



Statement by Chair Gineen Beach

U.S. Election Assistance Commission

Public Meeting, February 4, 2009

I am honored to serve as Chair of the Election Assistance Commission for calendar year 2009. Our work at EAC is vital to ensuring that Americans can continue to trust in the integrity of our election system and that their voices will be heard on Election Day.

While we had a successful 2008 election cycle, EAC still has much work to do. I view 2009 as the year to analyze data, identify areas of election administration that were successful, and note those that need improvement or additional guidance.

One of our primary goals at EAC this year is to ensure voting systems are certified under our program so that they are ready for use by states and localities during the next federal election cycle. Our testing and certification division is working hard and you will be hearing an update from them later this morning.

Our clearinghouse is another area where we must continue to improve our efforts so that we may provide real value to our stakeholders. One area where there is certainly momentum to deliver solutions is to UOCAVA voters. There are pilot programs and projects that are in existence and EAC should be the lead in collecting this information and sharing them with our stakeholders. Another area where EAC can continue to provide assistance is at the polls – looking at accessibility, contingency planning and training of poll workers. We must also focus on internal initiatives to improve efficiencies so that we continue to serve as good stewards of the federal funds we receive.

Given the state of the economy, we recognize that it will be a challenge to accomplish all we hope to do given budgetary constraints. Therefore, I encourage my colleagues to utilize cost efficient practices, such as forming working groups to provide comments and information on the various policies and projects we consider this year, such as Maintenance of Effort and statewide voter registration databases.

Recognizing budgetary issues that states and localities will also face this year, EAC must continue to provide election officials with practical, user-friendly, and voter-centric deliverables such as management guidelines and training materials, especially ideas that can be implemented with minimal cost.

I appreciate the confidence my fellow Commissioners have in my leadership ability and I look forward to working with them, EAC staff and all of our stakeholders.