

Janice Rich Mesa County Clerk and Recorder



P.O. Box 20,000 ~ Grand Junction, CO 81502-5006
(970) 244-1607 (970) 244-1703

Amy Storm, Chief Deputy Clerk
(970) 244-1746 (970) 255-7154

CLERK TO THE BOARD

Mesa County Courthouse - 544 Road
P.O. Box 20,000
Grand Jct., CO 81502-5006
(970) 244-1896 • Fax (970) 244-1864

ELECTIONS DIVISION

Mesa County Courthouse - 544 Road
P.O. Box 20,000
Grand Jct., CO 81502-5009
(970) 244-1682 • Fax (970) 255-5039

MOTOR VEHICLE DIVISION

Mesa Mall - 2424 Hwy 6 & 50, Unit 414
P.O. Box 20,000
Grand Jct., CO 81502-5008
(970) 244-1664 • Fax (970) 244-1676

RECORDING DIVISION

Mesa County Courthouse - 544 Road
P.O. Box 20,000
Grand Jct., CO 81502-6007
(970) 244-1679 • Fax (970) 256-1588

April 11, 2007

(TOTAL: 6 PAGES)

The Honorable John Salazar
U.S. Congress, 3rd Congressional District
State of Colorado

via Telefax: 202-226-9669

RE: HR 811

Dear Congressman Salazar:

This letter is to once again reinforce Mesa County's **OPPOSITION TO HR 811**. We are asking you to do the same. This Bill, as presently written, will in no way accomplish your objectives.

First and foremost, this Bill has an unrealistic timeline of 2008, and will most likely create a "train wreck" of the Presidential Election of 2008.

If such a Bill is passed, the implementation needs to be after 2008, and carried out in stages rather than all at once.

The requirements of this Bill will "undo" the action of the 27 states that have already passed state legislation on this, and will make it impossible for those 27 states to conduct an election with a DRE in 2008. In Colorado, a voter verifiable paper audit trail is already required on the DREs, but not in the manner in which this Bill mandates. *(It would have been nice if you would have first researched the requirements in Colorado.)* The objective of the Bill to force paper receipts can be done in a more responsible and rational manner than HR 811.

The audits of elections can be better achieved by following already proven audit procedures that currently exist in several states, including Colorado.

~ Motor Vehicle Branch Offices ~

Clifton	Peachtree Shopping Center	3225 I-70 Bus Loop, Unit A2	Clifton, CO 81520	(970) 434-3830
Fruita	Fruita Civic Center	325 E. Aspen	Fruita, CO 81521	(970) 858-7002
Orchard Mesa	Mesa County Fairgrounds	2775 Hwy 50	Grand Jct., CO 81503	(970) 256-1545

The Honorable John Salazar
U.S. Congress, 3rd Congressional District
April 11, 2007
Page 2

The procedures in HR 811 are likely to lead to less voter confidence, and may force almost any close election to the courts on a continuing basis.

Audits can be done better by having a workable solution developed by the states working through state plans filed with the US Election Assistance Commission rather than the federal government. Once again, please be advised that Colorado has a state plan in place.

Funding called for in the current legislation (approximately \$1 billion) is insufficient just to accomplish the desired result in paper trails alone, and the audit procedures will cost almost double that (another \$2 billion, bring it to a total of more than \$3 billion) to accomplish, as specified in HR 811.

I suggest you fully read and understand the implications of HR 811 before passage. Its impact on elections is likely to lead to so many unintended consequence problems that democracy may be irreparably damaged.

I invite you to visit with your election officials in your home jurisdiction(s) before proceeding on this legislation. By doing so, you will learn first-hand why this legislation is likely to be an embarrassment to Congress.

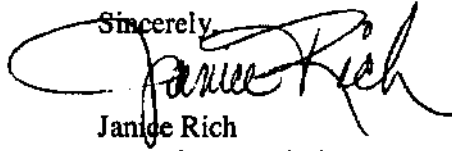
The Help America Vote Act took two years to fashion because the learning curve on what is possible administratively and what harms can result were paramount in the bi-partisan solution. Congress needs to be careful and approach this less hastily.

"There are roughly 511,000 elected offices in the US when you total all the ballot listings for elected school boards, city officials, county officials, state officials and federal races. Of that 511,000, there are 435 members of the US House, 100 members of the US Senate and a President and Vice President. To suggest that extreme measures, such as those contained in HR811, outweigh the practices, procedures and laws of the states that handle the other 510,000 elected offices is not a realistic nor practical position to be in as an elected representative. The election of 537 offices should not radically alter the methods for electing the others.

"The objectives of this Congress can be met better by taking responsible actions rather than extreme actions. It is possible to achieve the goals and still have the process be in the hands of the states and in a manner that allows states to design the process that best serves their voters while still accomplishing the desires of Congress. But HR811 is not the correct vehicle to do this." R. Doug Lewis, Executive Director, National Association of Election Officials, The Election Center.

The Honorable John Salazar
U.S. Congress, 3rd Congressional District
April 11, 2007
Page 3

Please oppose HR 811. Thank you for the opportunity to comment:

Sincerely,

Janice Rich
Mesa County Clerk & Recorder

/Enclosures (previous e-mails to/from Congressman Salazar)

cc: The Honorable Diana DeGette (via telefax: 202-225-5657)
The Honorable Douglas Lamborn (via telefax: 202-226-2638)
The Honorable Marilyn Musgrave (via telefax: 202-225-5870)
The Honorable Edwin Perlmutter (via telefax: 202-225-5278)
The Honorable Tom Tancredo (via telefax: 202-226-4623)
The Honorable Mark Udall (via telefax: 202-226-7840)
US House Administration Committee (via telefax: Democrats 202-225-7664)
US House Administration Committee (via telefax: Republicans 202-225-9957)
The Election Center (via telefax: 281-293-8739)
Mesa County Board of County Commissioners
Colorado State Senator, Josh Penry
Colorado State Representative, Bernie Buescher
Colorado State Representative, Steve King