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American Statistical Association Endorses Statistical Principles of ElectionAudits.org's Post-Election Audits Document

Press briefing call today will feature election integrity organizations and audit experts

ALEXANDRIA VA (PRWEB) SEPT. 15, 2008 – The American Statistical Association (ASA), the nation's preeminent professional statistical society, today announced its support for the statistical principles of ElectionAudit.org's Principles and Best Practices for Post-Election Audits 2008. The ASA Board of Directors voted to endorse the principles dealing with limiting risk, addressing discrepancies and comprehensive coverage.

"ASA strongly supports the efforts of the many individuals, including several ASA members, who worked to develop these principles," said Peter A. Lachenbruch, ASA's President. "In light of irregularities in previous elections, exploring and verifying election results to assure the public that the recorded vote is correct can play a critical role in restoring confidence in election results. Statisticians can make unique contributions to this process."

A press briefing call will be held at 2 pm today to present the principles and answer questions. Ron Wasserstein, ASA executive director, will be on the call, along with Pam Smith, president of Verified Voting; Maggie Toulouse Oliver, county clerk, Bernalillo County, New Mexico; and Mark Halvorson, director of Citizens for Election Integrity Minnesota. **NOTE:** Media may access the call at 231-962-8000 and entering access code 181565#.

The audit principles were developed to guide the design and performance of high quality post-election audits and are the result of the work of election officials, public advocates, computer scientists, statisticians, political scientists and legislators. There are nine principles in all, and ASA has endorsed numbers 5—7, the statistically relevant statements. These are as follows:

Risk-Limiting Audits: Post-election audits reduce the risk of confirming an incorrect outcome. Audits designed explicitly to limit such risk (risk-limiting audits) have advantages over fixed-percentage or tiered audits, which often count fewer or more ballots than necessary to confirm the outcome.

Addressing Discrepancies and Continuing the Audit: When discrepancies are found, additional counting and/or other investigation may be necessary to determine the election outcome to find the cause of the discrepancies.

Comprehensive: All jurisdictions and all ballot types, including absentee, mail-in and accepted provisional ballots, should be subject to the selection process.

The complete list of principles may be viewed on the ElectionAudits.org web site at <http://electionaudits.org/principles>.

About the American Statistical Association

The American Statistical Association (ASA), a scientific and educational society founded in Boston in 1839, is the second oldest professional society in the United States. For more than 160 years, ASA has been providing its 18,000 members serving in academia, government, and industry and the public with up-to-date, useful information about statistics. The ASA has a proud tradition of service to statisticians, quantitative scientists, and users of statistics across a wealth of academic areas and applications. For additional information about the American Statistical Association, please visit the association's web site at <http://www.amstat.org> or call 703.684.1221.

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