

**Testimony of  
Kate Doran, Election Specialist  
The League of Women Voters of the City of New York  
To The Voter Assistance Advisory Committee  
Public Hearing on November 26, 2012  
regarding election day experiences.**

The New York City Board of Elections should be congratulated for the heroic round-the-clock work it did to find alternative poll sites and move equipment in the aftermath of the destructive hurricane. That said, most of the exasperating, frustrating problems encountered by voters on November 6<sup>th</sup> had little to do with the hurricane.

Election Day/Poll Site operations, as implemented by the NYC BOE, have never been analyzed and updated to reflect the “new” way of voting that began in the city in September of 2010. This is inexcusable considering the time taken in the run up to the implementation of the optical scan system, and the problems that have been apparent at every election event since September 2010.

For the most dramatic and far reaching impact the Board must revamp its system for recruiting and training poll workers; write rules to implement split shifts on Election Day; and demonstrate creative flexibility in staffing poll sites by function.

The Board must call on, and create incentives for, the best and the brightest of our city’s citizens to step up and work on Election Day. It’s an honor and a privilege to serve one another in the singularly equalizing act of voting. We believe that the Board can, and must create a work environment that is empowering instead of dehumanizing, well supported and well managed rather than confusing and disorganized.

Technology is important in this re-imagined workplace, but it can’t ever be the whole story. In my own poll site on November 6<sup>th</sup> we had long lines waiting to see information clerks who directed voters to ED tables. The Street Finder provided by the Board of Elections is a book containing every address in the entire borough. It is bulky and awkward to handle. A low tech solution would be street finders printed by poll site, which would likely be just a few pages long. These coupled with a simple clip board would provide the tools for poll workers to walk down the line of waiting voters and locate for them their ED. If the poll worker determined that the voter was not at the correct site, he/she could be directed to another worker, and the large borough wide book.

The League of Women Voters endorses all ten of the sensible reforms suggested by elected officials and advocates at the Press Conference held on November 13, 2012, and we look forward to being part of a working group having the goal of improving election administration overall.