part of the ballot. They return to the voting booth to cast a vote for an intentionally undervoted office, go through the time to do that, and then upon reinserting the ballot into the tabulator discover that they made a mistake and overvoted for another office, or had a stray mark that was counted as an overvote. It is likely that the person will give up in frustration and will have cast a vote they didn't really want to cast and will have wasted a vote that they intended to cast.

### **Voters who intentionally undervote will lose their right to a secret ballot.**

When the machine beeps and hesitates to accept the voters ballot, anyone observing the voter will know that the voter either overvoted or undervoted. If the voter does not ask for the ballot to be returned, people will assume that they did not vote a full ballot.

There are very few voters who will not need assistance in determining why their ballot is being rejected. That means that those voters will turn to an election judge for help. The judge will need to read the screen which will inform the judge of the race for which the voter intended to undervote. At that point, the voter has lost his right to a secret ballot.

### **Blind voters will lose their right to vote a secret ballot**

One of the principles reasons for the Help America Vote Act was to guarantee a secret ballot for blind voters. The undervote provision negates that provision in those instances where a blind voter wishes to undervote for a particular office. While a specious argument can be made that voters with sight can deal with problems at the tabulator, it is impossible for a blind person to handle the problem without assistance.