



*Election Integrity Project*<sup>®</sup> *California*  
EVERY LAWFULLY CAST VOTE ACCURATELY COUNTED

## **VOTE SAFE IN 2022—November General Election**

### **Part #3—Damaged Ballots—You’ll Never Know**

Ballots returned in envelopes endure many steps of processing before being counted. One of the more treacherous and not widely-known steps is “Ballot Duplication”.

After vote by mail ballots are extracted from their envelopes, they are carefully inspected—for damage. What is damage?

- transporter error—ballot torn or mangled by handlers
- voter error—overly-aggressive erasure, food or drink spills, etc.
- vender error—ballot defective from the printer (cut crooked or incorrectly etc.)
- extractor error—damaged by extraction machinery
- Remote Access ballots (RAVBM)

To further explain the last bullet point:

In 2016 the California legislature passed a bill designed to give handicapped individuals voting independence and to facilitate voting for remotely deployed military. It allowed for emailing blank ballots that could be marked by computer, printed and returned.

But leave it to the California legislature to turn a good idea into the worst idea ever, converting a bill to increase voter access to those in need to a bill opening the door to potential ballot manipulation and increased ballot processing chaos.

In 2020, they extended the RAVBM to all California voters, claiming COVID made it “necessary”. To qualify for a RAVBM in that election, one only needed to be able to pick up a phone and ask for one, or pick up a computer mouse and click on a link.

By 2021, California lawmakers decided that universal access to RAVBM was such a good idea they threw away all pretense of COVID rationale and made the policy permanent “just because”.

Voters may be attracted by the “convenience” or novelty of the RAVBM ballot, but they should know that in most counties the RAVBM is a damaged ballot because it is printed on paper not the same size or weight as a ballot, and therefore cannot be accepted by the tabulator.

The fate of all damaged ballots is to be duplicated, “remade”, copied over by elections officials. **The accuracy of such remaking is usually in the hands of 2 individuals, without further audit or oversight.** EIPCa stresses that ballot duplication is a high priority for citizen oversight and observation, and also constitutes a strong argument for voting in person to avoid this potential.

The number of ballots determined to be “damaged” is **not small** by any means, and creates a large risk to election integrity. Was your ballot deemed “DAMAGED”? You will never know, because no ballot, once removed from the envelope, can be traced back to the voter.

Avoid this real risk and VOTE IN PERSON, without the envelope.