

KEN SALAZAR
COLORADO



United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20510 - 3903

January 17, 2008

Honorable Peter Groff
President, Colorado State Senate

Honorable Andrew Romanoff
Speaker, Colorado State House of Representatives
Colorado State Capitol
200 E. Colfax
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Mr. President and Mr. Speaker:

The right to vote is the keystone of our democracy. As such, I am very concerned about the uncertainty surrounding the voting process for the 2008 elections.

As the Colorado General Assembly considers changes to state law that will ensure the integrity of paper ballots or electronic voting machines for the upcoming elections—in which several federal offices, including the President of the United States, will be decided, and in which federal voting and civil rights laws apply—it is critical that our state settle on voting standards and processes that will ensure the elections are conducted fairly and smoothly.

In my view, the following principles should guide our public policy in ensuring the public's confidence in, and the integrity of, the voting process: (1) we must preserve access to the ballot for all eligible and registered voters, (2) we must avoid processes that are burdensome or involve mandatory costs to the voter that may inadvertently disenfranchise voters, and (3) we must ensure the greatest accuracy in counting votes and transparency and security in the election process.

It is my hope that whatever methods or processes are adopted for the 2008 elections Colorado's voters continue to have the familiar, time-honored multiple options for casting their votes--mail-in or absentee voting, early voting at designated polling places, and same-day voting at convenient polling places-- with the ability of the county clerks to verify the accuracy of votes cast electronically with a secure paper trail or by paper ballot.

Thank you for the work you do on behalf of the people of Colorado. If I can be of any assistance regarding this matter of importance to all Colorado citizens, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ken Salazar".

Ken Salazar
United States Senator

cc: Governor Bill Ritter