

(Washington, D.C.) – Rep. Rush Holt (NJ-12) today praised the Advancement Project, the NAACP National Voter Fund, and Voter Action for the presentation of their report, “*Was I Denied My Right to Vote? Uncovering Flaws in Election Administration,*” to the Committee on House Administration. The Joint Report on the 2008 Election, based on data gathered by the CNN and 866-MYVOTE1 election protection hotlines, urges Congress to put important election safeguards in place “well in advance of the 2010 federal elections.”

“This important report is just one more piece of evidence highlighting ongoing problems with our electoral system,” Holt said. “The hotlines featured in this report alone received almost 70,000 calls from voters reporting problems with their registration status, their ability to obtain and cast provisional ballots, and their ability to cast an emergency paper ballot when electronic voting machines failed – problems which actually disenfranchised voters,” Holt said.

The report reiterates earlier findings that “the national percentage of voters who were denied the right to vote in 2008 was almost identical to 2000 an estimated 4 million people were barred from voting.”

Said Holt, “clearly we still have much work to do.”

In particular, Holt praised the conclusions of the report that “[e]lectronic voting systems have proven to be unreliable and insecure for the counting and recording of votes” and that “where these systems are used, elections cannot be audited or verified.”

“I agree completely with the recommendation of the authors,” Holt said: “ ‘[v]oter-marked paper ballot systems are necessary to ensure that votes will be properly counted . . . that the public will have confidence in the accuracy of electoral outcomes [and that] [m]andatory election audits are also critical for protecting the integrity of our elections.’ ”

“I am continuing to fight in Congress to ensure that my bipartisan Voter Confidence and Increased Accessibility Act, which would do precisely that, is enacted in time to protect the 2010 elections,” Holt said. “In addition, I will soon be reintroducing my legislation from prior Congresses that would protect voters from wrongful voter roll purges and establish uniform and equitable standards for counting provisional ballots.”

During the hearing, radio personality Tom Joyner endorsed Holt’s bill, saying, “I’m glad to hear about the legislation that’s currently working its way through Congress: It’s the Voter Confidence and Increased Accessibility Act.”