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Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Electronic Voting

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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Having been a computer scientist, security researcher, engineer, teacher, technologist, and democracy enthusiast for two decades, I'm enthused by the possibilities electronic voting offers, but also cautious about implementing this in a way that preserves integrity in our democracy. Having read widely, and discussed these issues over the past few years, I'd like to make the following points.

Any electronic voting system needs to be fully open and audit-able, including both the hardware, software, and any communications systems between the components. In this regard, the hardware design must be open, and the software source code should be available for scrutineers and researchers to investigate without any restrictions. Preferably, the final design would be published for researchers to test well before it is actually deployed. Systems not open to this kind of scrutiny are open to subversion or attack by various actors along the production chain.

A paper-based system should be used in parallel to an electronic system. For example, once a voter has voted on the computer, it prints a receipt, showing their vote. The voter can then check this matches what they entered into the computer system, and alert officials if it doesn't. If it does, they'd then place this into a ballot box. The paper receipts can then be used to validate the electronic count, either across the board, or for a random sample.

Electronic voting opens up possibilities for more citizen involvement in the democratic process. This can range from electronic substitution of existing mechanisms like elections, referendums and plebiscites(making these easier, cheaper, and more frequent) to alternative models of democracy such as direct democracy, or fluid democracy/delegative democracy/fluid democracy.

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File1:

File2:

File3: