Dear Editor,

The League of Women Voters of Rensselaer County acknowledges that the Board of The Enlarged City School District of Troy, at its March meeting, sought an alternative to the malfunctioning lever machine in the 2006 election. If the purpose of going with the suggestion of the Rensselaer County Commissioners of Election was to prevent a public debate similar to the one you had last year, we have concerns because the Liberty voting machines that they have arranged to be used are not certified for general elections.

The process for certification by the State Board of Elections has been interrupted and it does not look like it will be completed by the May 15 election. Some New York state procedures governing how local boards of election “accept” or test new voting machines upon receiving them have not been adopted. These procedures must be done by local commissioners (and staff/election inspectors) prior to an election. If the state regulations which will establish the procedures have not been adopted, Rensselaer County Board of Elections cannot independently inspect and test equipment without the assistance of the vendor. This adds an additional concern about the privatization of an election.

It is incumbent on school leadership to provide a school election that is secure, accurate, recountable and accessible. The League of Women Voters of Rensselaer County believes the use of non-certified voting machines may jeopardize a fair election.

Sincerely,

Gail DeMarco
Co-President

Margaret Story
Co-President