

# Measure would let Coffman retest

**By Colleen Slevin**

Associated Press Writer

DENVER – Republican and Democratic lawmakers introduced a bill Wednesday allowing Secretary of State Mike Coffman to retest and possibly recertify the electronic voting machines he disqualified last month.

The measure (House Bill 1155) allows Coffman to test the equipment after it has undergone software upgrades or other changes. However, it specifies that he can't relax the standards and must explain any decision to recertify a machine.

Lawmakers working on how this year's election should be handled are leaning toward using paper ballots, but some electronic voting machines must be available for disabled voters and anyone else who wants them under federal law. In addition, some of the optical scanners needed to count paper ballots were among those machines de-certified last month. Coffman has said there are some proposed changes that he would like to test on the machines.

In a written statement, state Reps. David Balmer, R-Centennial, and Rosemary Marshall, D-Denver, and Senate Majority Leader Ken Gordon said they were working with their colleagues, county clerks, Coffman, the governor and residents to develop "a reliable, paper-based voting system."

"We'll need a certain amount of electronic voting machines to comply with federal law. But we believe that the votes cast in 2008 should be recorded on paper," they said.

They introduced the bill along with Sen. Steve Johnson, R-Fort Collins.

Coffman requested the bill so he could avoid a lengthy appeals process and focus on fixing problems with the machines.