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response

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A comment about technology and democracy.

On p.155 the discussion paper includes a panel on electronic voting for people with disabilities. It describes the NSW iVote Internet voting system as allowing voters with disabilities "to cast a secret and unassisted vote remotely." However, this confuses the appearance of independent voting with a reality that is deeply problematic and easily manipulated. In fact, electronic electoral processes are highly dependent on a variety of people, software programs and human processes.

Independent security analysis over many years has shown the iVote system, like other Internet voting systems worldwide, to be subject to serious security and privacy problems. The error I recently found in their proof of proper vote decryption is just the most recent example: <https://people.eng.unimelb.edu.au/vjteague/iVoteDecryptionProofCheat.pdf>

It is not accurate to say that iVote has "improved the franchise of people with disability." At best, it has offered an alternative set of dependencies that many voters are not even made aware of. In practice, it opens their votes to privacy breach and fraud. Even worse, some states (such as Western Australia and Victoria) have discontinued much better systems based on electronically-assisted voting in a polling place, mistakenly believing iVote to offer better security and privacy. So for some voters with disabilities, an excessive faith in Internet voting has actually caused a reduction in good-quality voting options.