

## **New report highlights lessons learned following Minnesota election audit and recounts**

Minneapolis, MN (May 26, 2009) Although Minnesota's contested U.S. Senate seat remains unfilled five months after the election, the recount procedures were sound, according to a new report by Citizens for Election Integrity Minnesota (CEIMN).

The report, "*Eyes on the Vote Count: Non-partisan observer reports of Minnesota's 2008 audit and recount*" can be downloaded at [www.ceimn.org](http://www.ceimn.org)

According to CEIMN, Minnesota election laws provide for transparent and independent verification of election outcomes through key provisions including the use paper ballots that allows for manual recounts and manual audits; the requirement that recounts are conducted by hand; a public observation of audits and recounts; a recount provision for every close election contest; and an escalation mechanism that triggers additional audits if discrepancies are found.

"The report describes the manual counting process based on nonpartisan volunteers' on the ground reports during the 2008 Minnesota audit and recounts," said Mark Halvorson, founder and director of CEIMN. "We also analyzed the accuracy of the optical scanners used in the audited precincts. We hope the findings are of value to Minnesota and other states committed to fair, transparent and accurate elections."

For the 2008 audit, CEIMN recruited and trained 155 nonpartisan volunteer observers who covered 75% of all counties in the state. During the recount, 77 volunteers observed 36% of all recount locations in Minnesota.

All of that experience observing audit and recount procedures across the state gave observers a unique perspective. Their comments and

recommendations on the audit and recount procedures have been consolidated in the report.

Halvorson and Martyn Crowell will discuss their report Fri., May 27, at 10:30 a.m. during the Innovations in Election Technology Conference sponsored by Center for the Study of Politics and Governance at the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs. The program agenda is available at <http://tinyurl.com/pffvex>.

During the last two federal elections, CEIMN has organized four nonpartisan observations of statewide audits or recounts in Minnesota. In 2008, CEIMN and the League of Women Voters Minnesota were joined by Common Cause Minnesota to organize a statewide nonpartisan citizen observation of the recount. It was the first time U.S. citizens engaged as non-partisan observers in a statewide recount.

Founded in 2004, Citizens for Election Integrity Minnesota is a non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring accurate, transparent, and verifiable elections in Minnesota, and nationally.