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## MIT-Caltech faculty from many sciences will seek voting remedy, Vest tells CNN

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CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Dec. 19 -- MIT and Caltech researchers in political science, cognitive science, computer science, engineering and design will study a range of voting systems, MIT President Charles M. Vest told Cable News Network (CNN) Monday.

"We really intend to look at a whole range of things," including ATM and Smart Card-type systems, President Vest told interviewer Leon Harris. "We'll go all the way back to the traditional use of paper ballots and see where we can go."

Vest added, "We're going to have to look very closely at affordability because we're talking about very large amounts of money to deploy systems across the United States.

"What we will try to do is make a very objective analysis and come back with not necessarily a single technology, perhaps even a range and some estimates of what cost and reliability figures can be.

"It's been astounding looking at this experience over the last several weeks. The estimates I've read show that approximately one out of every fifty American citizens who walked into the polling place, presumably intending to place a vote for the president, walked out without their vote counting for one reason or another."

Some voters may have voted twice; some may have voted but it didn't record; and some may have not voted for president.

When you compare an estimated national "no-vote" rate of two percent "to the fact that the margins in at least five states were under one percent, and in the case of Florida, it was 9/1000 of a percent, you can see why we really have to get hold of a technology that will be much more accurate and reliable," Vest said.

President Vest noted that two new systems had been introduced this year -- mail ballots during the Democratic primary in Oregon and internet voting in Arizona. "Indeed, here at MIT's Laboratory for Computer Science, (Professor) Ron Rivest and his group have been studying Internet voting for many years," he said. "This is one possibility."

With many urban areas using (lever) machines designed in 1892, which are unreliable and easily tampered with, President Vest said "a system that is easy to use, that is reliable, that is secure" must be developed.

URL: <http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/2000/votcnn.html>



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