State of Colorado

Department of State

Informal Request for Information:

Electronic Ballot Delivery for Military and Overseas Voters

May 16, 2011

Colorado Department of State
Elections Division
1700 Broadway, Suite 200
Denver, CO 80290

Introduction

Following passage of the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act of 2009 (MOVE), the Elections Division of the Secretary of State's office investigated alternative means of electronic ballot delivery for military and overseas electors. The goal of this research was to identify viable solutions to deliver ballots to military and overseas electors in a secure, private, and accessible manner that would aid in shortening the time required to transmit the ballots so that the electors would have time to vote and return the ballots.

In 2010, five counties participated in a pilot project through the Federal Voting Assistance Program to provide online ballot delivery for military and overseas electors in the 2010 general election. One county conducted an independent pilot with a separate vendor for 2010 primary and general elections. Both pilots were well-received by military and overseas electors in the participating counties.

Secretary of State Gessler is considering implementing a statewide online ballot delivery project to provide ballots to military and overseas electors. The project may be implemented for the 2011 coordinated election and would be available for participation by all 64 counties. The goal of the project would be to allow military and overseas electors to download and mark their ballots online, then print and return the ballots in a method available under state law.

Purpose of this Request for Information

The purpose of this request is to gather information to assist the Secretary in making a determination as to whether such a project should be implemented. Information is being gathered to help the Secretary better understand the capabilities of the ballot delivery tools available, and to assess whether the implementation of a statewide project is feasible.

This Request for Information (RFI) is solely for informational and planning purposes and does not constitute a formal solicitation for a product and/or service and may not directly result in an award or contract. Respondents are responsible for all expenses associated with responding to this request. The State is under no obligation to pay for any information or ideas submitted in response to this RFI or for any of the costs incurred by any party as a result of this RFI. Responses will not be returned. However, after evaluation of the information submitted if the Secretary determines that this project can be feasibly implemented in the state (and sufficient funds are available), and that one or more vendors may be able to provide the tools necessary to implement a project, one or more respondents may be invited to provide additional information about their product/service and/or submit a formal proposal for consideration.

Description of Information Requested

All vendors with a solution meeting the potential requirements outlined in this request are invited to submit a response that specifically addresses the potential requirements outlined in this request. Respondents are encouraged to also provide any additional relevant information or alternative considerations that may assist the Secretary in defining requirements and determining the feasibility of the project. However, no confidential information should be submitted in a

response to this request; all responses shall be considered public information and will be handled as such.

Potential Requirements

The following is a brief description of potential requirements for the project and respondents should provide any information relative to how their solution would address these requirements.

System requirements

The ballot delivery system must provide online ballot delivery and marking and allow for the elector to print the marked ballot and return it via the methods available under current law. Ballots must be available online to electors eligible to vote under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) no later than 45 days before the election.

System functionality requirements would include:

1. *Voter log-in.* The system must require a minimum level of authentication to verify the voter is eligible to use the ballot delivery system and for the voter to obtain the correct ballot style. The voter would need to provide name, date of birth, and either driver's license or the last four digits of the social security number in order to log in the system. The voter would also need to provide UOCAVA classification for the system to determine the ballot style.

2. *Voter instructions*. The system must include accurate voter instructions for completing the ballot, notifications regarding under/over votes, and printing and returning the voted ballot according to the method(s) available. Instructions for printing and returning the ballot must be dynamic according to the return method. The system must provide a coversheet appropriate to the selected method of return with the voter affirmation.

3. *Ballot design/layout*. The system must accommodate all requirements for Colorado ballot language and design. All races and issues must be ordered on the ballot as certified by the local jurisdictions and ballots must be accurate according to unique ballot style/split. Ballots must be able to include write-in votes where there are approved qualified write-in candidates. The system must allow a write-in candidate only where no other candidate is selected. The list of qualified write-in candidates must be available for each race for the voter to review if he or she chooses. The system must not allow ballot rotation or straight ticket voting.

4. *Language requirements*. Ballots and instructions must be provided in both English and Spanish for participating counties covered by section 203 of the Voting Rights Act (42 USC 1973aa-1a, *et seq.*). (The approved translation would be provided by the covered counties with approved English language text.)

5. *Printing*. Ballot printing must support both standard U.S. and European paper standards. The system must have the ability to interface with ballot-on-demand solutions or other automated ballot duplication technology.

6. *Ballot data and external interfaces*. The system must allow for flexible data import. The system must be capable of importing ballot data in the format normally provided by the county, which may include an in-house or vendor-specific EMS format, Access, Excel, Word, Text, PDF, or CSV file. The ballot data would be provided by the counties and the voter registration data would be provided by the state.

7. *HAVA/ADA compliance*. The system must not allow overvoting and must notify the voter of an overvote, requiring the voter to make a single selection. The system must allow undervoting, but should notify of the undervote and offer the opportunity to make a single selection. The system must interact with, or provide standard accessibility interfaces. The system must provide a summary of the selections and allow the voter to make changes before finalizing and printing the ballot for return.

Security standards
The response should address relevant security protocols to anticipate, detect, and prevent security threats.
1. *System and ballot security protocols.* The system must, at a minimum, use encryptions standards currently documented and validated for use by an agency of the U.S. federal government. The system must employ an industry standard means to detect the presence of an intrusive process.

2. *Data security and destruction*. The system must not store voter information or voted ballots. No voter information may be cached or retained and all files containing such information must be destroyed upon conclusion of any project. Confidential voter information must be protected from accidental disclosure or breach.

Support and help desk
The response should address available support or help desk services. In particular, responses should discuss help desk services available to counties during the ballot design phase of a project as well as help desk services available to the counties or voters during the live election period. The response should also address online help options such as frequently asked questions, links or redirects to county or state websites, and other information for voters.

Reporting and statistics
The response should discuss the standard reporting and voter survey options. The system must include the capability to provide a daily, weekly, and election summary of use by the counties and voters. The reports should include a county-level breakdown of ballots accessed and downloaded for printing. The system should also include statistical information regarding access by UOCAVA classification. The response should also discuss any voter satisfaction survey options and associated reporting tools.

Other

Company overview
A respondent to this RFI should include a brief company overview describing the company's relevant experience and qualifications with ballot delivery systems. Responses should discuss

relevant staffing considerations and unique qualifications. Responses should include a discussion of any election challenges, successful security attacks, or breaches. Responses should also discuss relevant timelines for a project that might be implemented for the 2011 coordinated election.

How to Respond

Any vendor interested in submitting information in response to this RFI should make such submission by email to hilary.rudy@sos.state.co.us no later than the close of business on **Friday, June 10, 2011.**