

# EXHIBIT G



## MOBILE REGISTER

### Voter registration system now 'substantially compliant'

Worley says changes mandated by federal law should be complete by November 2006 election

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**MONTGOMERY** -- Though the state's voter registration system was deemed obsolete two years ago, Secretary of State Nancy Worley is now touting it as "substantially compliant" with new federal guidelines, according to a letter she wrote federal officials last month.

The original goal was to have a new system in place by January, the federal deadline.

In a telephone interview Wednesday, Worley said the state will use both the old and a still-undetermined new system for the June primaries next year. She said the transition to the new system should be complete by the November 2006 general election.

Improved voter registration databases are one of a bundle of election reforms mandated by the federal Help America Vote Act, or HAVA, in reaction to problems in 2000 presidential election. Alabama voters endured similar uncertainty in 2002 when changing vote tallies from Baldwin County cast doubt on a tight governor's race.

Other reforms include requiring recount-compatible voting machines and having a machine for disabled citizens in every polling place.

HAVA requires that state and local officials share a voter registration database, which should also connect with computer systems used by other key state agencies. One example is the Department of Public Health, which maintains death records that would be used to purge the names of deceased voters from the rolls.

The existing statewide system is the Alabama Voter Information Network, or ALVIN. A technology expert considered it "obsolete" due to inadequate funding, according to Alabama's HAVA compliance plan completed in 2003.

It was top-notch when Alabama started using it in the 1980s, Worley said, but officials have not had the money to update it along the way.

More than half of Alabama's counties keep all their voter registration records in ALVIN, but 28 use their own

software and send updated data to the state system weekly or monthly.

Many states were not centralized to that degree before the federal mandates. "We do have a statewide system," she said, but "it is a dinosaur."

The letter obtained by the Mobile Register is dated Sept. 9, roughly four months before the deadline for HAVA compliance.

"They have indicated that as long as we are making a good-faith effort, they won't skin us alive," Worley said of federal officials.

Worley had budgeted up to \$12 million for a replacement system, the plan indicates. She said this week that it could come in under budget.

The purchasing process for a new system began in 2003, but no software contract has been signed yet.

Requests for proposals for a new voter registration system went out in August 2003, and the state HAVA committee heard pitches from finalists in September 2004. Worley announced May 27 that she had selected Diebold Election Systems.

Worley's office and Diebold "reached an impasse in negotiations" after three months, according to Worley's letter. She explained Wednesday that she wanted the state to own software, but Diebold would agree only to license it.

In August, the secretary of state asked for proposals again, this time calling for software licenses. Three revised proposals are under consideration.

She said the hangup at this point is funding.

"We could sign a contract now but it wouldn't do us any good," Worley said.

The federal government provided Alabama with \$41 million for HAVA-mandated improvements, but that is one-time money. Worley said the problem is recurring funds for software licensing fees and connections to link county offices to Montgomery.

At present, it costs about \$50,000 a month to connect all 67 counties to the state office, Worley said.

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