

**All-Mail Vote in Colorado Isn't Needed, Governor Says
New York Times (01/24/08) P. A18; K. Johnson**

Coloradans will be able to cast paper ballots at regular polling places in November, under a bill that Gov. B. Ritter (D) expects to introduce in the next few days in the state's Democrat-controlled General Assembly. Ritter's one-year emergency repair plan for the state's voting system has bipartisan sponsors. Uncertainty began to surround the election when concerns about the accuracy or security of electronic voting prompted Secretary of State M. Coffman (R) to decertify many of the state's e-voting machines. The General Assembly is also considering other legislation that focuses on recertifying the e-voting machines for the purpose of offering access to disabled voters, and for getting ballot-scanning devices back up and running in time for the election. Ritter says the state will not move to an all-mail system, which has been an option for Colorado voters since 1992. He says developing an all-mail system would be like "building an airplane in the air."

**A 'Swift' Kick to the Secure Development Process
Dark Reading (01/18/08), N. Spande**

Developers will be able to easily create secure, robust, and high-performance Web applications using a new system called Swift. Developed by a group at Cornell University, Swift allows developers to write code using a variant of Java, applying sensitivity labels to variables. Developers then feed the code into a series of programs that use the labels to determine which code is to reside on the server, on the client, and in both places. The code handles synchronization, and translates the requisite client code into JavaScript. The resulting application will not be as fast as an optimally designed system, but the performance cost should be minimal. Client code is generated using the Google Web Toolkit with fixes transparently adopted by a simple recompilation, and although the code is exposed to any bugs in the toolkit, developers are able to use a suitable client-side framework due to the loose coupling of the front end. Swift was the subject of a paper at the 2007 ACM Symposium on Operating Systems Principles.

**Bush Looks to Beef Up Protection Against Cyberattacks
Wall Street Journal (01/28/08) P. A8; S. Gorman**

The Bush administration plans to include a \$6 billion cybersecurity spending bill in February's budget proposal designed to protect US communications systems from cyberattacks, but without knowing the details many lawmakers are unresponsive and skeptical the bill will pass. Dept. of Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff says cyberterrorists make more aggressive attacks on government and private networks now than in previous years, and in one recent case hackers even shut down power equipment in several regions in an attempt to extort money. The proposal would cost an estimated \$30 billion over seven years with \$6 billion in startup costs in 2009. National Intelligence director Mike McConnell says the proposal can be cut back to cover only government networks, though more than 90% of attacks occur in the private sector. Lawmakers, however, are more concerned with the details of the

proposal, and how network security and monitoring would be implemented without compromising civil liberties. One of the key sticking points will be how much access intelligence agencies have to private networks, since those agencies, particularly the National Security Agency, are expected to have big roles in any protection scheme. "We don't want to unconstitutionally infringe on the rights of private business under the guise of this new program," says House Homeland Security Committee Chairman B. Thompson (D-Miss.).

At Florida Polls, Touch Screens and Crossed Fingers Washington Post (01/27/08) P. A8; P. Whoriskey

While the troublesome voting machines that created the "hanging chad" debacle in the 2000 presidential election are gone, some in Florida are preparing for more ballot trouble from touch-screen machines during the upcoming presidential primaries. Following a machine failure in a 2006 congressional election, the Florida legislature voted to ban touch-screen machines, but replacement machines will not be ready until the general election in November. In one 2006 congressional contest, there were 18,000 people who checked into the polls and chose candidates in other contests but not in the congressional race. Some believe the undervotes were the result of a confusing ballot page or a conscious choice to skip that contest due to the negative tone of the race. Others suspect the machines dropped the votes, and numerous voters claimed the machines did not function properly. The cause of the undervotes has not been determined, and an official investigation did not find a bug in the machines that would have caused the votes to be dropped. The touch-screen machine failures prompted state lawmakers to require voting machines to leave a paper trail, forcing most counties to buy new machines. With the exception of Sarasota County, every county that has had to replace their machines will not be ready by the state's primary election. "Floridians have said they want to be able to cast a ballot on a piece of paper," says state elections officials spokesman S. Ivey. "We're moving to a paper system to help restore confidence."

'Biometrics' Used to Identify Terrorists Advertiser (AU) (01/22/08), S. Riches

Computer scientists and engineers, investigators, and lawyers gathered in Adelaide, Australia, this week for the first international "e-Forensics" conference, which addressed Internet and electronic-crime and crime prevention. "We're talking about the Internet, telephony, mobile phones, mobile phone cameras, digital cameras--all of these are being used not only to commit crimes but also to solve crimes," says conference chairman M. Sorrell from the University of Adelaide. The United States is currently working with Australia, the United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, and China on a collaborative database that would use biometrics to identify and trace terrorists and other persons of interest. Airports and corporations have used such artificial intelligence tools for years to capture facial features and match them to existing images or data. "There have been some very minor achievements, but people still expect to spend more money and time and to achieve a solution that cannot afford any more mistakes--aiming for 100% accuracy," says Northeastern University professor P. Wang.

Decertification Dilemma Government Technology (12/07) Vol. 20, No. 12, M. Douglas

Following an expert review of California's electronic voting systems, Secretary of State D. Bowen implemented the decertification of all the machines and then recertified them for use under specific circumstances. She says ongoing, unresolved debates about the security and

reliability of various e-voting techniques, as well as documented security bugs, spurred her concerns. Bowen's office now requires the deployment by election officials of tougher security and post-election auditing procedures for all machines, while Hart InterCivic direct recording electronic systems may continue to be employed by counties, provided that they are in compliance with the stronger standards. Counties cannot use DRE systems from Sequoia Voting Systems and Diebold Election Systems except to perform early voting, and must supply one machine for disability access at each polling place. California Association of Clerks and Election Officials President S. Weir says this ruling will be especially significant for 21 counties where Sequoia or Diebold DRE systems have been used for all Election Day voting, adding that counties will probably be forced to use paper ballots for most in-person voting in February. Votes can then be counted either by running all ballots through the centrally located optical scanning systems that are currently used to tally absentee ballots, or by purchasing new scanning systems to count votes at the precinct level. Weir says the tallying process will be slowed down with the addition of paper ballots to the absentee ballots that counties already feed into the central scanners, while installing new precinct-based scanners and associated training costs could come to about \$66 million. Bowen says the effects of the voting system decertifications should be eased by the state's vote-by-mail policies.