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**NATIONAL STUDY FINDS MORE VOTES NOT COUNTED IN LOW-INCOME/HIGH MINORITY CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS DURING 2000 ELECTION**

***SCHAKOWSKY: "THE OUTCOME OF THE 2000 ELECTION COULD HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT IF EVERY VOTE CAST WAS COUNTED AND NO VOTER WAS DENIED THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO VOTE."***

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The first of its kind [study](#), an examination of vote counts in 40 Congressional districts, found income and racial disparities are factors in vote counting at the national level. The study, conducted by the Democratic staff of the Government Reform Committee, was requested by U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), a member of the Government Reform Committee, and other Democratic members.

The study concluded that 4% of presidential ballots cast by voters in low income/high minority districts were not counted compared to only 1.2% of ballots cast in affluent/low minority districts. In Illinois, the percentage of ballots not counted in the 1st and 7th Congressional districts were 7.9% and 7.6%, respectively. These districts are considered low income/high minority.

"Our election system is broken and we cannot wait any longer before we take action. Congress has a responsibility to bring about comprehensive reforms by funding newer technologies at the polling place and setting national standards in areas such as provisional voting, voter identification, purging of voter lists, and other issues," Schakowsky said.

The study, which examined 20 low-income/high minority districts and 20 affluent/low minority districts, found:

- In the 20 districts with high poverty rates and a high minority population, 4.0% of ballots cast were not counted in the presidential race. In the 20 affluent districts with a small minority population, only 1.2% of the ballots cast were not counted.
- On average, voters in low-income, high-minority districts were over three times as likely to have their votes for president discarded as voters in affluent, low-minority districts.
- Better voting technology significantly reduced uncounted votes in low-income, high-minority districts. In low-income, high-minority districts, the undercount rate was 7.7% on punch-card machines, 4.7% on centrally counted optiscan machines, 4.5% on

**lever machines, 2.4% on electronic voting systems, and 1.1% on precinct-counted optiscan machines.**

**- When voters used punch-card machines, votes 7.7% in low-income, high-minority districts and 2.0% in affluent, low-minority districts, a disparity of 5.7 percentage points. But when precinct-counted optiscan machines were used, the size of the disparity dropped to only 0.6 percentage points.**

**"The outcome of the 2000 election could have been different if every vote cast was counted and no voter was denied their constitutional right to vote," concluded Schakowsky, who is a Vice Chair of the Democratic Caucus Special Committee on Election Reform. The Committee has held public forums in major cities across the country, including Chicago to hear from disenfranchised voters, local elected officials, and community organizers.**

**Schakowsky is the author of H.R. 1004, the Provisional Voting Rights Act of 2001. The bill permits individuals whose names do not appear on a voting registration list to vote after affirming their right to vote; calls for provisional votes to be transferred immediately for verification; and requires that provisional votes be counted unless the state can prove that those voters should not be allowed to cast their votes.**