



League still backs state's voting system

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The head of Georgia's League of Women Voters said Tuesday the chapter still supports the state's electronic voting system, despite concerns among the group's national membership over the security of such systems.

"We still absolutely, 100 percent, feel the system in Georgia is a good system," said Meg Smothers, executive director of the League of Women Voters of Georgia. Georgia is one of only two states that rely exclusively on electronic voting, using a system championed by Secretary of State Cathy Cox.

Smothers has been an important ally for Cox in defending the state's voting system. Smothers lobbied to defeat a bill this year that would have required Cox to outfit every voting machine with a printed receipt.

Critics of the touch-screen machines say that without such a receipt, voters are left to wonder whether their votes have been accurately tallied. Cox opposes the paper trail, saying it will cause logistical nightmares at the polls. She and Smothers say Georgia should wait until uniform national standards are developed for paper receipts before the state moves forward.

The debate over attaching printers to voting machines has split the national League of Women Voters. Some members have demanded that the national group endorse a paper receipt. On Monday the league, at its national convention, revised its position. The league previously had said receipts were not necessary. It removed that language from its official position, saying now that the organization supports voting systems that are "secure, accurate, recountable and accessible."

Chris Riggall, a spokesman for Cox, said Tuesday that "Georgia's current voting platform in fact meets the goals set forth by the league in their new resolution. We welcome their continued focus on voting system security."

Smothers said Georgia has enough security measures in place to prevent fraud. "There's no evidence that a paper receipt is necessary to make elections secure," Smothers said.

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