

April 12, 2006 PRESS RELEASE

PORTER CALLS ON CONGRESS TO PASS HR 550

In a statement released today, Dr. Steven Porter, Democratic candidate for Congress in the 3rd district of Pennsylvania, called on the Republican leadership of both the House and Senate to pass HR 550, an amendment to the HAVA voting rights bill.

“There has been great distrust of our election process since 2000,” Porter said. “It is part and parcel of the low regard Americans have for government in general. To regain the people’s trust, we need new voices in Congress and new laws on the books which will guarantee the honesty of the vote counts. HR 550 is an amendment that would not only provide voters with a verifiable paper trail, but would make sure the programming of computerized voting machines and the accuracy of their tallies achieve a far greater degree of transparency. Congress needs to do its job and pass this legislation so that the 2006 elections are untainted.

“But HR 550 is only one step in the journey to clean government,” Porter went on. “Of equal importance is the elimination of special interest influence in the election process. As it is now, we really do not have a true democracy because only the wealthy or the well-connected can run effectively. The answer is the public funding of all campaigns financed by tax dollars **already paid**, dollars which would be equally distributed among candidates who qualified for the ballot. It takes about \$1 per person in any jurisdiction to run a credible campaign. This means that roughly \$10 per person could cover the cost of every local, state, and federal campaign in any given party. I cannot think of money better spent. Imagine,” Porter continued, “cabdrivers or teachers or bricklayers able to run for office without having to sell themselves as so many political prostitutes do today. A common citizen might actually have a chance to represent the people instead of the system we have now where the corruption of the Abramoffs and DeLays have taken over the process and disgraced our nation. Clean government and integrity in office are key issues in this campaign. Real campaign finance reform and HR 550 can be important steps in the reclamation of the American democracy.”

Dr. Porter’s positions on other key issues are attached to this press release so that the media may inform the public about them.