

**Alan Dechert**

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**From:** "Senator Debra Bowen" <senatorbowen@yahoo.com>  
**To:** "Alan Dechert" <alan@openvotingconsortium.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 09, 2006 12:43 AM  
**Subject:** Today's Hearing -- Progress!

Alan,

Thanks for your tenacity in pushing for the first ever hearing on open source software. The witness list was very respectable by any measure, and your introductions were critical. There is no way I could have met so many key people in such a short time without your contacts.

Speaking of your contacts ... spending time with Dr. Avi Rubin at Johns Hopkins in early January was extremely important. Thank you for that connection. It led to the the hearing I have planned next week on the testing process, where we can look behind the curtain at the weaknesses of the federal testing paradigm as applied to proprietary software, as well to to the invitation for me to participate in the ACCURATE board meeting.

The conversation at today's hearing was excellent. We heard a great deal about the advantages of using open source software in general, and as we focus more and more on the application of voting, I believe the picture will become clearer. I know Dr. Rubin believes that voting software in particular should be open source, and we will learn the reasoning behind that next week.

Having Red Hat there was excellent, and I appreciate that introduction as well.

The breaking news that Diebold was considering jettisoning its DRE business highlighted the need for an alternative such as OVC presents. Several witnesses commented that with a relatively minor investment, we could have a robust, open source system.

It has been a long day. I'm having lunch with Michelle Kraus tomorrow, and I'll let you know how that goes. (another Dechert introduction!)

Arthur Keller is already very enthusiastic about working with a new Secretary of State (yes, that would be me) who understands the need for the open source solution.

Michelle and Arthur have been talking about doing a joint fundraiser for my SOS campaign and OVC; we'll know more about that tomorrow.

I'm sorry that I didn't begin to work with OVC sooner. But the momentum is there, with all the recent focus on problems with DRE's, as is the opportunity to create a system that can meet the challenge set forth in today's hearing -- provide a platform that will last for at least the next 100 years. What a legacy that would be!

Please thank the people who've kept the dream of open voting going in the last few years. Their commitment, and your commitment in particular, has been the basis of my work. Thanks!

Talk to you soon.

Best,  
Debra

P.S. Thanks for the photo from the CDP e-board. You (or was it Patrick Higgins?) caught Mimi Kennedy and I with the most extraordinary smiles. It was a good night! I trust that OVC made many new friends. The combination of OVC and the Clean Money Campaign is powerful. Both are realistic solutions to extremely important problems!