

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
March 2, 2006**

**GOVERNOR RENDELL COMMENDS STATE SUPREME
COURT FOR CLARIFYING THAT COUNTIES CAN BUY NEW
ELECTRONIC VOTING MACHINES**

Counties can purchase electronic voting machines without a referendum

HARRISBURG — Governor Edward G. Rendell commended the Pennsylvania Supreme Court today for taking action that will allow Westmoreland County, and other counties, to move ahead with plans to buy new electronic voting machines as part of a federal requirement before the May primary election.

“The Supreme Court today has clarified the rules that will help Pennsylvania counties appropriately prepare for upcoming elections,” Governor Rendell said. “With this prompt decision by the court, counties can now move forward in meeting the federal requirements under the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) and buy new electronic voting machines.”

The state Supreme Court reversed a February 13 decision by Commonwealth Court that had prohibited Westmoreland County from buying new electronic voting machines (*Mary Beth Kuznik, et al. v. Westmoreland County Board of Commissioners, et al.*, No. 18 MAP 2006).

“Though the State Supreme Court soon will issue an opinion explaining its order, we believe that the Court’s ruling validates what the commonwealth’s position has been all along,” Governor Rendell said. “Federal law supersedes any state laws that hinder the commonwealth’s compliance with mandates of federal law.”

“Just last week I asked the state’s highest court to expedite its ruling on this critical issue. This timely decision will alleviate confusion for counties and for voters,” Governor Rendell said.