

Executive Board Report

Standards Board Meeting
February 24 & 25, 2011
United States Election Assistance Commission

Since our last Standards Board meeting in late July of 2010, significant change has taken place at the EAC. Most notably is the fact that only two Commissioners remain in their appointed positions because the other two Commissioners resigned their appointments. The most recent resignation came in December of 2010, when Ms. Gracia Hillman retired. Ms. Hillman was the last of the original four Commissioners appointed at the Commission's beginning. Now that only two Commissioners remain, decisions by the Commissioners are made impossible since the Help America Vote Act of 2002 requires a vote of at least three Commissioners in agreement.

Election officials are accustomed to the fact that very little can stop the next election from taking place and for this reason they move forward doing all that needs to be done. Since Standards Board members are election officials, it was not surprising, but certainly quite pleasing to see the work of the various boards and committees continue to go about their business. As the chair of the Executive Board, I am grateful for every member who generously gave of their time and skill to accomplish the assigned tasks. As the committees present their reports, you can be assured we are only seeing a small glimpse into the volume of work by the members.

The Standards Board is fortunate that the DFO, Commissioner Gineen Bresso, continues in her appointment. During the past two years on the Executive Board and in this last year as Chair, I have come to know her as one who is always ready to assist in the work in the ways possible under her authority as Commissioner. I have also appreciated her understanding that it is her responsibility to assist us and not to intrude with a specific agenda of her own.

Sharmili Edwards has been working with Commissioner Bresso and the Standards Board every step of the way. She continues to be an amazing gift and it is certainly true that she keeps us all organized. Whether she is preparing for an upcoming in person meeting of the Standards Board, covering the details for the first virtual meeting like was held last summer, or tending to the details of the monthly Executive Board conference calls, Sharmili makes it happen.

Interesting days lay ahead for the Standards Board and its members. We await the appointment and confirmation of the two Commissioners to fill the existing vacant positions and the reconfirmation of Commissioner Bresso. We will watch with interest as Congress continues to deliberate on a wide variety of election bills. Regardless of all the challenges, decisions, and work in front of us, I am confident that the members of the Standards Board will roll up their sleeves and accomplish what needs to be completed.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Silrum
North Dakota Deputy Secretary of State
Executive Board Chair