

Partisanship and Conflicts of Interest in the Electronic Voting Industry

A Public Accountability Report

In one of the most competitive elections in U.S. history, reports of voter suppression and vote fraud are already prevalent, and it is likely that questions regarding the reliability of electronic voting machines will come to light in the event of a contested outcome.

The Public Accountability Initiative has compiled information on the ownership structures and track records of the companies most heavily involved in the elections sector. The new report chronicles conflicts of interest and partisan ownership at six major electronic voting companies whose systems and software are in use in more than forty states: ES & S, Sequoia, Diebold, Hart Intercivic and Accenture.

ELECTION SYSTEMS AND SOFTWARE

The Omaha, Nebraska-based company's computer systems will be responsible for counting 61 million votes this election, nearly half the total ballots cast.¹ ES&S also has major contracts to provide paperless electronic voting machines in Ohio, Florida, Colorado, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Nevada, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.. The company is privately held, and its owners are uniformly conservative.

- ⟨ **Elections Systems and Software is currently owned by a contingent of highly conservative businessmen.** Despite the company's private status, EVM researcher Bev Harris has uncovered information about the company's ownership structure.² The three largest shareholders are the McCarthy Group, an investment firm, the Omaha-based World-Herald Company, and the Texas-based Cronus Industries (the percentages given below are based on the terms of previous mergers and buyouts).
- **World Companies, a subsidiary of the World-Herald Company (~45%).** The company publishes Omaha's conservative daily newspaper, which has endorsed George W. Bush. James Baker, who headed up the Bush campaign's Florida recount effort, was the keynote speaker at the opening of the Omaha World-Herald Freedom Center, the newspaper's new headquarters, on September 1, 2001.³ Baker has taken the lead in advocating for electronic voting systems, calling them "precision machinery."⁴
- **The McCarthy Group (~35%).** The firm's principal, Michael R. McCarthy, and his wife gave \$28,750 to Republicans and nothing to Democrats in the last three

¹ Ronnie Dugger, "How They Could Steal the Election This Time," *The Nation*, August 16, 2004.

² Bev Harris, www.blackboxvoting.org, Chapter 8

³ <http://www.lmcc.com/news/winter2001/winter2001-6.asp>.

⁴ Ronnie Dugger, "How They Could Steal the Election This Time," *The Nation*, August 16, 2004.

election cycles. The firm's executives gave about five times more to Republican candidates (\$74,245 to \$13,300).⁵ Chuck Hagel worked for the firm before being elected Senator in 1996 (see below). The McCarthy Group is closely tied to the World-Herald Company—World Investments, a subsidiary, is a primary investor in the McCarthy Group, further consolidating control of ES&S.

- **Business Records Corporation (~20%).** In 1996, BRC was acquired by AIS, which became ES&S. Among the owners were members of the Hunt family of Texas, heirs to the Hunt oil fortune. Nelson Baker Hunt is a significant donor to the Chalcedon Institute (see below).
 - **ES & S's forerunner, American Information Systems, was founded by Bob and Todd Urosevich.** The Urosevich brothers were pioneers in the development of software and hardware used in electronic voting.⁶ They continue to exercise enormous influence in the industry. Bob Urosevich now serves as President of Diebold Election Systems (see below) and Todd continues to serve as a top executive at ES & S.
 - **The Ahmanson family.** Initial funding for ES&S (then known as American Information Systems) was provided by the ultra-conservative Ahmanson family, of California. Howard Ahmanson belongs to the far-right Council for National Policy and finances the Chalcedon Institute, a Reconstructionist organization which aims to “expose the bankruptcy of all non-Christian (and alleged but compromising Christian) systems of thought and practices.”⁷ The Ahmansons sold their stake to World-Herald and the McCarthy Group in 1987, and it is not clear if they retain any shares in the company.
 - **The Ahmanson's also fund the right wing Discovery Institute.** In 2001, the Los Angeles Times reported, “. . . primarily funded by evangelical Christians—particularly the wealthy Ahmanson family of Irvine—the [Discovery] institute's \$1-million annual program has produced 25 books, a stream of conferences and more than 100 fellowships for doctoral and postdoctoral research.”
- ⟨ **Chuck Hagel was CEO and part owner of ES&S shortly before he was elected Nebraska's U.S. Senator in 1996.** ES&S voting machines were used in the election, which was considered an upset victory for Hagel—Gallup polls had shown the race tied 47-47 two days before the election, but Hagel won by 14 percentage points. World-Herald publisher John Gottschalk had recruited Hagel, an investment banker at the McCarthy Group, to work for American Information Systems several years earlier. Though Hagel stepped down from his position at ES&S in 1995, he did not disclose his involvement with ES&S during the

⁵ Ronnie Dugger, “How They Could Steal the Election This Time,” *The Nation*, August 16, 2004.

⁶ Bev Harris, www.blackboxvoting.org, Chapter 8

⁷ <http://www.chalcedon.edu/vision.php>

election. In 2002, he still had an investment in the McCarthy Group valued up to \$5 million.

Lobbying Florida

The majority of electronic voting machines being used in Florida are supplied by ES&S, thanks to a highly influential core of lobbyists hired by the company.

- ⟨ **Sandra Mortham, Katherine Harris’ predecessor as Florida’s secretary of state, worked for ES&S as a lobbyist in Florida in 2001 and 2002.** At the same time, she was working as a lobbyist for the Florida Association of Counties (FAC), an influential organization which endorsed ES&S as a preferred voting machine supplier. As a result, ES&S’s iVotronic electronic voting machine was sold to 12 of Florida’s largest counties, including Miami-Dade and Broward. ES&S paid the FAC a percentage of its profits in return for the endorsement, and Mortham was awarded a commission.
- **Mortham is closely tied to Governor Jeb Bush and was responsible for the first Florida felon list.** Bush selected Mortham, then secretary of state, as his running mate in the 1998 gubernatorial race. Her candidacy quickly became plagued by news of corruption in her office, leading her to decide not to seek office as lieutenant governor.
- **Mortham was responsible for the first Florida felon list, used in the 1998 gubernatorial race, which Jeb Bush won by a surprising margin.** She oversaw the compilation of the first list after the Republican Congress passed a law mandating the removal of ineligible voters from the rolls six months before the gubernatorial election. Writing for *The Nation*, investigative reporter Greg Palast disclosed that the magazine had “obtained an internal Florida State Association of Supervisors of Elections memo, dated August 1998, which warns Mortham’s office that it had wrongly removed eligible voters in a botched rush ‘to capriciously take names off the rolls.’”⁸
- ⟨ **Florida’s Broward County selected ES&S machines after a “lobbyist feeding frenzy,” according to an election commissioner who voted against the contract.**⁹ ES&S was selected for the contract despite the fact that the iVotronic had not been approved by the state and higher operating costs were associated with the machines. ES&S was not the low bidder, either. The lead lobbyist for ES&S on the Broward deal, Russ Klenet, is reportedly very close to several Broward County election commissioners, including Ilene Lieberman, who called him “a friend and supporter.” Klenet, who made over \$60,000 in the deal, continued to serve as her 2004 campaign’s finance co-chair.

⁸ Greg Palast, “Florida’s Disappeared Voters: Disfranchised by the GOP,” *The Nation*, February 5, 2001.

⁹ Buddy Nevins, “Elections Mess is County Commission’s Own Fault, Too,” *South Florida Sun Sentinel*, September 27, 2003.

SEQUOIA

Sequoia machines are in use in California, Colorado, the District of Columbia, Florida, Iowa, Louisiana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

- < **Sequoia is owned by a company which recently won a major contract from the Bush administration.** The UK-based De La Rue, a commercial security printer and cash software provider, was contracted to print Iraq's new currency in July 2003. Its stock surged 9% on news of the deal.¹⁰ De La Rue reported that profits were much higher than expected last year on the strength of the Iraq contract.¹¹ The company had hired The Livingston Group, the lobbying firm of former Speaker of the House Bob Livingston, to help them secure the contract.¹²

- < **Madison Dearborn, a Chicago investment firm with major ties to George W. Bush and the Carlyle Group, is a part owner of Sequoia.** According to Texans for Public Justice, Madison Dearborn's chairman and CEO, John A. Canning, raised over \$100,000 in bundled contributions for Bush-Cheney 2004, qualifying him as a Bush pioneer. The firm has teamed up with the Carlyle Group, a major defense contractor which employed George H. W. Bush, on a number of bids, including the billion dollar purchase of Williams Energy.¹³ In 2002, CBS exposed the energy company as conspiring to fake the California energy crisis.¹⁴ Madison Dearborn inherited its 15% share in Sequoia from Jefferson Smurfit, an Irish firm that had retained a stake after selling the company to De La Rue in 2002.¹⁵

- < **Sequoia was involved in a major corruption scandal in Louisiana.** Louisiana's state election commissioner, Jerry Fowler, was found guilty of accepting \$9 million in bribes to purchase voting machine equipment from Sequoia. Sequoia employee Phil Foster was indicted by a grand jury in 2001 for conspiracy to commit money laundering and malfeasance. Foster continued to work for Sequoia, was promoted to regional manager, and sold a number of voting machine systems to election officials in Florida counties, who Sequoia failed to notify of the indictment.¹⁶ The charges against Foster were dropped when prosecutors promised him immunity in return for testimony against Fowler.¹⁷

¹⁰ Dan Lalor, "UK note printer De La Rue Set for Iraq Contract," *Reuters*, July 7, 2003.

¹¹ Andrea Felsted, "Iraq contract puts De La Rue in black," *Financial Times*, May 27, 2004.

¹² Thomas B. Edsall and Juliet Eilperin, "Lobbyists Set Sights on Money-Making Opportunities in Iraq," *Washington Post*, October 2, 2003.

¹³ "Williams Energy Partners Announces Buyers of General Partners Interest," *PR Newswire*, April 21, 2003.

¹⁴ "California Energy Crisis A Sham," *CBS Evening News*, September 17, 2002.

¹⁵ "Smurfit Sells Sequoia Stake for \$23 million," *Irish Times*, May 30, 2002.

¹⁶ Deborah O'Neil and Thomas C. Tobin, "Scandal Tars Vote Device Deal," *St. Petersburg Times*, November 1, 2001.

¹⁷ "Appeals Court Upholds Decision to Throw Out Elections Probe Indictment," AP, 2/15/2003.

- ⟨ **Sequoia has hired a number of state officials in California.** Bill Jones, California's former Secretary of State was employed as a consultant. Jones is currently contesting Barbara Boxer's Senate seat. Alfie Charles, Jones' press secretary, is a public affairs director for Sequoia.¹⁸ The top election official for Nevada's largest county, who had brought electronic voting to Nevada by purchasing EVM's for her county, became a Vice President at Sequoia (she now works at Hart Intercivic).¹⁹

Sequoia in Florida

- ⟨ **Theresa Lepore, the Florida election official responsible for 2000's infamously confusing "butterfly ballot," purchased Sequoia voting machines in 2001.** She purchased them for Palm Beach County, where she is the top election official, after seeing Sequoia machines in Riverside County, California. Riverside had already had major problems with the machines.²⁰
- ⟨ **Lepore signed contracts with the Sequoia employee who had been indicted in the \$8 million Louisiana corruption scandal.** Lepore had known about the charges when she signed the contract with Phil Foster in September 2001 but did not tell Palm Beach County election commissioners. Lepore told the *St. Petersburg Times* that she "didn't think it was relevant" that Foster had been indicted. Commissioner Burt Aaronson, when notified of the charges, responded "I'm appalled....she didn't think it was relevant?" Officials from other Florida counties had also signed contracts with Foster, but many canceled their contracts and re-negotiated when the salesman's indictment came to light.²¹
- ⟨ **Lepore has denied attempts to have Sequoia voting machines examined.** A mayoral candidate in Boca Raton requested the examination after being soundly defeated. Just days earlier, a poll had shown him winning by 17 points. Lepore denied his request, saying that the Sequoia equipment and software were defined as "trade secrets" by both the contract and state law, thus prohibiting any scrutiny of the machines.²²
- ⟨ **Theresa Lepore is still the top election official in Palm Beach County.** Her term ends in January. In September, she failed in her bid for reelection.

¹⁸ Tim Reiterman and Peter Nicholas, "Ex-Officials Now Behind New Voting Machines; Those who led the state's ballot-count reforms now work for the firms making the equipment," *LA Times*, November 10, 2003.

¹⁹ "Kathryn Ferguson, Former California and Texas Election Official, Joins Hart InterCivic to Head Company's Voter Registration Group." *Business Wire*, October 27, 2003.

²⁰ Andrew Gumbel, "Something's Rotten in the State of Florida," *The Independent*, September 29, 2004.

²¹ Deborah O'Neil, "Voting Machine Scandal Upsets Commissioners in Two Counties," *St. Petersburg Times*, November 8, 2001.

²² Andrew Gumbel, "Something's Rotten in the State of Florida," *The Independent*, September 29, 2004.

HART INTERCIVIC

Hart Intercivic voting machines are in use in California, Colorado, North Carolina, Texas, Ohio and Virginia.²³ The Texas-based company grew out of a family-run commercial printing business. Hart Intercivic was spun off from Hart Graphics in 1999.

- **Four of Hart Intercivic's five major investors are clients of Vinson & Elkins, a Houston law firm that ranks among the five largest political donors to George W. Bush.**²⁴ Vinson & Elkins counts Hart Intercivic investors Stratford Capital, Texas Growth Fund, Triton and the Capstreet Group as clients.
- **Stratford Capital is a major investor in Hart Intercivic.** Stratford is an offshoot of Hicks, Muse, Tate and Furst, chaired by leading Bush patron Tom Hicks.²⁵
- **Tom Hicks, a leading Hart Intercivic Investor, purchased the Texas Rangers from George W. Bush.** According to researcher Charles Lewis, "Hicks and the firm's employees rank nineteenth as Bush's career patrons, having given him at least \$233,000. But in 1998, Hicks helped provide Bush with an even greater windfall: he bought the Texas Rangers for \$250,000,000, three times what Bush and his partners had paid ten years earlier. . . . [Bush's] cut from the proceeds of the sale was \$14.9 million, nearly a 25 fold return on his investment."²⁶
- **Hicks benefited enormously during George W. Bush's term as Texas Governor.** According to the non-profit Texans for Public Justice, "Tom Hicks heads the corporate raider firm Hicks Muse Tate & Furst (Bush's No. 4 career patron). Hicks Muse long wanted to tap the \$13-billion University of Texas (UT) endowment for its takeover deals. As Bush assumed office in '95, Hicks was confirmed as a University of Texas Regent and hired lobbyists to push a bill creating the UT Investment Management Co. (UTIMCO). With Hicks as its first chair, UTIMCO began doling out contracts to private investment firms to manage portions of the endowment. A scandal blew up when the media discovered that UTIMCO awarded many of these lucrative contracts to firms tied to Hicks and Bush—including one that former President Bush reportedly owns a piece of. The UTIMCO board doling out these contracts included Clear Channel Chair L. Lowry Mays and the Pioneers Tom Loeffler, A.W. Riter, and A. R. Sanchez. Ed Bass and Pioneer Charles Wyly owned two firms that landed some of these contracts."²⁷

²³ <http://www.thestandard.com/movabletype/datadigest/archives/000499.php>

²⁴ http://www.vinson-elkins.com/practices/practices_detail.asp?pracid=000320821101

²⁵ <http://www.hartintercivic.com/about/investors.html>

²⁶ Charles Lewis, *The Buying of the President 2004*, Center for Public Integrity

²⁷ http://www.tpj.org/pioneers/r_hicks.html

- **Hicks sold AMFM, a media company, to Clear Channel and obtained a position on the Clear Channel Board of Directors.**²⁸
- **The Texas Growth Fund, a venture capital firm run with money from two large public pension funds, is another major investor in Hart Intercivic tied to George W. Bush.** The Growth Fund works with UTIMCO, formerly chaired by Tom Hicks. The Fund's major investment in Hart came in the summer of 2000, while George W. Bush was Texas governor. The Growth Fund is the only state-run private equity fund in the United States.²⁹
- Hart InterCivic's other investors include Texas-based Triton Ventures and CapStreet Group LLC.³⁰
- **The family of Frederick R. Lummis, a founder of CapStreet Group, and a Director at Hart Intercivic, is closely associated with the family of Bush lawyer James Baker III.** The Baker and Lummis families have operated at the pinnacle of Houston society for several generations. Both families are major patrons of Rice University and have representatives on the Rice Board of Trustees. William Lummis and James Baker III were law partners together at Andrews, Kurth in Houston for many years. Both currently sit on the board of the Howard Hughes Medical Center. The Lummis family inherited a substantial portion of the Howard Hughes fortune.
- **Fred Lummis gave \$2,000 to George W. Bush in 2004 and \$1,000 in 2000.** His wife gave an additional \$1000 in 2000.³¹

DIEBOLD

Diebold has won contracts to provide voting machines in California, Colorado, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas.³²

- **Diebold's electronic voting division, Diebold Election Systems, is run by ES & S co-founder Bob Urosevich.** His brother, Todd Urosevich, is a top executive at ES & S. As industry pioneers at the forerunner of ES & S, the Urosevich's sought and received financing from the far-right Ahmanson family.³³ (see above)
- **Walden "Wally" O'Dell, President and CEO of Diebold, has raised over \$100,000 for the Bush campaign, qualifying him for "pioneer" status.** A

²⁸ W. Scott Bailey, Clear Channel Must Deal With Hicks Leaving, San Antonio Business Journal, 5/7/04

²⁹ Lucius Lomax, The Texas Growth Fund, The Austin Chronicle, 12/19/2003; Austin Business Journal, September 29, 2000

³⁰ <http://www.hartintercivic.com/about/investors.html>

³¹ Center for Responsive Politics database: www.opensecrets.org

³² (<http://www.thestandard.com/movabletype/datadigest/archives/000499.php>)

³³ Bob Fittrakis, "Diebold, Electronic Voting and the Vast Right-wing Conspiracy," Free Press, 2/25/2004.

large portion of the funds were generated by a \$1000 per head event at his home in Upper Arlington, a Columbus suburb, in September 2003 (O'Dell secured a special exemption from the city council in order to hold wet fundraising events at his home). The CEO made national headlines when he expressed his commitment to "helping Ohio deliver its electoral votes to the President" in a letter to fellow GOP supporters later that fall. In June 2004, responding to charges of conflict of interest, O'Dell asked the board to ban Diebold executives from making further political donations (directors were exempted).³⁴

- **W.R. "Tim" Timken, a member of Diebold's board and current chairman of the board of the Timken Company, is one of Ohio's most prominent Bush supporters.** He has attained Bush "Ranger" status, raising over \$350,000 for the 2004 campaign. Timken has a long history of support the Bush family--always a major contributor, he has served in various finance positions for Bush presidential campaigns since 1988. The Timken Company's Political Action Committee has also given around \$150,000 to Republican causes over the past two years; Timken and his family gave hundreds of thousands directly to Republican causes during the same period.³⁵
- **In April, 2003, President Bush chose to visit the Timken Company, which manufactures steel roller bearings, in order to plug his economic stimulus package, saying that the tax cuts would free up "more money for growth and more money for jobs."** He chose the Timken Company because "it's a roll up your sleeves company...that does what it takes to overcome obstacles."³⁶ Ironically, the Timken company announced in September 2003 that it was laying off 700 workers (in June of that year, Tim Timken co-hosted a fundraiser in Akron, Ohio that raised \$600,000 for the president). This spring, it announced plans to phase out several plants over the next two years and lay off a quarter of its workforce in Canton, Ohio, dealing a major blow to the local economy. The company recently opened a fourth plant in China.
- **Timken's support of the Bush administration has paid dividends for its executives and owners, if not its workforce.** Despite \$3.8 billion in sales, the company did not pay federal income taxes in 2001 or 2003 and will get more tax breaks this year thanks to the recently passed corporate tax cut bill. It has also received millions in anti-dumping penalties paid by foreign steel companies. The Cleveland Plain Dealer recently reported that the Timken Company saw a 176 percent jump in military contracts since the Bush administration took office. Nearly 60% of the contracts were awarded in a no-bid process, without competition, because the Pentagon was "in a hurry."³⁷

³⁴ See e.g. Julie Smyth, "Voting Machine Controversy," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 8/28/2003.

³⁵ See e.g. Allison T. Hoffman, "Meet Deleगत Tim Timken," *New York Observer*, 11/1/2004.

³⁶ White House Press Release, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/04/20030424-3.html>

³⁷ Mark Naymik, "Timken could add fuel to Ohio Presidential race," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 5/15/2004.

- **According to the Center for Responsive Politics database, Diebold gave \$100,000 in soft money to the Republican National Committee in 2000 and \$95,000 in 2001 and 2001.**³⁸
- **John Sununu, former White House Chief of Staff under George HW Bush, served a strategist and lobbyist for Diebold Election Systems.**³⁹
- **A study by Science Application International Corp (SAIC) of Diebold's AccuVote-TS voting system concluded, "The system...is at high risk of compromise."**⁴⁰ Johns Hopkins University and Rice University also found that Diebold would be able to "create, delete, and modify votes on device" on certain of its voting machines.⁴¹
- **In January 2003, Diebold acquired Data Information Management Systems, Inc. (DIMS), one of the largest voter registration systems companies in the United States. DIMS was integrated within Diebold Election Systems.** Diebold systems now maintain voter registration rolls in many states, including California, Oregon, Washington and Nevada.⁴²
- **Diebold's voting machines malfunctioned in a California election in Spring, 2004, disenfranchising thousands of voters.**⁴³
- **According to Ronnie Dugger, investigative journalist for The Nation, several Diebold election machines were stolen in Georgia shortly after initial delivery and memory cards disappeared on the night of the election.** Dugger writes, "Running his laptop with a dual battery, [Diebold employee] Rob Behler says, in six or seven hours he could have changed the totals on those sixty-seven cards. "There's no technical problem. There was absolutely zero protection on the card itself. You throw the card in, you just drill down into its files."⁴⁴

ACCENTURE

Accenture is a large high-tech consultancy firm with about \$12 billion in revenue and nearly 100,000 employees worldwide. It entered the voting sector in 2002, when it acquired Election.com. Since then, Accenture has been contracted by a number of states to produce voter registration databases, which are intended to consolidate state voter rolls.

³⁸ www.opensecrets.org

³⁹ Tim Reiterman and Peter Nicholas, "Ex-Officials Now Behind New Voting Machines," L.A. Times, .

⁴⁰ David M. Fine, *Ohio Counties to Adopt Diebold Voting Machines*, The Mill, 1/18/2004

⁴¹ David M. Fine, *Ohio Counties to Adopt Diebold Voting Machines*, The Mill, 1/18/2004

⁴² Diebold SEC 10-Q, Annual Report

⁴³ Ronnie Dugger, *How They Could Steal the Election This Time*, The Nation, 7/29/2004

⁴⁴ Ronnie Dugger, *How They Could Steal the Election This Time*, The Nation, 7/29/2004

- **Accenture was formerly Andersen Consulting, a subsidiary of Arthur Andersen, the accounting firm entangled in the Enron debacle.** Andersen Consulting's name change was the costliest in history—a complete re-branding in a matter of days—and it came just months before Enron went under. Andersen Consulting performed services for Enron, but it has never been investigated in connection with the scandal.
- **Accenture has won contracts in a number of states to produce voter registration databases.** The centralized systems, which are intended to consolidate state voter rolls, were mandated by the Help America Vote Act, of 2002. Among Accenture's clients are Colorado, Wisconsin, Florida, and Pennsylvania. The databases in Florida and Pennsylvania are scheduled to be in place for the November 2004 election.
- **Florida contracted Accenture to create a list of felons ineligible to vote, similar to the list that disenfranchised thousands of eligible black voters in 2000.** Journalists, who only obtained the list after taking their request to court, discovered that the list of over 20,000 names included only 60 Hispanic felons. Speculation is that the list would have been used to disenfranchise black voters, who typically vote Democrat, but not Hispanic voters, who are more likely to vote Republican. Investigative reporter Greg Palast discovered in 2001 that a similar list had been developed by DBT Technologies for use in the 2000 election. This time, Glenda Hood, Florida's secretary of state, announced that counties would not be required to use the list to deny people the chance to vote due to these huge inaccuracies. Prior to the release of the list, however, the Jeb Bush appointee had ignored the glitch and spent hundreds of thousands in legal fees in an attempt to fight journalists' requests to see the list.
- **Accenture's lobbyists have close ties to Governor Jeb Bush and George W. Bush.** Several partners at the lobbying firm of Poole, McKinley, and Blosser, which Accenture hired to help it secure contracts in Florida, have worked on Jeb Bush's staff or have been garnered appointments from the governor, including Brian Yablonski, one of Jeb Bush's longest standing aides. Jamie Wilson was executive director for the Republican Party during the 2000 election. Three partners are major fundraisers for George W. Bush's reelection effort. Justin Sayfie, a Bush pioneer, is a former spokesman, policy advisor, and speechwriter for Jeb Bush. James Blosser, a Bush Ranger, was a finance chair for Jeb Bush's 1998 gubernatorial campaign. Van Poole, a Bush Ranger and head of the Republican Party until 1993, was involved in Bush's Florida Recount Effort and told one reporter "I've talked to so many angry people today, many of them business people who just can't believe this is happening, that they just want the legislature to do what it takes to stop the outright theft of this election that is going on."⁴⁵

⁴⁵Mary Ellen Klas, "Republicans Mull Way to Fight Ruling," *Palm Beach Post*, November 23, 2000.

- **The Department of Defense tapped Accenture to develop an internet voting program for military stationed abroad.** The \$22 million eDemocracy program was scrapped in February 2004 after a panel of experts told the Department of Defense that the system posed a grave security risk, saying that internet voting is inherently risky, open to hacking, and impossible to verify.
- **Accenture was recently awarded a Homeland Security contract worth up to \$10 billion.** The contract is for development and implementation of "Smart Border Technology," a biometric identification system to be used at U.S. borders. It was approved in June 2004 despite opposition from many members of Congress, who protested Accenture's status as an offshore corporation. According to a 2002 law, contracts of this nature are not supposed to be awarded to offshore companies (offshore status allows the companies to evade taxes), but the House Rules Committee made an exception and maneuvered to grant Accenture the contract.