

“The price of liberty is eternal vigilance.”
Thomas Jefferson

“The people who cast the votes don't decide an election, the people who count the votes do.”
Joseph Stalin



Disturbing Facts:

In most recounts, the ballots are simply run through the same machines and never hand counted to check their accuracy.

“Only 50% of citizens in households earning less than \$15,000 are registered to vote, compared to 85 percent in households earning \$75,000 or more.” (Source: Demos “Fulfilling America’s Promise” Electoral reform Agenda, 2006-07, p.24)

“Two-thirds of the states surveyed did not require elections officials to notify voters purged from the voter rolls, denying these voters an opportunity to contest erroneous purges.” (Demos - ibid., p. 27)

Your Rights as a Voter:

- ◆ You do not need a photo ID to vote - ask for and sign an affidavit to verify your ID
- ◆ If your name is not on the voter list, you should be directed to the correct polling place or be provided a provisional ballot
- ◆ You can request permanent absentee ballot status for many different reasons
- ◆ You have the right to vote again if you make an error on your ballot
- ◆ If you are in line when the polls close you are entitled to vote, no matter how long you have to wait.



How Much do Elections Cost?

Michigan’s primary election in 2008 was estimated to cost taxpayers in excess of \$10 million to administer. The November general election cost even more.

Nationwide, Congressional and Presidential candidates alone spent more than \$5.3 billion on their 2008 campaigns.

What happens in other countries when their elections are contested?



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Here in the U.S. of A., we talk a lot about election reform, pass legislation and spend a lot of taxes to improve elections, but often end up with more problems!

Maybe because --

“For too long we’ve been told about “us” and “them.” Each and every election we see a new slate of arguments and ads telling us that “they” are the problem, not “us.” But there can be no “them” in America. There’s only us.”

Bill Clinton

Aristotle agreed, over 2000 years ago --

“If liberty and equality, as is thought by some, are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in government to the utmost.”

So it is our responsibility to

“Trust, but verify.”

Ronald Reagan



MichiganElectionReformAlliance.org

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“To encourage citizen ownership of transparent, participatory democracy.”

Creekside Declaration, Palo Alto, CA, 5/08

MEMA Accomplishments

- Proposed comprehensive legislation for Michigan election reform, including no-reason absentee voting, election-day registration, chain of custody standards, hand count post-election audits, and effective law enforcement

- Studied an unprecedented, statewide voter list maintenance program from 2006 through 2009. This expensive, politically motivated purge is examined in detail in the MERA publication:

The 2006 Michigan Voter Purge: A Report on a Statewide Program to Cancel Michigan Voter Registrations.

- With the Advancement Project, promoted a web site and phone number for Michigan voters to check if they were slated to be removed from the voter list in 2009 as a result of the 2006 purge.

- Trained nonpartisan monitors in 2006 and 2008 to oversee proper election administration in select jurisdictions.

- Initiated citizen vote count audits, utilizing FOIA requests to obtain access to inspect and photograph voted ballots. An opinion from the Michigan Attorney General, prompted in part by MERA efforts, validated this process.

Mission

MEMA formed in 2006 as a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to the realization of election processes that consistently uphold the principles of democracy, thereby assuring the confidence of voters and maximizing representation of all citizens.

To do that, we must ensure:

- votes are accurately counted and election outcomes quickly determined
- voting systems have proven integrity
- the electoral process gives all citizens a fair and equal opportunity to participate
- the vast majority of citizens vote because they have faith in our democratic process, truly believe that their votes count and can see that their voices are heard
- elections are funded in such a way that elected officials are only indebted to those who elect them, and everyone has an equal financial opportunity to run for office
- new ideas are encouraged by equal access to the ballot, the media, & political debates

Projects Underway

- Design and implement a comprehensive, detailed monitor plan and post-election survey for General Election 2012, to collect data about voter access, ease of voting, and election administration (Democracy Index)
- Produce short films to explain obscure and widely misunderstood, but very significant, elements of our election process

What can I do to Help?

- ✓ **Join MERA** or contribute to our efforts at: MichiganElectionReformAlliance.org
- ✓ Support election reform organizations
- ✓ Volunteer as a MERA election monitor
- ✓ Become a paid poll worker on election day
- ✓ Contact your elected officials and express your concerns about election reform
- ✓ Write letters to the editor supporting hand count audits and other reform proposals

<u>MEMA Membership Levels</u>	\$	E-mail news	Training	Publications	Web site link	Logo on literature
Student or Senior	10	*	*			
Basic	20	*	*			
Sustaining 10/mth	120	*	*	*		
Nonprofit Partner	120	*	*		*	*
Corporate Sponsor	200	*		*		

Affiliated Organizations

Election Audits, electionaudits.org
Verified Voting, verifiedvoting.org

“We always want the best man to win an election. Unfortunately, he never runs.”
Will Rogers

“Folks who don't know why America is the Land of Promise should be here during an election campaign.”
Milton Berle

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Name _____
Mailing Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
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Preferred means of contact: email regular mail (USPS) do not contact - onetime contribution
Membership: \$10 Student/senior \$20 Basic \$120 Nonprofit Partner \$200 Corporate Sponsor
Please charge my Credit Card # _____ Expires _____
Signature _____ **Optional:** charge a monthly pledge of \$ _____

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