



American Statistical Association

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March 19, 2010

The Honorable Lori Saldaña
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 3152
Fax: (916) 319-2176

Dear Assembly Member Saldaña:

I am delighted to hear of Assembly Bill (AB) 2023 to pilot risk-limiting audits and applaud California's leadership in promoting efficient and meaningful audits.

The Board of Directors for the American Statistical Association (ASA) has made two statements on election auditing. The March, 2008 statement on election integrity reads in part, "...the integrity of central vote tabulations [must] be confirmed by audits of voter-verified hardcopy records in order to provide high – and clearly specified – levels of confidence in electoral outcomes." In August, 2008, the ASA board endorsed the statistical parts of *Principles and Best Practices for Post-Election Audits*, which include the definition of risk-limiting audits and the advantages of risk-limiting audits over other methods. In particular, risk-limiting audits guarantee a large chance of finding and correcting erroneous electoral outcomes; good statistical design can provide this guarantee efficiently and economically.

The AB 2023 language to pilot the risk-limiting audits follows this guidance and breaks important legislative ground: These pilot audits will advance election integrity in California and the nation. This is important, groundbreaking, and scientifically sound. Your leadership is vital and appreciated.

Please let me know how the American Statistical Association might be of help to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sastry G. Pantula".

Sastry G. Pantula, PhD
President, American Statistical Association

cc: The Honorable Debra Bowen, Secretary of State, California