

**TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL**

**FROM: CITY MANAGER DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**DATE: MAY 8, 2006 CMR: 211:06**

**SUBJECT: HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL TO DIRECT THE CITY ATTORNEY TO DRAFT A VOTER CONFIDENCE RESOLUTION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff and the City of Palo Alto's Human Relations Commission (HRC) request that the City Council direct the City Attorney to draft a Voter Confidence Resolution.

**BACKGROUND**

At its January and February 2006 meetings, the Human Relations Commission (HRC) discussed the election process and entertained testimony from residents regarding the voting system and the problem with voting machines in Santa Clara County. The HRC's concerns are that the voting machine system is unregulated. Some of the machines that have been tested had as much as a 30 percent error rate. Currently, the voting machines do not have a paper back-up system to provide for accurate recounts. The HRC is in support of absentee ballots because voting on paper is the only way to ensure an accurate recount of votes.

The HRC is recommending a Voter Confidence Resolution as a way of sending a message to local, state and federal election officials that we must return to a more participatory democracy.

**BOARD/COMMISSION REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION**

At its February 9, 2006 meeting, the HRC discussed a draft of the Voter Confidence Resolution. After a lengthy discussion, the HRC approved the final changes to the draft resolution (Attachment A). HRC and City staff agreed to forward the resolution to the City Council for adoption and have the City Council direct the City Attorney to draft the final version of the resolution.

**RESOURCE IMPACT**

There should not be a significant impact on staff time.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Draft Voter Confidence Resolution

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