

**United States Election Assistance Commission
Roundtable Discussion**

**“Preparing for the 2016 Election Cycle in Battleground
Jurisdictions: Best Practices and Lessons Learned”**

Held at

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Wednesday, January 6, 2016

VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT

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The following is the verbatim transcript of the United States Election Assistance Commission (EAC) Roundtable Discussion: Preparing for the 2016 Election Cycle in Battleground Jurisdictions: Best Practices and Lessons Learned, held on Wednesday, January 6, 2016. The roundtable convened at 2:33 p.m., EDT. The meeting was adjourned at 4:58 p.m., EDT.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

CHAIRWOMAN McCORMICK:

So, it's finally here 2016. We have to ask the question, are we ready? Welcome to the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's roundtable discussion on "Preparing for the 2016 Election Cycle in Battleground Jurisdictions." We're going to look at best practices and lessons learned.

We have assembled representatives from nine battleground jurisdictions, both state and local, that have been identified through various media sources. These jurisdictions, in 2012, and traditionally, have been close and could determine the next President of the United States. Because of this, these jurisdictions are constantly in a fishbowl. We will be exploring with them how they're preparing for both the Presidential primaries and general election in 2016, and because they are scrutinized in everything that they do is magnified and speculated upon we'll discuss logistics, lessons learned, the media aspect and what these jurisdictions are doing to prepare. Ultimately, we want to share concerns, risks, mitigation strategies, and best practices for heading into this year's exciting and unpredictable election season.

Today our panel will be moderated by Dr. Merle King from the Center for Election Systems at Kennesaw State University in Georgia. So, without further ado, I'd like to introduce Dr. King.

DR. KING:

Thank you Commissioner McCormick.

CHAIRWOMAN McCORMICK:

Thank you.

DR. KING:

It's my pleasure to be here and welcome to the members of the roundtable. I'll be introducing folks in just a moment and we'll get started.

A couple of just business issues, the microphones are always on and so there's no need to touch a button and the volume level will be boosted from the back of the room. We will be going straight through from 2:30 Eastern Standard Time to five p.m. and we'll be ending right at five. And I will be asking questions of the panelists throughout the afternoon and you may need to work a little bit to get my attention if I'm looking this way on the panel. So, help me in that regard and work with me.

As Commissioner McCormick said, the presidential election cycle, when there is to be a vacated Whitehouse is -- it's a special event. And even though from the public's perspective it may seem like the election season is just beginning for election officials we've

been preparing for a number of months and, in some cases, years in terms of acquiring new equipment, training poll workers, training election officials, redistricting, all of the mechanical things that go on in the background. So, for us, the election cycle is kind of the apex, it becomes the finish line, but it certainly doesn't speak to all the work that's been going on over the past months and years. So, again for our colleagues in the election community that are joining us online, via the Web, we welcome you to this discussion and hope as we go through the discussion, we not only get insights into the issues and the struggles within these battleground jurisdictions, but more importantly what are the things that we can carry from their experiences to all of the election jurisdictions in the U.S. And often we say that elections within these battleground jurisdictions are like elections on steroids. I mean, there is a level of energy, a level of scrutiny that is unparalleled, and yet, it's really the same issues that go across the country. It's just that the spotlight is shining maybe, if you will, on these jurisdictions.

So, I'd like to begin by introducing at the far end of the table, and then we'll work our way around, Secretary of State Wayne Williams from the State of Colorado. And I'd like to ask you, as the rest of your colleagues, to briefly introduce yourself, your perspective on election administration in this cycle, what your

experience has been in the past that is kind of guiding you through your preparation as you go into this election cycle.

SECRETARY WILLIAMS:

Sure, my name is Wayne Williams. I'm the Secretary of State for Colorado. And, I guess what -- the experience I start with is in 1997 I served on the Canvass Board for my local county and that's the board that assesses the procedures and ultimately certifies an election. And we had the old punch card ballots at that point and as we did that we had a set of standards in place and a set of rules as to how many corners had to be touching and other exciting things like that. And it went very well, and then, a few years later when I saw the issues in Florida during the 2000 election, it drove home the importance of having those standards decided in advance, so you don't have people who are shifting the rules to get the results they want, so that people can have confidence in the system. And so, as I have approached that then as the clerk and recorder in the state's most populous county, El Paso County, and now as Secretary of State, our emphasis is on making sure the rules are decided in advance, that the procedures are set up.

And Colorado faces some unique challenges this time. We will be conducting the first swing state election in which every active voter is mailed a ballot. I know Washington and Oregon have had all mail ballots, but they have not typically been classified as swing

states in a Presidential election, and so, ours will be the first instance in which every active voter is mailed a ballot in a swing state, which provides some unique challenges and some opportunities that I hope to talk about today.

DR. KING:

I'd like to just quickly follow up with a question, if I can. You said something that I thought was very profound, is that the standards lead to confidence. And I know as Secretary of State, part of your responsibility is guiding through those standards. Just briefly comment on what kind of challenges that creates, because I know you've also been a county election official.

SECRETARY WILLIAMS:

There are a host of different challenges that are there and the bigger issue is, I think, working collaboratively -- we work in close partnership with our 64 counties and ensuring that procedures are similar from county to county so that everyone's vote has the same opportunity to be counted. Ultimately, when you talk about a democratic republic the entire basis of the legitimacy of government is really based on the confidence in the elections process, knowing that my vote was counted. It may not have resulted in the candidate I wanted receiving the most ballots, but I need to have confidence that that system is there. And that's why as we gather together today as swing states, or as states that may have a very

large role in deciding who the next President of the United States is going to be, people need to have confidence, not just our residents, but people from across the country. And so, when they look at each of our states and they see the results, they need to have the confidence that those results reflect the people's will in those respective states.

DR. KING:

Okay, thank you. In the last election cycle I heard a pundit comment that it wasn't so much that we had seven swing states, is that we had 11 swing counties. And it reinforced what we in elections know is that all elections are local. And so, Kirk Showalter from the City of Richmond, Virginia, kind of helps underscore that importance of the locality of elections and how they're all executed at the local jurisdiction level.

So with that, your comments, Kirk.

MS. SHOWALTER:

Thank you. The City of Richmond is a mid-sized jurisdiction. It's not the largest in the Commonwealth of Virginia, but it is one of the ten largest in the state, so it's easy to see the issues of the small localities and easy to see the issues of the big localities. And there are a number of them in common when preparing for an election year such as 2016. And my background, which is in planning and budget, I'm a career bureaucrat, and have been doing it for a long,

long time, but I've been doing elections for 20 years, feeds into that. In order to have the confidence of the voters you've got to look at all your processes and procedures and apply the adequate resources. And I think that's something that all the localities struggle with. And as we go throughout the day, I will talk, you know, more about what we need to do as election administrators is behind the scenes that the voters don't see, so that everything happens on Election Day as they expect it, and they can vote in a reasonable fashion and timeframe. And the City of Richmond gets a great deal of scrutiny in that regard, because we're in the capitol city, and we are a highly urban jurisdiction, but my experiences there have been -- have run the gamut from so-so elections that, you know, it was ho-hum and pretty pro forma, to very contentious elections. And we have survived at least five recounts that I can recall. So that's where I get into the procedural aspects are so very, very important in conducting elections.

DR. KING:

Okay, thank you. Secretary of State Paul Pate from Iowa first up in the queue, I guess, in about 30 days or so, welcome.

SECRETARY PATE:

Thank you, thank you very much. I can just say that I can't underscore enough of what's already been mentioned. When we look at the election process, it is a team effort. My start in this was

as a very young man back in 1980 going to my first caucus, going into a kindergarten classroom and sitting on those little chairs for a couple hours and experiencing the process and watching how it worked. It's not changed a lot on that side of it, but on the formal election side it has changed and we've had to change with it.

When I served in this position back in 1994 as Secretary of State, we were using brick phones and fax machines.

[Laughter]

SECRETARY PATE:

Today we are moving much farther. We have 70 percent or more of our society now has mobile Internet systems, whether it's on their phone or their iPad, and the expectations are higher now. People want it instantly. So, it's no longer always about just getting the information to people, it's how fast can you get it to them, which comes back to, as the commissioner of elections for Iowa, dealing with things like integrity and making sure you have the service there and participation, obviously, is a part of that. I would say that we're focusing more and more on preparing and that's where it's going to be at. We spend a lot of time working with local county auditors, our local commissioners of elections, like Pat Gill from Woodbury County is one of our auditors who's here today, who's been on the frontlines, as well. But we spend a lot of time with training and training and training and training, and I can't underscore that

enough, to prepare for the worst and hoping for the best. And that's where we're going to start at and we'll keep working from there.

DR. KING:

Secretary, you mentioned speed as kind of an attribute now of modern elections. And I know, in the 2012 cycle, the pressure on Iowa to report the caucuses there's an expression in the newspaper business, you know, get it right, get it first -- I'm sorry, get it first, get it right, but get it first.

SECRETARY PATE:

Yes.

DR. KING:

What do you see as the pressure that's mounting within your state on the need to get the results of the caucuses almost instantaneously available to the public?

SECRETARY PATE:

Well, the pressure is extreme and it's a little different because the political parties run the caucuses in Iowa. We serve more as a cheerleader in that capacity, but they have taken it more seriously because of some of the fumbles that they have experienced in the past. And one of those is partnering with Microsoft, for example, so every precinct in the State of Iowa, which is nearly 2,000, will be set up with an app so that they'll have those instantly, and they will

be able to go back, obviously, and do the paper audit if they need to. But they'll have it right there as quickly as they can and they don't have to be as concerned, possibly, of somebody perhaps going home for the night and not remembering to send their results in. And when you have a close election, that can be a little touchy.

DR. KING:

Okay thank you, Sandra Juno, County Clerk of Brown County Wisconsin.

MS. JUNO:

Good afternoon. I come from a little bit different background probably from a lot of people working in elections. First I worked in business, then I went to education and finally I came to government. So I have a blend of working in different kinds of organizations. And 1998 was my first year as an elections deputy for Brown County, and to be perfectly honest, it was really eye opening because at that time their 24 municipalities in Brown County were using four different kinds of technology. Well, and some wasn't really technology. They were hand counting votes, they had punch card, lever and optical scanning. So trying to pull all this data together at the end of the night was something that created a lot of stress, was frustrating. And I think it was not only frustrating for us but candidates and media as well.

So, one of the first priorities we worked on after that election was to develop our technology. So, at that time we went back to our municipal clerks and we came to an agreement that throughout our whole county we'd use the same election equipment. The other thing that we decided to do was to combine as many things as possible that we do in the election. For example, with our legal notices everyone is noticed in one notice. So, you know, when the public is looking for what might pertain to them, it's there. Previously, 24 municipalities did it 24 different ways. So there was a lot of cooperation in that. We also combined how we use our supplies to package the election so at the end when we go back to do our canvas it was a uniform system of how we approached data.

So, those are some of the things that Brown County has done throughout the years and as we look forward to the future we'll look at other ways.

DR. KING:

And what is the principle municipality in Brown County?

MS. JUNO:

That would be the City of Green Bay which is about 50 percent of Brown County.

DR. KING:

I ask that for the benefit of the audience that may not recognize where Brown County is, but certainly, I think they'll know where Green Bay is. Thank you.

MS. JUNO:

Thank you.

DR. KING:

Brian Corley from Pasco County Florida.

MR. CORLEY:

Thank you. First I want to thank the EAC for hosting this very, very important roundtable. I'm Brian Corley. I'm honored to be the Supervisor of Elections for Pasco County Florida, as well as being the President of the Florida State Association of Supervisors of Elections. I've been doing this for just under a decade. And you asked about perspective Merle. I'm in the trenches, if you will, of elections administration in a state that is in the perennial spotlight. We all know about Florida and its history of having very close elections. I'm very, very familiar with that and we're the first and largest swing state, you know. When you talk about electoral votes being counted, it's pretty determined in advance of California, Texas, New York, and then, of course, enter Florida. So, we're used to being in the hot seat. So when it comes to perspective, that's certainly an important caveat.

Going into '16, it was said earlier every election is important. We all know that every single election should be treated like November 8th, 2016, but clearly, there's more emotions and it elicits more a fever pitch, if you will, among the various stakeholders. And with that and because of that there is literally no margin for error for us as elections administrators and we know that going in we have to get it right and get it right the first time.

So, again, thanks for hosting this and honored to be here.

DR. KING:

Okay great. Whenever I talk about Georgia, which is where I'm from, Georgia elections, I always point out that in the 2000 election we had a higher residual vote rate than Florida and we are grateful that the spotlight didn't sweep northward. I feel unfortunate for you all...

[Laughter]

DR. KING:

...but I think it's important to note that there were many, many imperfect elections in the 2000 cycle. So, thank you. Secretary Pedro Cortés from Pennsylvania.

SECRETARY CORTÉS:

Merle, that's an excellent segue, and thank you to you, as well as the EAC for hosting us. Pennsylvania, you talk about nobody wants to be in the spotlight in the sense of what our friends in

Florida went through in 2000, but to be fair you put it well, every state had issues. It just happens that, you know, that the light shown on Florida more than anywhere else. So -- and certainly the media had a field day with Florida to this day and I always feel bad over the years because I became Secretary of State in Pennsylvania, which is the sixth largest jurisdiction in terms of population in the country. In 2003, so it was incumbent upon our team to implement the mandates of the Help America Vote Act and I became very active with the National Association of Secretaries of State, and I will often sit right next to my colleague from Florida and they will always, you know, say whenever you want to say something terrible you turn to Florida. And the reality is that everybody had challenges and the media just was so relentless in pointing out everything that went wrong. And that's what is the challenge because in elections everybody expects perfect elections and there's not such a thing. You're talking about millions of people interacting with machines and the poll workers. And for my money a good election hinges for the most part on a well informed electorate and properly trained, you know, administrators and the poll workers.

But nobody wants to be the next Florida, so I remember coming into office in 2004 that Presidential election great pressure on the state that we were not going to be the next Florida. And the

same happened in 2008 but by then we have the new voting systems mandated by the Help America Vote Act. And I remember for me -- I mean I go back to what Secretary Williams and other have stated in terms of it's so important to be consistent with your procedures, what constitutes a vote, make sure that your voting systems, there's good maintenance, good preparation and then, you know, transparency and communications. And that's how Pennsylvania has been able to successfully manage many of our elections is through good preparation, but also the fact that we try to stay ahead of the curve when it comes to keeping the media and the public informed about what we're doing and ultimately a great relationship with our counties, because ultimately, as you well pointed out, all elections are local.

So, I'm looking forward to the 2016 election. For me this will be my 17th election that I get to administer as Pennsylvania's chief election official. And you know every year you feel the pressure that you don't want to be the next state that people point out as a failure. But the reality is that if you have elections, even like the one in Florida in 2000, you're still doing a lot of good because the reality is this is a complex endeavor and we strive to do the best we can. And that's a mandate, so we have to do so.

DR. KING:

Very good and I think one of the things that we will certainly come to in today's discussion is the importance of these lessons learned. And so, in every election there are internal and external events that help instruct us in the next cycle and so that's a part of what we want to get to today is what have we learned from these past experiences that we can roll forward into procedures and mitigations.

All right, Luanne Cutler, Registrar of Voters, Washoe County Nevada, welcome.

MS. CUTLER:

Thank you, thank you. Yes, Washoe County encompasses mostly the Reno/Sparks area and we're fortunate enough to have a portion of northern Lake Tahoe in our jurisdiction as well. So it's a beautiful area. We have about 225,000 registered voters and what puts us in the spotlight I believe is the very even divide between Democratic voters and Republican voters. We're often viewed as sort of a bellwether of what may happen nationwide. We've had our own issues in past elections, just like Florida. We had a wonderful time in 1998 for a very highly public senate race. Some of our ballots were printed, I believe it was 1/32nd of an inch off, so they wouldn't read properly, and it was, I believe, nine days it took us to actually certify that election. We had people sleeping on the floor in our lobby watching us round the clock and a lot of scrutiny

in that election. We no longer have paper ballots. We're a DRE state now. Everything system-wise is the same in Nevada. We all have DREs. We have the same vendor. We meet and we work as a team with the guidance of the Secretary of State's office. And even though we were all a little reluctant at first to give up the voting systems that we had in place at the county levels, it has turned out to be a very good thing, a beneficial thing to be able to share the knowledge that we each experience because we're so vastly different. Clark County to our south is probably three-and-a-half times larger than we are voter wise. And then, we have 15 other counties are who are mostly rural. So our needs are all different and yet we all come together and work as a team and accomplish what we need to.

As some others have mentioned, everything that we do in the election world is about public perception. It doesn't matter how we get there, if the public perceives that we're doing something incorrectly or behind the scenes, if the public perceives it then it's so. So that's our goal I think for this election year mostly is to try to get ahead of that, get the word out, spend a lot of time informing the media, the parties, the activist groups making them our partners to try to get the word out to those who doubt us that we really do know what we're doing and we're ready to do the best job that we possibly can.

DR. KING:

Okay good, thank you. Matt Damschroder, Assistant Secretary of State of Ohio, welcome.

MR. DAMSCHRODER:

Thank you and good afternoon. So I was fortunate to begin my career in elections administration in Franklin County, Ohio, as the Director of Elections there in the capital county, and so, this will be my fourth Presidential election now at the Secretary of State's Office.

And in Ohio the previous Secretary of State coined the phrase "The margin of litigation" and that has kind of become a watch phrase I think for Ohio specifically, but I think swing states, generally. And I think there's an interplay between that phrase and kind of the old election official mantra of or prayer, you know, "Please Lord, let it be a landslide," you know. And so, I think all election officials, but particularly, you know, local election officials in swing states, have to prepare for the known and for the unknown because the level of scrutiny, as I think we've all talked about so far, is intense in those kind of -- in our kinds of states in Presidential elections. And so, we have to be prepared not just to run the election, but to make sure that our procedures, our planning, our training, our processes, our auditing, all of those things cannot only

support the run up to and the administration of Election Day, but also, withstand what will inevitably come after Election Day.

DR. KING:

You make a really good point Matt about the knowns and the unknowns, and in elections we often talk about the law of unintended consequence and how everything can be undone quickly by those unforeseen consequences. So, I've stolen from Robert Gates also the phrase now "the known/unknowns" in my list of what I prepare for. So, thank you.

Robert Dezmelyk, a moderator, that's a new title for me for an election official, from New Hampshire.

MR. DEZMELYK:

Well, it's interesting because New Hampshire, I guess, took it to heart the idea that all elections are local because our election administration system is kind of upside down compared to most states. We have for every town in the state an elected official who's in charge of elections and where a moderator comes from is in charge of town meeting. And in the town meeting the role of the moderator is to basically, as you are doing, move the discussion along, recognize the speakers and move the town legislative body through its deliberative session.

So, apart from that job, you also run the elections. In contrast to the other organizations where it's a management challenge, for each of the moderators in New Hampshire it's a herding cats challenge because you have in the polling place, not only yourself, an elected official, but the selectmen, a quorum of them, who basically run the community and they're all politicians themselves, and you have your elected clerk, who has his or her own responsibilities and areas of power. We have a system that's kind of decentralized down to the precinct, so in the very precinct when the election is being run, you're handling this kind of group of fellow elected officials to get the job done. Now that said, the state also has a lot to say, down to the point where, technically, if I'm more than 48 inches from the voting ballot box or machine I need to appoint a temporary moderator. Now, we also have the commonsense law in our state which means that if I have to walk across the room to talk to the clerk for some reason then I don't bother.

But we have a very active, very locally driven election process which is quite different in execution from a lot of other states.

DR. KING:

Okay, well, very good. Well, thank you, thank you for your self-introductions.

And I'd like to start now with some questions and I'm going to come back to Robert because over lunch today I heard this topic being discussed and it's the first question on my list. But I also want to throw the question out to the rest of the panel. And it has to do with the changes in the electorate or the behavior of the electorate in the last election cycle. So for those of us who work in elections, every election is unique but elections have patterns, and so, right now we're looking back not so much to the 2014 cycle, but back to the 2012 cycle and the 2008 cycles to get ideas of turnout and other behavior.

So, my question first to you, and then, really to the rest of the panel, what changes do you see in either the electorate in your jurisdiction? Have you had changes in demographics? Or, more importantly probably, changes in the behavior of the electorate in terms of expectations? And when you're looking ahead, and I know we talked a little bit about students and student behavior at lunch today. So let me start that question with you, but then, also spread that out to the panel.

MR. DEZMELYK:

Well, I think that it will be very interesting because as we discussed earlier there have been a couple elections where there was great enthusiasm among students and young people, there was a lot of activity, a lot of new voters coming from that direction. It's very

hard to predict what will happen with New Hampshire voters, virtually impossible to predict what will happen with the voters in our town, but I do get a sense that there will be a lot of engagement and excitement particularly at the primary level. There's -- we have two contested primaries. We have a lot of candidates that are interesting. So I think we'll have a lot of engagement and excitement amongst those people.

And I think we're liable to see a different group. I don't think it's going to be driven by the young people so much as the other sections of demographically speaking. I think the people that are most engaged right now that we've seen are not young people.

DR. KING:

Kirk?

MR. SHOWALTER:

The City of Richmond has four colleges or universities, institutions of higher education. And I agree, in the previous in 2008, but especially 2012, the level of student involvement was unprecedented. I'm not seeing that so far this year. That could change later in the summer, but I think we are seeing other interest areas. For example, I'm seeing an unusually high number of uniformed services and overseas voters are coming in already and it's only -- it's not even yet started for our absentee voting period for the March primary. That doesn't -- the 45 days hits January 15th for

us, so to get this number this early tells me that there's some push in that regard. I don't think it's necessarily going to exclude the younger people but I think there's going to be a broader push as far as registered voters. But I also think it's going to look at functions of the elections process. For example, photo ID is new to Virginia. We've always had a requirement of some sort of identification for a number of years, but it didn't always have to be photo ID. And in fact, that has -- that is a subject of an ongoing lawsuit with Virginia right now. We'll see how that plays out. So I think the actual policies and procedures are going to be questioned and examined as a possible influence on the outcome of the election.

DR. KING:

Okay.

SECRETARY PATE:

I would just add, I look at it as three-legged stool when you look at this process. The candidates themselves, because it's being an open Presidential year, they play the key role of the -- I call it the inspiration. Are they going to turn people out motivationally speaking? And because of the sheer volume on the Republican side, there's got to be something there for everybody. So, that is driving some attention. You have the political parties who have become more and more sophisticated of this technology that's out there walking around with apps now. They're going door to door,

they're updating voter registration lists faster than we keep up in some cases. They're noting all the details of that voter's interest and patterns and what their interest is in. So again, I think it's becoming sophisticated. That's the second leg of the stool. And the third is the media itself. Because of the evolution of the media over the last 15, 20 years with so many TV stations, so many news coverage, Internet, all of these other pieces, they're hungry for information. They're hungry for a story. They're driving a lot of this as well. So, I think those are the three components.

And I agree, I think that this isn't going to be the youth vote this year. I think it's going to be – actually, I'd say it's my generation. It's the baby boomers and a little younger. I think they're kind of coming out more aggressively, at least.

DR. KING:

Okay.

MR. CORLEY:

I'll tell you, in Florida what we're seeing when you allude to, Merle, the behavior of the electorate, if I may borrow Secretary Pate's line, the three-legged stool, it's evolving voting patterns. What used to be more traditional Election Day only has been taken over to some extent by early voting and vote by mail. Statutorily, in Florida, it's called an absentee ballot, but in all of our materials to voters we refer to it as vote by mail. In fact, it's not uncommon starting with

'12, and I see it's going to be a continued spike, an increase of early voting and vote by mail. In a lot of our larger counties more than half of the votes cast were before Election Day. And I think you're only going to see that -- you know, voters are creatures of habit. Once they become an early voter or a vote by mail voter, they tend to stay that way. So, I think it's less significance on Election Day turnout, more on pre-election day, if you will, for lack of a better term.

DR. KING:

Okay.

SECRETARY CORTÉS:

I would say that, you know, talking about what to expect in terms of who's going to vote, I mean, everybody. The millennial side, in Pennsylvania, still plays a significant role, but I agree that you're going to have participation from the baby boomers generation, actually in numbers that perhaps you would not think, you know. You think that the younger generation may dictate the expectations but, you know, in terms of the younger generation what we're seeing in Pennsylvania is that, say, talk about communications and just technology, there's an expectation that you're got to be modern in the way that you administer elections, for example, voter registration. Pennsylvania, we resist change. I hate to say, we don't have early voting. We don't have a lot of measures that are

already done in other states that are reforms that are -- seem to commonsensical and well accepted. But we had a clamor for at least being able to register online, because the mentality and the expectation of 24/7 customer service and customer care. And I'm so glad that we were able to adopt in Pennsylvania in August, and what we saw is that about 60,000 Pennsylvanians, with no budget for advertising, this was all word of mouth, social media, getting that application to be actively used online voter registration, and what we saw is that out of the 60,000 people more than 3,000 are over the age of 65 and large numbers are the millennials, but you have that in all age groups. So, I think that's an expectation. You touched upon, briefly Merle, in terms of the changing demographics, and we're seeing that in Pennsylvania at a significant rate where the traditional white Caucasian population is decreasing. We have growth of many groups, so we have to adapt even our administration to provide, for example, more access by way of language. And that's something for which we're going to be dedicating a significant amount of energy and resources to translate, not just our materials but, you know, just any form of communication to be as inclusive as we possibly can.

DR. KING:

Yes, Luanne.

MS. CUTLER:

That's a very good point, Pedro, that you make about the expectation that we're going to be modern in everything we do. And unfortunately it seems that government usually runs a little behind the eight ball there with, you know, what is current. But in Nevada, we've worked very hard, the Secretary of State's Office has put together online voter registration which without much advertising at all is becoming more and more popular as you said. And then, to your point, as far as early voting in Florida, early voting in Nevada has really pretty much taken over. In Clark County, to the south, they've had more voters turn out to vote early for early voting than on Election Day for many years. And up north, here in Washoe County, we are now experiencing that same thing. Along with that, the percentage of absentee voters seems to be sliding a little less, you know, a little lower and lower with each cycle, because early voting is so popular.

DR. KING:

Secretary Williams.

SECRETARY WILLIAMS:

Let me follow up a little bit. When we talk about online voter registration it's not just changing how people register to vote, it's also changing how candidates make the ballot, how issues make the ballot. And so, what you see -- in the old days someone would be standing in front of your local Walmart or grocery store with a

paper petition and they would ask people, “Do you live in this jurisdiction? Are you registered here?” And they would hope they were telling the truth. What we’ve seen in Colorado is a significant change, because now, instead, they’re standing there with their iPad or other device and saying, “Let’s check your registration. Let’s make sure you’re registered at this address. If you’re not, let’s update it, so you can sign this. And even if you’re not registered at all, you can be registered in just a couple of minutes, and then you can sign this legitimately.” And so, we saw in one of our cases in Colorado, in part because we had the first mobile enabled online voter registration in the country, we saw one of the campaigns turn in a petition where the veracity rate, the legitimate rate was over 90 percent and approaching about 95 percent. And traditionally, there had to be a huge margin of petition signatures. So that, I think, has changed.

We’ve also seen changes in the way voter registration lists are scrutinized. And as I look around the room, here, I think Colorado, Virginia, Nevada, and Secretary Cortés just brought Pennsylvania into ERIC, which is the Electronic Registration Information Center, where states share voter registration information with each other to ensure there aren’t duplicate registrations, and so, when someone moves from one state to another, they don’t continue to maintain a voter registration in the

state in which they no longer live and that helps increase the accuracy of those voter rolls.

DR. KING:

All right, I heard technology mentioned several times in this discussion, and Secretary Pate, I think your observation that the campaigns now have access to technology, the data for which we used to be the exclusive gatekeepers, and now, that may no longer be the case. So I want to pose this question, and I'd like to start with Luanne, because you brought it up in your opening comment.

In the PCEA report in 2012 that addressed the pending crisis in voting system, as our equipment ages, and what we know is that jurisdictions are mitigating, jurisdictions, as you pointed out Sandra, are resource strapped always. And so, I'd like to talk about -- or ask you to talk about, in your jurisdictions, how has that played out? How has the age of your voting equipment, possibly the inability of the voting equipment to do the kinds of things that the legislature now expects to be done by the system, how is that changing your preparation, in terms of maintenance, of testing, and your level of concern as you prepare, particularly on a precinct based jurisdiction? But I'd really like to get more input than just Luanne, but please start with that.

MS. CUTLER:

Sure, sure, there are a number, of course, of tests that we're required to perform by statute prior to any election, and again, after any election, to make sure that our equipment is working properly. Beyond that we do what we can to keep everything up and operational. We replace batteries on a regular basis, not just the little double A's, those big expensive ones, you know, that we have to buy quite often. We are fortunate enough to have a few more than we need, of our touch screen voting machines, so that we sort of oversupply our polling places in the case -- just in case there is a failure of equipment. There's only so much that we can really do, maintenance wise. Our vendor does a lot of preventative maintenance for us. Dominion Voting Systems comes in and goes through each machine before we start every -- you know, before each cycle. It's a tough one, because it is aging. We know it's aging. We're warning our county commissioners, and we're warning those at the state level, that money is going to have to be spent to upgrade this equipment.

But as far as what we do, we just keep at it. We keep making sure that things are operational. We do instruct our poll workers to go through what we call a collaboration test more than once a day, now, as opposed to maybe just once during the day. During early voting, if there's heavy turnout, we ask them to do it

every, say, three hours or so just to make sure that where the voter touches on the screen is the candidate that's marked.

Because I know there's a lot of perception that that doesn't happen in the general public. So we just work hard to keep up the maintenance processes. We're in the middle of moving to an upgraded absentee system, which we're going to view as a building block to whatever Dominion Voting System develops next for general Election Day voting equipment, and so on.

So, we're trying as hard as we can to bring things up to speed to get something more current technology-wise and to stay out of the news with failures of equipment. So it's all about oversupplying, so that even if here's a failure we can continue without the public really being affected.

SECRETARY PATE:

If I can just add a quick comment, it's partnering too, having that conversation with -- in our case, we have 99 county auditors/commissioners of elections in Iowa. It's that communication with them as to what resources they need, as well, because in our state those counties have to buy the voting machines. They're the ones that have to pay for the staff to run what processes we put in place. One of the best resources I've seen in recent times have been the e-poll books, the electronic poll books. We have 70 counties, right now, out our 99 who have

those. I can't -- we need all the counties to have it frankly. It's the one tool that both the county auditors can use as a key resource, but also the campaigns are tying into it because it's the -- it frees up resources. You know who's voted. You know that they voted in the right place. You have all the information that we talk about when we want to maintain integrity. So, I think that's crucial. And Wayne talked about online voter registration. That helps us keep the most clean, accurate, up-to-date list that I can imagine because the people are helping you do it. It's not trying to interpret their chicken scratch on the form that they sent in, and there's a way to cross reference it immediately and verify they who are they are. Again, integrity goes along with it, but it also gives you the timing. So, I think we are moving forward on technology. And if I could put an appeal out there to the state legislators and governors, and maybe even congress, funding would be nice.

[Laughter]

DR. KING:

Secretary Williams?

SECRETARY WILLIAMS:

Well, I want to talk a little bit about the technology and the voting systems. Colorado is completing a multi-year process that began under my predecessor where we began to say, how do we update this voting technology? And for those who may not follow it as

closely or are wondering why we're talking about updating something that's only 15 years old in some cases, very few people are using the same phone that you used 15 years ago. You're probably not using the same computer that you used 15 years ago. And yet, much of our voting technology using operating systems that Windows no longer even supports -- or Microsoft no longer supports. So, we are at the stage where we have to make some changes.

And so, Colorado did kind of a unique experiment in that we actually, at the recommendation of a committee of local election officials, decided to do a series of pilot elections. And so, this last November, we had a large county and a smaller county test each of four different systems, and then, the committee came together after that and made a recommendation to me as to which system to proceed with. And so, instead of just listening to the great dog and pony show that each of them provided, we actually tried it out in different counties with real voters and real judges. The disability community, for example, brought blind voters in to test the various different systems in real voting situations. And so, it was a very thorough presentation -- very thorough review, and that's the way we've looked at it, is kind of a commonsense way of approaching things. And so, we've made a decision, we're now in negotiations

with the vendor and plan to proceed. And we'll have about a quarter of our counties that will have that system in place this year. As you talk about a Presidential election, our goal is that each of those will have that system in advance of the primaries so that the first time they're using it is not the Presidential election on November 8th.

DR. KING:

Matt, I'd like to get your perspective on this, because as Secretary Williams points out, the Presidential preference primary, if your state has such, is only the first of many elections to come this year. And so, a part -- as Luanne points out, a part of best practices is collecting data on performance because you've got another election right behind it, and another one behind it, et cetera.

So, from the state perspective, in Ohio, how have you looked at your aging equipment and how are you mitigating, if needed, in preparation for the election?

MR. DAMSCHRODER:

So, I think, you know, when we talk with our county election officials I like to use a story that may actually be apocryphal, from Florida, you know, that some of the challenges that some jurisdictions had in Florida in 2000, were maintenance issues, you know. If you don't empty the Chad from previous elections, it's going to hard -- it's going to be hard to get a clean punch through a punch card.

And so, this is where I think in elections administration the phrase “don’t sweat” -- you know “sweat the small stuff, because everything is small stuff” really comes into play, because it can be just those little things, you know, the batteries on the -- you know, on the card for the scanner, emptying the Chad from the bin, all of those little things can really add up to make sure that there is not a large problem, because, you know, I think when we look at that technology, and the Secretary is exactly correct that, you know, we have technology that was purchased with federal funds that is now, you know, not really used in any other environment of government and business. But, it is what we have and it’s still good and it’s not like, you know, congress when they appropriated the money and the states bought the voting machines, you know, in Ohio, that we didn’t send 20,000 cars on the road and they’re all going to run out of gas at the same time on Election Day. And so, the issue is as you always say, Merle, you know, that election officials now have to be sophisticated IT administrators in addition to everything else they have to do, you know. Back in Franklin County, when we had lever machines, maintenance was performed with a grease gun.

[Laughter]

MR. DAMSCHRODER:

You know, that’s not the case anymore. And so, you know, the issue is how do we do those -- the little maintenance things so that

there isn't a problem on Election Day, and while at the same time reassuring the public, you know, that the systems that we have in place for 2016, will work for 2016, while at the same time having that conversation with the legislature about, you know, how do we fix this funding gap, because it is unlikely that locals, particularly smaller jurisdictions across the country, are going to be able to bear the full brunt of those new capital costs for equipment.

DR. KING:

Okay. Brian?

MR. CORLEY:

Florida is unique in that for three consecutive Presidential elections there were three different voting systems, you know. Of course, 2000 punch cards, 2004 DREs, and then 2008, by legislative mandate the Mark-Sense optical scanners.

But I want to hit on something, since we have local and state election officials on the roundtable here, the importance of collaboration and working together. Because that last legislative mandate I mentioned, you know, a lot of the counties the equipment is relatively new, by most definitions, but we had about 14 counties who have been using very, very old optical scanners, and the local elections officials got with our Secretary of State and entered into a consortium, and because of that they were able to purchase new optical scanners for the upcoming election cycle. So

that's how we were able to solve that problem. But it speaks to the -- how important it is for the local and the state election officials to work together, because obviously, we're on the same team for the most important stakeholder, the voter, which we all work for.

DR. KING:

Robert?

MR. DEZMELYK:

Just a quick thought. No matter what you do to maintain it, test it, prepare, you need a plan "B", in that I've certainly had the case where we have a single voting machine in our precinct, it dies mid election. And, as an IT guy, myself, professionally, once I see some piece of electronics equipment just sort of die, I'm not about to reboot it and hope it keeps working or trust that it's going to keep working. It's out. So, we just switched back to manual count. We have an advantage that we are a paper ballot optical mark scan counting state, so that means we just bring out the boxes, we have one from the late 1800s, just start stuffing the ballots in it. And then, at the evening, we have to get results the same day, we're going to now be hand counting. And that means you need to train your people on hand counting or whatever your backup scheme is, you've got to practice it sometimes, because it doesn't do any good to read about it if you've never done it, and you got to be able to pull it off. So, it's kind of like keeping an old skill alive.

I was once asked what would we do in some theme of preparedness drill, you know, if certain circumstances happen. And I said, it doesn't matter, we can stand in the parking lot outside and, you know, use paper, even if we don't have the ballots anymore, right? We'll have the election no matter what. And we may have to improvise. We may have to count by hand. It may take all night, but we're going to have an election. And that's the sort of principle we start with and that's how we prepare.

SECRETARY CORTÉS:

Robert must have been reading my mind because I was going to, you know, the focus, and rightly so, has been on technology and the aging equipment, and for that, again, it goes back to maintenance and testing and being able to do the repairs that are necessary, but you still have to instill a sense of confidence in the public. I mean, we -- perhaps all of us read the Brennan Center for Justice report on the aging equipment and that sent chills up the spines of many who would believe, oh my God, all the systems are going to break down in 2016 because they're old. Not really. If the systems have been properly maintained and if you have the spare parts and you have a good contract, you stand a better chance. But in the end, even if it's, as Brian noted, even if it's brand new equipment, you can still have hiccups. And that goes back to my point I was going to make is that you have to have contingency

plans, and you have to be prepared to execute at a moment's notice whether it's emergency paper, ballots, or whether it is another system that you can deploy very quickly and keep it running smoothly, because that's where things begin to get a little bit tricky for us, for an administrator, if all of a sudden you have to stop altogether and you don't have a way to get -- continue to keep that line moving that attracts a lot of media attention. And even if, in the end, everything works well, the news is going to be that the system broke down, and then it creates all sorts of doubts, particularly if the margin of victory is fairly close.

DR. KING:

Sandra?

MS. JUNO:

In Wisconsin, our municipalities choose which voting equipment they would like to use and there's over 1,800 municipalities. So, there can be, you know, a lot of different types of equipment being used within a county. We're unique because we did get all of our municipalities to choose one type of equipment, and when we did that we chose to do all of our programming and printing of ballots in Brown County. So, we have the opportunity if, for some reason, our equipment fails we can always give them a new flash drive to reprocess ballots. If they're running low on ballots, we can print ballots, which we do on Election Day up until about seven p.m. So

we have that opportunity. We were fortunate when we needed new equipment that the Brown County board supported that, so they purchased the equipment for the entire county so that when we made the upgrade from the old equipment to the new equipment we're all on the same platform. So, that has worked really good. We do hire our vendor to send in a staff person to be onsite for each election, because a lot of times, you know, being computer equipment, there's questions about it; how it's functioning, that you need an answer to right away. So, we have that support person onsite in our office.

So, those are some of the things that we do to try and stay on track on Election Day.

DR. KING:

I want to reflect on a couple of things that I heard in this particular question and maybe drill a little deeper.

The first is Colorado's decision to kind of go against conventional wisdom, which is rolling out a new voting system in, not only an even numbered year, but a Presidential year. And I think, historically, we try to roll them out in odd number years and let our municipalities beta test the systems. But the reality that we're in now is, when the money is available you roll out the system, and when the opportunity presents itself it may not be there again. So, I'd like to talk about that just a little bit, which is why

your jurisdiction found it appropriate to roll out a system, but other jurisdictions are going to ride with what they got, even if they have additional resources.

And then, the second thing that Robert brought up is election continuity; that have we reviewed our disaster recovery or emergency contingency or election continuity, whatever your jurisdiction calls the plan, lately? And I think that's important. I know Robert and I share an IT background, but there's been so much IT that has changed since the last election, and so many of our election continuity procedures are embedded in technologies. Have we gone back and refreshed them? And, of course, as Robert points out, we may document them, but we rarely rehearse them, we rarely prove that they work or not.

So, the first thing, I'd like to come back to Secretary Williams and get just kind of a quick reflection on your decision to roll out, in a Presidential year, what the specific challenges are, the rationale behind it, and then, if other jurisdictions have considered that, but decided that maybe 2017 or 2019 might be better windows. And then, I'd like to come to the election continuity question.

So, first, Secretary Williams.

SECRETARY WILLIAMS:

And I've got some comments on the election continuity, but I'll start with just restricting them to your first question. It's actually a three-

step process. We went through an exhaustive testing process this last year. All of the systems went through the necessary requirements for certification under temporary certification in Colorado. And then, we actually tried out each of them in the odd year election. So, that's the first step.

The second step for those jurisdictions, it's probably only about a quarter of our jurisdictions that will proceed with this this year, is that they will be using it in the primary election. And so, we're not trying anything new in November that hasn't already been done in a November election, and then a primary election. And actually, the system that was chosen was used by the City and County of Denver in their municipal election. For the most part there were few tweaks to it. So, it's actually going to be the fourth election of this equipment. So it's not, "Hey, let's try it out in the Presidential election to see." And in fact, the timeline we're under with our jurisdictions is to ensure that it is available to all of them, that they have the new equipment 60 days, at least, ahead of that primary election in June, because we send out ballots to the military at least 45 days ahead of time. And so, we've got that permeation going on, where we have a very short window in the next few months that we're going to have some jurisdictions that will choose to do it, ultimately, in partnership with our county partners. They're the ones who make that decision. Now, we've been having the

discussion with them about the need and about the concern. And I guess I'll differentiate election equipment from other equipment in one way. If my car breaks down I am inconvenienced, and it's annoying, but I'll get a new car and maybe that day I won't get done what I need to get done. But we can't have that in an election. You can't say, "You know, things didn't work out today, come back tomorrow. You know, tomorrow we'll get new stuff and it will work better." And so, it is a different standard that we're held to. It has to be ready on that day when the election occurs, or in Colorado's model in those, you know, 12 to 22 days in which that election occurs. But it's got to be ready then, and you can't just tell people, "Well we'll get it fixed, come back another day" which is what you tell people when you have another piece of equipment that breaks down. When your fridge breaks down, you go, you get a new one and you take care of your food; you take it to your neighbors for that day or something like that. You can't do that in election, and so, it really is a higher level that we have to meet in that process.

DR. KING:

Okay, Kirk.

MS. SHOWALTER:

There is a good reason why elections administrators avoid putting new equipment out in a Presidential election year, and the reason behind that is, it's not just putting a new piece of equipment out

there, number one, the voters aren't familiar with, but there are amazing number of details that the equipment change affects and decisions that have to be made, as far as, I went from a DRE to optical scan. DRE localities need very few paper ballots in a precinct and only as emergency to optical scan where everybody is voting on paper ballots. And we've been wrestling with, how do we get the number of paper ballots to the precinct for a Presidential election in a secure fashion and meeting the code of Virginia, and how do we get them back from the precincts to the Court. Details like, how do you keep the chain of custody of the paper ballots from the moment you order them from the printer to sending them to the precinct and how many are used in the precinct. Details of like processes and procedures, do you have the poll book officer handing out the paper ballots or do you have a separate ballot officer. And all of those changes affect personnel procedures. And also, how do the machines actually operate on Election Day. Yes, we can't -- we should expect them to be almost flawless, but mechanical equipment is mechanical equipment is mechanical equipment. So, you need to have your technicians anticipate what possibly could go wrong and have a remedial plan in place. But if you're not familiar with the quirks of that particular type of equipment, that's not -- you can't always anticipate those details. So, for that reason it's always good, if you can, to change before.

But, I think if you're going to change in a Presidential election year, you need to be prepared to step it up as far as brainstorming all of those different aspects of those procedures, and build into your schedule the leisure time for it, and anticipate that it is going to have that much more time because all of those bits and pieces -- I know somebody across the table said the Devil is in the details with election administration -- so that needs to be taken into account for a successful '16 election.

DR. KING:

Right, and Kirk, I think to your point, it really wouldn't matter if you're going from DRE to precinct count optical scan or the other direction, it's the change that has to be managed and planned for.

MS. SHOWALTER:

Yes.

DR. KING:

Let's talk a little bit about this -- the election continuity piece. And Robert, you touched on something, which is, you can count them in the middle of the square by hand if necessary. But the difference is that there will photographers, cameramen, reporters, poll watchers, and so, it's not a quiet, necessarily, process. How has your perspective, particularly if you've had a change in technology, how is your perspective on election continuity, your preparedness, are there things that you're going back and revisiting to ensure that

you've got the capability? And particularly, now we know from Super Storm Sandy what can happen in the hurricane season on the East Coast. So, let me open that topic up. What has that changed in your perspective? Let's start with Robert.

MR. DEZMELYK:

Well, I've had the opportunity to actually kind of run through that mentally, at least, thankfully, not in real life. A couple elections ago the powers that be decided we would conduct a drill related to the Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant because we're in the evacuation zone. So, as part of the normal safety drills that are conducted by all the agencies involved with that, we had to relocate our polling place. Not for real, because the election was happening, but we had to go through all the steps, make the phone calls, identify the people, have a plan and kind of, you know, talk through as if we were doing it. So, there's a lot of things to think about there because one of the first questions is, you know, what do we take when we go out the door? This is, you know, not quite a fire drill, but close to it. Once you hear the sirens going off and they're telling you to leave, nobody is going to sit around for two hours, you know, packing stuff up. So we got a chance to run through that, you know, thankfully again, not in real life, but in kind of a drill sort of a sense. And that brought a lot of, you know, things to the forefront. For instance, we thought the best place to relocate to

was the reassembly center, where schools transport school kids to and families reunite, because -- and there's like a big shelter. It's a high school in a town to the west of us, so the idea would be people sort of piling up there anyway, so we'd go there. Now, would we actually get there or get stuck in a traffic jam? Who knows? What would we take? We weren't going to take the voting machine, but we were going to take the poll books and the ballots and, you know, we had a kind of a plan. And we would have ended up, basically, in the hallway somewhere with kind of an ad hoc situation.

And I'm sure there would have been plenty of media if, you know, God forbid, it actually happened. But we do our elections with a lot of media anyway, so the idea that there's anything calm about it, peaceful about it, you're feeling relaxed, doesn't happen. In other words, there's the people who are conducting the election. About six feet away is one of those little tape barriers, and then, there's everybody watching. So, we're pretty used to that idea of counting votes and doing everything with people watching. And that's a good thing.

DR. KING:

Performance art.

MR. DEZMELYK:

Right, I mean, we do that all the time.

DR. KING:

Matt?

MR. DAMSCHRODER:

I think when we think about contingency planning and continuity of operations I think it's important to not only think about, you know, the extremes, you know, the nuclear power plant issue or Hurricane Sandy, but I think it's also important to think about the issues on election that are also -- that are at least more likely to happen. So, it seems like every election, you know, there's the high school student who pulls the fire alarm in the polling place so they don't have to take their math test, you know, or the road crew cuts the gas line in front of the community building, and so, you know, you have that hour or 90-minute interruption. And so, I think it's important for, you know, especially locals, as they work with their precinct election officials, because at the end of the day, you know, we can sit in Columbus and administer the statewide election, but it's really those four or six individuals at the high school who need to have the training in place, to know, I grab the poll books and the ballots and I go outside and I wait until the first responders say, "All right, you can go back inside" and what do you tell the voters during that time period. So, I think there's kind of those two sets of contingency situations that election officials plan for.

DR. KING:

Okay, Secretary Williams, you had a comment.

SECRETARY WILLIAMS:

Well, I had the misfortune of running a primary election when my office was vacated by the emergency responders by the most devastating wildfire in my community's history. And so, we went through this, it wasn't just a drill. And there are a number of issues that we had to deal with, and deal with it successfully, but you do need to have those contingency plans in place. We -- after that, when we had another election, we were then dealing with the flood runoff, and so, one of our city halls that's a logical polling place in one of our communities, literally, has the voting room sitting over the creek. And so, we had a series of procedures written for the short-term evacuation or the long-term evacuation as to what they should take, where they reassemble. And, in Colorado, under our model, you can vote anywhere in the county. And so, we had alternate sites and we began to schedule sufficient extra sites. And some of it was a minor thing. We had a concrete slab fall down. We had a school board that cancelled their election, and then, decided a week before the election they really didn't want us there because it would be disruptive to the students. And so, you have to plan for both those minor things, but also the major events; what happens if your whole office is evacuated, how do you handle that response, how do you ensure the integrity of the elections?

But I will disagree with one thing, nobody was watching the election processing that day. It was not an issue of intense media scrutiny. You couldn't even find the results except maybe on a crawler on one of the stations, "There is a raging forest fire destroying hundreds of homes, and by the way, the primary election results today, let's go to this candidate." No, none of that occurred. It was a sufficiently large disaster that there wasn't very much media scrutiny. Now, in part I think because we're doing it right. If there hadn't been, someone would have raised a stink. But you may not be as scrutinized as you might otherwise think, because there's a bigger story going on and it's not the local election, it's what's going to happen to these people and how do they go on with their lives and how do we respond to them, how do we make sure they have the right to vote. And there's going to be some people that don't care, but we have to make sure that everyone who wants to has the ability to vote on that day.

DR. KING:

That's a good point. You know, I think as we are sharing this information with our colleagues via the Web, and afterwards, I think everybody on this panel would strongly encourage all of our election jurisdictions to review the election continuity plan. And, you know, Robert, I think one of the things that happens in large scale natural disasters is the very locations that you think you

would relocate to, Red Cross takes possession of them for the very reasons that you indicate is that life is more important. And then, the other recognition, that the first casualty of battle and of emergencies is the plan, and so, whatever plan you have, the most important part of the plan is the communication piece so that you can keep in communication with all of your actors and all of your offices to keep them updated as the fluidity of the situation manifests.

Sandra?

MS. JUNO:

And the communication part is what I was going to mention, as well, as part of our continuity plan. Sometimes it seems like a little detail, but it can be very helpful prior to an election to make sure you know which judge may be on call, your DA, any kind of alternative numbers your clerks might have, because once you're in the middle of an emergency, you know, you're under enough stress to begin with. It's nice to be able to go to a place and have those numbers available, and to also provide them to the state agency as well, so should they need them that they would have them, as well.

DR. KING:

Okay, Kirk?

MR. SHOWALTER:

I would also recommend that they have a plan to not have communications at all available. I was -- a number of years ago a new registrar in Stafford County had a special election in August, and I was up there consulting because they were a new election, and one of the largest earthquakes to hit Virginia hit that day. Communications were out because the cell phone towers were flooded, and the only communications available were landlines and not all the polling places had landlines. So, to have a plan in place is good, but it's even better to have that plan in the hands of the election officers, because every one of them did flawlessly. They did exactly what they should have; they rolled the machines out in the parking lot and kept on going. But that was because the registrar up there had communicated that plan to them. We've had polling places where you couldn't get to them because there were a couple of floods. The election officers knew what to do; they had selected an alternative. And, in those cases, we didn't have communications with them because they had landlines in those polling places, and of course, being flooded out, the landline was also flooded out. So, there will be times when you cannot reach your polling places and you have to rely on the citizens. I won't say that they're employees of the localities, because they aren't. They're ordinary plain, you know, Joe Blow, and Sherry Shalee coming in off the streets and working that one day, maybe once,

twice a year. But nonetheless, having a written plan that they can then flip open their notebooks and access what do I do now is of utmost importance.

DR. KING:

Okay. One of the things that comes up in every major election cycle is the challenge of explaining the difference between unofficial results and official results to media and other stakeholders, and particularly, now that a large number of states, since the last two Presidential cycles, have implemented Election Night reporting system, so that there is, not only, ready access to unofficial results, but in many cases the media themselves are tapped into the state's Election Night reporting system and are utilizing that data.

And so, what I'd like to throw out really to the group is your insights and advice on how to explain the -- that sequence of canvassing, reporting the official results, counting for provisional ballots, all of the things that occur in that week after the election, because I know many of you will be speaking to civic groups, you'll be speaking to universities about the issue. So, what are some pieces of advice that you can give your colleagues about how to make this clear that what we have on Election Night is unofficial results and what that means? So, let me, if I can, let me start with Secretary Cortés.

SECRETARY CORTÉS:

Yes, so, certainly for me it comes back to clear, concise, continuous communication with all your stakeholders, which include media, the advocacy groups, and the public in general, and doing so, for me as a state administrator in conjunction with my county partners. And what that means is, for example, we don't have a whole lot of issues with people not understanding that the Election Night results are not the official results, because at every opportunity we say that. And so, we are heavy on communications. In our department, the Office of Communications and Press, you know, the, probably, center of everything we do, because you can do a lot of good work, but if those that you're serving don't realize what you're doing, that creates the opportunity for just simply just ideas and misconceptions.

So, the confusion comes, for the most part, like, is like we just had our Gubernatorial race last year, and the polls closed at eight o'clock at night, and media is calling the winner of the election at 8:03. And the folks are saying, how can you count, you know, so many millions of votes in three minutes? No, we can't. And that's because you have the exit polls and what have you. So, you have to make it a point, we do a good number of op-ed pieces. We do -- and we do -- so not just coming from me, but from the counties, and try to bombard everyone with understanding sort of the sequence,

as you well noted, of what is happening. And in the end I think folks get it. But, when it gets to a heavily contested election, if you're that battleground state that is under a microscope and things seem to be close, that's when you have to be on top of your game. For example, we plan, particularly, for Presidential election years, that, in addition to everything we do pre election, on Election Day we already have prescheduled press conferences that I would do. As soon as the poll closes at eight, I'm getting in front of the microphone and I'm almost doing a play by play description of what's happening, and my hope is that I get by 11 o'clock that everybody is so bored because there's really no big news, other than the fact that things have worked out well administratively, that it dies down.

[Laughter]

SECRETARY CORTÉS:

And then, from there it's just making sure that on your Website -- we make it a point to tell everyone we are, ultimately, the Department of State, the final and official repository of the results. So, if you want to get what's really happening, come directly straight to the horse's mouth, get it from us, and we have every opportunity to make sure that we clarify these are, you know, our own certified results. And we go as far as even telling what are the steps and what happens in the coming days, in terms of the

canvass. So, for us it's communications, communications and more communication.

DR. KING:

Yes, Brian?

MR. CORLEY:

I use an analogy, it can be summed up in one word, Thanksgiving. When I talk to groups, you know, I use the analogy, when you're at Thanksgiving the turkey is on the table, it's not done. Of course, you have to eat the turkey, then you have the leftovers to cleanup, dessert, and of course, the nap goes with it. Election Day is lot like that. I use that analogy to highlight we still have provisional ballots, you know. We had an old software system that when our -- it would say "Absentees reported." But the problem with that was, it was misleading, and I didn't want to shout it to the world at the time, in my county, but under Florida law, you can return your vote by mail ballot, in person, up until seven p.m. right before the polls close. And, for example, in Miami-Dade in 2012, they had 65,000 ballots returned up until seven p.m., upwards of eight to ten pages per ballot. That's a lot of ballots to tabulate. And so, now the new system we use it doesn't show "absentees reported" until that late run, and obviously, we don't get as many, we'll get a few thousand. But I had reporters calling me saying, "All those years the absentees were. What's your problem?" And I explained to them

all those years they weren't in, you just didn't know it and now you do. So, as Secretary Cortés said, communication is so important that you relay that it's simply not over. It's important that our men and women in the military overseas their ballots get counted. And once you relay the communication and education, they -- the voters get it and the stakeholders get it. So, it's simply important as communicating.

DR. KING:

Secretary Williams, and then, Secretary Pate.

SECRETARY WILLIAMS:

I want to follow up on those excellent comments. And when you talk about setting the expectations, letting folks know, particularly in the media, and we would send out a media schedule that says, this is when the first results are going to be posted, this is when the next batch are going to be posted, so that they know what to do. And a lot of times, if you know when something is going to happen, you're less annoyed by the wait than the uncertainty. And so, I know Denver and other jurisdictions do that as well, where they say, this is the time schedule we're going to be reporting results. And because Colorado is 95 percent vote by mail, now, we'll have a lot of results that we're able to report shortly after the polls close, but we also have a lot of ballots to process. And I think part of the setting the expectations, to follow up a little bit on what Brian was

saying, explaining who these people are and why you aren't going to have them. We know it takes time for mail to come back from Afghanistan, and so, we're going to -- we can't count all the military ballots until eight days after the election. Oh, wow. Once you realize that some of those ballots don't come back until eight days after the election, you start realizing, "Oh, well, now I understand why you can't have final results." We have, in Colorado, an important step of the integrity process is we check the signatures of the mail ballots. Well, if your signature doesn't match, we send you a letter and you have until eight days after the election to make it good. So explaining it, but you can't do it on Election Night. You have to talk to the political reporters, the people who are going to be reporting the news and let them know ahead of time what's coming, so that they're aware of those issues and they're comfortable with it long before they're in the phonetic reporting, because they're trying to figure out how to do their stories, and if you're trying to explain the nuances of provisional ballots and signature verifications and everything else, they're not going to be able to handle it on Election Night. You need to tell people ahead of time.

And the other unique prong we have in a vote by mail jurisdiction, many of you have reporting software that says a hundred percent -- it gives you the percent of precincts reported.

Well, when you have mail ballots, we've got a mail ballot from every jurisdiction right away, and so, that first result has a hundred percent of the precincts reporting.

[Laughter]

SECRETARY WILLIAMS:

And so, we have to clarify what that actually means so they understand, just because we got one ballot from that precinct does not mean that all ballots have been received from it, and actually taking that off so that somewhat misleading bit of information isn't out there.

DR. KING:

Yeah, very good. Secretary Pate?

SECRETARY PATE:

I think it's been communicated pretty clearly here, it is about communication, but it's also about there are several audiences here. There's the general public who I give more credit to than I do the media, because I think they are a little more patient and understanding. We'd rather you not hurry but we want you to get it right, that's what they want. But with the media putting the pressure on us now, now, now, now, and they have a habit of doing exit polls and they have a habit of doing their own sourcing, if you will, of this and then it comes back to us and saying, "Well CBS" -- I'm not picking on CBS folks, whatever station, "is reporting" so and

so “won in Iowa.” I can’t comment on that because we don’t have all the numbers in. I don’t know how they -- so that’s why someone joked earlier about, frankly, these elections officials want it to win by a landslide. We don’t want close elections because those are the ones that will take, as Wayne has mentioned, a week, sometimes more, by the time we’ve canvassed, got all of the ballots in and done our due diligence, to come out with the results. We’re working with our 99 county auditors who service the local side and they’re sending their election results to us. We, then, are recording it, of course. But it’s not the end of the day. We’re going to work harder this year, because this being a Presidential year, to try and set reasonable levels of expectations for the media. The local media are pretty receptive to that. They listen. It’s the visiting media who don’t. The visiting media pop in the week before the caucuses, or a week before an election, and don’t take the time, perhaps, to learn all the nuances of it. So, those are the ones we have to constantly remind them of. And Pedro, I’d love to try to do an hour-by-hour press conference, but I don’t think they’d show up for the first one.

[Laughter]

SECRETARY PATE:

They’ve already done their exit poll.

SECRETARY CORTÉS:

That's right.

DR. KING:

Sandra.

MS. JUNO:

One of the things that we stress in Brown County is that we have our poll workers make sure once they're done -- when people are done voting is to do some balancing to check, you know, how many voter numbers were issued, how many ballots were cast, you know, off of the machine. And we want to makes sure those numbers match, and so, when you look at that tabulated tape, does that line up with that. So, if we're getting that we're pretty confident that, you know, the processes have worked. What changes those things in Wisconsin is we accept absentee ballots, and we'll have provisional ballots that can be rectified up until the Friday following an election. So, that's where some of the changes might occur. And since this is the first time we'll be having photo ID in Wisconsin, we're anticipating there could be more provisional ballots cast. So, if there's a close contests, those could be affected by those absentee or provisional ballots.

But when I talk to the media -- you know, I think we have a pretty good relationship in the Green Bay area -- what they always strive most is they just want transparency. They just want to know what's going on, you know. If we have one place that hasn't sent

us our data, you know, did they close up and go home before they sent it to us, or is there something really going wrong there, you know, are there lines of voters waiting to vote yet. So that kind of information that we can relay to them is really helpful on what they need to do in their job on Election Night.

DR. KING:

Okay. And if I can follow up, Sandra, in terms of strategies for accomplishing that, the old school was press releases hoping the media will pick up that information, pass it onto voters. Are you seeing, either in your jurisdiction or among your colleagues, the use of social media or other technology tools, to not only push that information out, but also, to create a conduit back for inquiries into your office or to a state office?

MS. JUNO:

Brown County hasn't gotten on the social media bandwagon but that is one of our goals for this year. The state has -- is using Facebook and Twitter and what we would like to do is incorporate that with us. The local media know where -- who to come to to get information from us, but sometimes just taking that initiative to notify them of things going on I think would be helpful for both sides.

DR. KING:

Um-hum, Matt?

MR. DAMSCHRODER:

Merle, one of the interesting things I think that election officials are starting to see in this -- in the social media age, where there's no longer the traditional filter, if you will, of the media, voters and individuals can interact directly with the election official and the election official can interact directly with them through all kinds of different forms of media. And I think one of the challenges -- so I think one of the great things about that is there is that direct line of communication. One of the challenges that can arise is because a lot of those traditional barriers to communication that have been broken down is there can be situations where there is confusion. So, you know, when you have states, I think like all of us, where you have very county centric operations, and then, precincts within those -- in those counties, when people start seeing on Twitter or Facebook that, you know, my hours for voting are "X" and "Y" and somebody says, "Well, I saw it on Facebook. Why can't I vote on that same weekend?" Or that, you know, there was a problem over here, so there must be a problem statewide, and maybe even like, maybe happened in Ohio in 2015, you know, some of those tweets start showing up in a litigation on Election Night polls open as you know -- and I'm not an attorney. I don't know whether that's clear and convincing evidence, a tweet or not...

[Laughter]

MR. DAMSCHRODER:

...but it's part of that new mix I think underscores that election officials, you know, have a much greater duty now to interact directly with the public and to provide clear information. I think it's incumbent on the public then to, you know, use the opportunity that they have to get more information from the relevant sources, the original sources as they make decisions.

DR. KING:

Matt, do you see a responsibility on the part of election officials to monitor social media, even if they are not users themselves, but to monitor it in a constructive way to identify either misinformation or incomplete information?

MR. DAMSCHRODER:

I think there is, and I think the challenge becomes, you know, sorting through, you know, what is the user who's just trolling you as opposed to what is a real issue that has to be addressed, and how do you communicate that information. You know, there are a number of jurisdictions, going back to the last Presidential election across the country, have done a really good job of, you know, where a voter can report a particular problem and the election official can use that same medium to get right back to the person to say, you know, "This is the form of identification that's acceptable." Or, you know, I think of some early voting opportunities in Georgia

where, you know, you can go online and say, "The line at this early voting site is shorter than the one down the street." So I can -- you know as the voter I can shift, you know, where I'm going to go. Not every state in the jurisdiction have all those same kinds of flexibilities depending on their laws, but I think there is a duty, an opportunity for election officials to use those tools constructively to help voters.

DR. KING:

Luanne?

MS. CUTLER:

I might just thrown in there, in addition to what Matt said, as far as monitoring social media, Washoe County is fortunate to have a very good county communication team and they do monitor, you know, tweets and Facebook, and so on, for us, as we're sort of busy conducting an election that day. But they share with us anything that they think is relevant that we do need to address and get out in the press immediately. So, it's going to become more and more important.

DR. KING:

It's an expectation.

MS. CUTLER:

It is an expectation, yes.

DR. KING:

Very good. Secretary Williams.

SECRETARY WILLIAMS:

Well, and the other part is to actually use that proactively, you know. In swing states like we are, that are here, there are people who are election activists from both sides who are going to be out monitoring every single polling place, or at least, many of them, responding to the results from the campaign worker of something bad is happening here, and so, establishing a communication plan and having someone they can communicate with quickly. And so, we have used text messages as a way to do that because they're a lot quicker than a phone call, you can look at them quickly, and you can tell the person who texts you whether they're from True the Voter Common Cause, "Hey, we'll look at that, we'll get back to you" and then, you get back to them and that makes you aware of the issue. Because every election jurisdiction depends upon wonderful people who give a few of their days to serve as election judges but they haven't dealt with everything. They're not aware of everything. And instead of viewing these activists and others as the enemy, using them as your allies to gain information from them, so they get in the habit of contacting you before they call a press conference saying "Disaster in this jurisdiction" when all it was was they were changing the paper cartridge, it took ten minutes. And so, a lot of times that's what the text back is, "Hey, the judges are

changing the paper cartridge, it will be back up in ten minutes. They'll be fine, don't get overly alarmed, but if you hear of something that's still going on, let me know." And so, developing that relationship, not just with the traditional media, but anybody can set up a blog now, anybody can post to Facebook, they can tweet, and so, having a process of responding I think is critical for election officials, because I go back to what I said near the beginning, which is that it really is the confidence in the system that matters as much as the actual competence of the system.

SECRETARY CORTÉS:

Merle, if I may...

DR. KING:

Yes.

SECRETARY CORTÉS:

...the same, you know. I'm always of the mindset to be proactive as opposed to reactive, to speak specifically to what Secretary Williams just noted. But I will tell you, just going back to the question of social media, the Department of State in Pennsylvania, we feel that social media is so important, we're in the process of hiring a Digital Director. And in fact, it's not just being done for the Department of State. We're going to have the -- the Governor's Office has a plan to have Digital Directors in each of the cabinet positions, or in each of the agencies that under the Governor's

jurisdiction. And we rely so heavily on social media when we launch online voter registration because we did not have a budget to advertise, paid advertisement for the new solution, and we ended up using word of mouth, mostly tweets and Facebook, and we had on National Voter Registration Day a twitter town hall, and we saw the largest increase of use on that new application on that day. So, we're big and we are communicating on real time, not only so that we can communicate our message, but we also want to hear what's going out there that people are concerned about, so that we can very quickly address it. So, for us it's the way to go. Plus, we're big on transparency, and in this digital age, whether you like it or not, that's the way it's got to be.

DR. KING:

Okay good. I want to ask a question, now, of the group about something that I really think has changed, in certainly the past two election cycles, and that is the activities of third party voter registration in Presidential years. And we know there's certainly a well founded practice of recruiting new voters in. If you can't persuade old voters to change their allegiance, then bring in new voters. But third party voter registrations are almost always accompanied with complexity in validating the electors' list, and then, the worst scenario, which is the frustration of the voter who believes they're registered and finds out that they're not. But in the

eight years over the last two cycles the advent of online voter registration may change that dynamic some. So, what I'd like to do is get your insights and perhaps advice to your colleagues about how to better facilitate voter registration, third party registration working with groups that are going to launch third party voter registrations with or without the help of the registrars in the state. So, let me put that question out and get your insights into that.

MR. DEZMELYK:

Well, we have same-day voter registration, which kind of fits within our philosophy of sort of a customer service or a voter service oriented approach to elections, in that pretty much if you want to vote you're going to vote, assuming of course you're qualified to vote. But basically, you show up Election Day you can register on the spot. Now – so, we see less activity from third party groups other than people encouraging people to do that, right, because there's not -- there's a slight benefit maybe of going ahead of time to your town clerk, so you not going to have to wait in line. But the simplest thing to do is, say, go to the polls and register. So, we make a very big effort in our town to move that process along, to help people do that. We -- as soon as you come in the door on our polling place somebody is going to greet you, maybe a high school volunteer, but somebody is going to say, "Hi," you know, "are you registered to vote? If you're not go over here, you'll need this" and

kind of guide people through it. And we just -- we do that as fast as we can. We, sometimes, get a little bit of a backlog, but if you just work hard at it and move the people through, that works.

DR. KING:

Secretary Cortés.

SECRETARY CORTÉS:

Yeah, for us, you know, one of the biggest frustrations that any voter registration administrator faces is when someone calls you -- calls you and says, "How come you're not letting me register? Where is my application because I gave it to," such and such "at the supermarket and I'm sure he turned it in or she turned it in."

DR. KING:

Um-hum.

SECRETARY CORTÉS:

And what kind of answer can you provide to that? I don't know whether that person in fact turned it in or not. You may have even put it in the mail and I'm not sure, despite, you know, the mail rule that assumes that the application gets there, you don't know if it gets there. And it's frustrating for the voter who thinks that we're doing something unbecoming to keep them from voting, and it's frustrating for us because we don't have full control of that application going through third hands. That's where one of the biggest benefits of online voter registration. And as I was

implementing, and Pennsylvania is very conservative when it comes to change, that's one of the selling points that we use; you cut the middle person -- and I'm going to speak very briefly about the third party -- but the online voter registration gives you that opportunity to have that direct contact, and then, you can track it, because, at least in Pennsylvania, when you submit your registration it's not automatic because it still has to be reviewed by the county, but at least you can track it afterwards.

But what we do with the third party voter groups, which I have a very important role to play, is to bring them to the table. I have an elections stakeholder meeting that includes everyone from the League to Common Cause and all the other groups that do third party and we work closely with them to provide them as much information as possible. So, we see them as partners. We try to anticipate the questions. And -- but the new tool of online voter registration is helping us immensely.

The other thing that we just did is that for the voter registration mail application, the actual paper application, we work with the Center for Civic Design to make sure that we look at the form and we modify that form in a way that is very intuitive to try to avoid the errors. But, you know, third party groups you have to work with them from the early, from the get-go, and treat them as a

partner as opposed to some group that you don't want to deal with because they're going to be there whether you like it or not.

SECRETARY PATE:

Merle, if I could add?

DR. KING:

Yes sir.

SECRETARY PATE:

I sympathize, you're trying to come of age and convince some of your colleagues to let you have some of the tools. I remember the days when I served in this position before and dealing with third party voter registration efforts, people calling you and being frustrated. I think with same-day voter registration, and now, with online voter registration, it takes a lot of that out. And frankly, I think the third party voter registration groups are going to have to probably retool a little bit and figure out how they fit into this.

We've offered an online voter registration toolkit through something we've partnered up with the National Association of Secretaries of State to promote voter registration. So, it's out there for the groups who want to do it. They need to know how to do it, what the laws are, how the procedures are. But with -- as Wayne mentioned with, now, online voter registration, you take the iPad, and they can still do it, but they need to work through that mechanism. And we're getting better records from that and that's

really the key to it. And people know they got registered because our local county auditors are going to have them get their voter registration card within a week, they're getting an instant e-mail response back that they registered, so there's a verification. So, I think that helps.

SECRETARY CORTÉS:

And if I may, and not to be disagreeable, but I'm actually -- we're seeing exactly the same thing. I'm not saying that I have online voter registration, and then, for the third party groups, I'm just telling them, use paper. No, absolutely not.

SECRETARY PATE:

Right, yes.

SECRETARY CORTÉS:

When I say bringing them and being part of the stakeholders, some of the -- when we developed the application, they were at the table giving us input, because we know that they're a driving force behind those registrations. So, therefore, the idea is, as you well point out, Paul, it's to actually have them understand the benefits for everybody...

SECRETARY PATE:

Sure.

SECRETARY CORTÉS:

...of the new tool and then encourage them to use the tool – well, you may still print paper applications -- and have them use it. So, you're absolutely right. So, we're saying the same thing, work through those groups because they're not going to go anywhere, but understand do so through the tools that we're putting together because in the end it helps everybody.

DR. KING:

Yes ma'am.

MS. SHOWALTER:

Third party registration was a big problem in Virginia in the past. The condition of the applications that we would receive from some of these groups were very proportionately the rejection rate was very high. So, Virginia took a number of steps. The first of the steps was if you want to get voter registration applications from the State Board of Elections or a local election office, and you wanted more than 25, you had to go through a mandatory training program. And that has proved very effective now in getting the information to the people who are going to be conducting the drive and making them aware of the importance of getting complete information. That isn't to say that some groups simply print off the applications themselves and circumvent it that way, but it has become actually more and more people are calling in for this training, combining that with Virginia's online voter registration system that is one of the

most wonderful steps for the local administrator that Virginia has implemented in recent memories. It has made it much more convenient for the voter. It allows us to just let the voter know that it's there, and if they've moved all they have to do is go on and update their voter registration. So, we are seeing a greater and greater number of sources of voter registration from that source than paper applications.

And the third part of it is, as others have mentioned, we are letting the third party groups know that all they have to do is take the iPad around and most importantly look up that person's current voter registration to see if in fact it has to be updated at all, because one of the things we see is two, three, four and five applications from the same individual at the same address during these pushes. So, you know, online voter registration is really beneficial in that way. And Virginia is even expanding it now onto online absentee ballot applications. So, it's use of technology and my hats off to the State Board of Elections for that push.

DR. KING:

I am -- one last question -- oh I'm sorry, Sandra go ahead.

MS. JUNO:

I just wanted to add that a lot of times some of these third parties are associated with the political parties and those types of forms or information are coming down at the national level which may not

necessarily apply to some of the things done at the state level. So that creates a lot of confusion and you get a paper trail of things going in a circular motion before they land where they're supposed to land.

But in Wisconsin there is no required class or training that's done, so anybody can virtually be a third party to take voter registrations. And like you had mentioned Kirk, you do get people who are already registered that just re-register again when there's no reason that they would have to. So...

DR. KING:

I know we meet with local Boards of Elections which have both parties represented and remind them that if you're aware of a third party voter registration drive be proactive; contact the group, ask to see the form, see that the form is completed properly that will actually result in a registered voter and not be passive about it.

All right, I have one more question, and then, we're going to start with our kind of wrap-up portion where I'm going to be asking you to kind of bring your thoughts together today, and particularly, the advice that you would give your colleagues in election administration as they begin to prepare.

But the question before we get to that point is, do you anticipate any specific voter education initiatives in your jurisdiction? Are there things that are changing that require a more

concentrated effort to communicate to voters, changes in procedures, changes in the availability of online voter registration, changes in voting systems, where, when they go into the polling place they're going to see a different technology, changes in voting locations, vote-by-mail, all these things that because we're immersed in it we don't really see the change on a grand scale, but because the voter is in this elliptical orbit sometimes, particularly Presidential elections, they may not have voted in four years. So, what are the things that you are seeing in your jurisdiction as special voter initiatives? And, is there any particular strategies that are changing this time around, either with social media or other approaches to get the message out to the voters that, first, we want you to vote, but here's the process this time and it may be different than last time. So, let me throw that question out. I'll start with Brian.

MR. CORLEY:

We just recently, my colleagues and I, did a big push, initiative, if you will, sending out letters to those who regularly vote by mail encouraging them to update their signature because of how important that signature is when it comes back for the integrity of the process. And through social media it was picked up by a state-based reporter in Iran in a major newspaper. So that's -- using social media is key.

But I would submit, you know, the greatest form of flattery is imitation. I'm not above stealing ideas from other elections officials, both in Florida and around the country, but be creative. I'll give you an example, it can't hurt to ask. We got with our particular county and they went ahead and produced, through a local university, a PSA spot, and got with our cable provider that runs in our particular county countywide and they ran it as a public -- a true public service. It cost us absolutely nothing other than my time, realizing how can we reach voters most effectively. Our library is a very popular avenue for citizens to use. We came up with a little loop, a little three to four minute loop of everything you'd want to know in a snapshot of voting and it played, I feel bad for the librarians, but it played continuously throughout...

[Laughter]

MR. CORLEY:

...the day because my mug was on it. So that's almost cruel. Utility bill inserts, you know, reaching out to your voters and citizens letting them know, "Hey register if you're not registered and if you are here's what you need to know." So making voters know about their options. And, you know, Florida is sometimes referred to as God's waiting room. We have an elderly population, God love them, so reaching out to senior assisted living centers letting them

know that they have options of getting a vote by mail ballot or under the law bringing the polling place to them for example.

But then, social media has just become -- if you're not utilizing social media -- we go so far as when somebody requests a vote-by-mail ballot and we have an e-mail for them, we e-mail them a quick, little three minute tutorial of how to vote by mail letting them know the process so they do it right and send it back the right way. And just utilizing social media, it's not uncommon for reporters to, around election time, and this is one of the great paradigms that frustrates me, and I think we all share this, if it's not around election time, you could save, you know, 20 people from a burning building and local reporters wouldn't really want to cover the story. When it's election time, you'd better make time for them because they have to get a very quick story. But the media will oftentimes use quotes from Twitter, for example, and that's how you can control your message. And that's just another way to get the message out.

So, again, be creative and don't be afraid to steal and just make -- if you steal it you give the person credit or at least give them a courtesy call. That's what I do.

DR. KING:

Luanne?

MS. CUTLER:

Sure, along with Brian, we're not afraid to steal either because, you know, once the wheel is invented there's no point in doing anything other than simply improving it as you go along. I think one of the great ideas that came out of our 2012 election cycle was put together, again, by our communication team. But they did a PSA with our regional transportation commission who runs the buses and so on in the community and they put together the free bus ride on Election Day along with some of the football stars from the university there and did a PSA to kind of get to not only the younger people at the university but also the demographic of people who ride the bus regularly because typically those are the harder people to reach. The typical, you know, network news stations, our Websites and so on, those things may not be accessed by the demographic that needs the most information. So that particular PSA, I felt, like struck a real cord and it addressed a couple areas of need.

I wanted to say one thing real quickly regarding our last topic about the drive, the third party drive groups. One of the groups that has recently come to Reno has targeted high school students and they went to all the high schools in the community and brought us hundreds and hundreds of applications from high school students, which is a terrific thing. We're thrilled about that. But not a single one of them had the student's ID number on the application. And I

think we all know that if you correspond, you know, through traditional mail, and so on, with a high school student, they're probably not going to respond. So, unfortunately most of these kids whose first experience with elections would be coming up are going to show up and they're not going to be able to vote. So, it is critical that we find these new ways to reach the younger demographic because they're the leaders of tomorrow, of course. But that's all. I just wanted to add that about the third party registration. It's so important, even though we train them, it's so important that they understand the value of getting a complete application.

DR. KING:

Excellent point. Secretary Williams?

SECRETARY WILLIAMS:

As part of that, it's important to recognize not everyone may get their news and information the same way the 50 year old election administrator does, and so, we have to adjust how people actually get their news. I mean, we've got, you know, some of our counties for example that put, you know, short little videos up on the Website that talk about how to do something. Yes, you could explain it in writing and they might read it, but there are a lot of people who would click and watch the video, as long as it's a short one...

DR. KING:

Yeah.

SECRETARY WILLIAMS:

...that wouldn't read the writing. And so, I think that's part of what you have to do.

One of the special communications challenges we have with shifting to everybody being mailed a ballot, we have to make sure that people keep their address updated, because we're going to mail that ballot and the post office isn't going to forward it to a different address. And so, Colorado has a very large mobile population. And so, we are not the waiting room that you are, Brian, but we might be the place they come just after they graduate from college. And so, they move every few months it seems like or, you know -- if I look at my kids, I can't memorize my kids' addresses because they move so frequently.

[Laughter]

SECRETARY WILLIAMS:

And so, as voters, we need to make sure that we're able to reach folks and say, "Hey, you need to update your address." That's true whether you're a traditional polling place so that you're not winding up having to have a lot of provisional ballots and it's certainly true in a mail ballot election, because they'll be sitting there going, "How come you didn't mail my ballot?" And of course, the response from someone will be, "You're suppressing my vote because you didn't send my ballot to me" and then you're going to have that long

winded explanation that, well, you moved and you didn't change your address and here's why. And so, we need to get that word out, and get it out in ways that people will actually pay attention to.

DR. KING:

Okay, thank you, Secretary Pate, and then Sandra.

SECRETARY PATE:

These are all excellent suggestions. I think they all have to be personalized to your jurisdictions based on the challenges you face. All politics is local and I think working with the counties, in our case, is really – is going to be successful because most the time people just get a little confused about where do I go vote at? What is the site?

DR. KING:

Um-hum.

SECRETARY PATE:

Because, you know, we have this thing where we move them around, you know, between a school board election year and the next election time.

[Laughter]

SECRETARY PATE:

So -- and people get a little confused. So there's part of that. But we've seen our counties who have stepped up and have put online messages out there, they do mailings, they do what they can with

the resources they have. But, frankly, we're all talking about the Presidential year, and I respect that, but it's the next election is the one that I guess I get a little more concerned about because we've had such low voter participation. When you start talking about school board elections and municipal elections when we see people only voting at three percent and seven percent, there's a problem. And we, as election specialists, need to get more active in that, as well. So, that's part of the public awareness, too.

DR. KING:

Okay, thank you, Sandra.

MS. JUNO:

Wisconsin is going to have a big challenge this year because this will be the first year that we'll be requiring photo ID for everyone who comes to vote. The good thing is we have four elections, three of them that will take place before the Presidential election. So, our goal will be to try and get as many people informed about that requirement early on.

We're working with a local celebrity to do some creative PSAs, something light and humorous, hopefully in an attempt that they'll pay attention and possibly remember what the message is. A few years back when we thought we were doing photo ID, one of the counties in Wisconsin had done a spoof on Star Wars. It was absolutely hilarious, and it got passed around the state because it

was different, it was clever. So, just kind of using those types of tools to tap into that population that might otherwise not listen to what you're saying is one of the tools we'll be using.

DR. KING:

That's great. Well, those are all great observations and great suggestions.

We're now in the last 30 minutes of our roundtable and this is the time where we like to make sure that each of the participants gets an opportunity to summarize their thoughts, kind of identify, what are the primary issues here, and give advice to your colleagues, if you were to identify maybe the small handful of things that you'll be focusing on and you encourage your colleagues to focus on, or what you feel were the most salient points that you heard today or, as Luanne did, maybe come back and touch on another point again that you mulled over for awhile.

So, what I'd like to do now is start with Robert and take a couple of minutes, two or three minutes, and then, we're going to roll back around, finish with Secretary Williams, and then, Commissioner McCormick will have the last word as appropriate.

So, Robert?

MR. DEZMELYK:

Well, thank you Merle. I think, for me, it's been fascinating today to hear a broad range of ideas and perspectives from election officials

at all levels; people, of course, running much larger organizations from the top, sort of a management level, but also seeing how that applies down at, I'll say, the retail level where I'm normally at. And I think, to me, the one thing which I think is most beneficial to carry throughout the system is the focus on the voter, in that, whether it's communications outreach, whether it's simplifying the voter registration process, for me, it all boils down to one thing. When you come into our town hall to vote, we're there to be friendly, positive and, assuming you're qualified, you're going to vote. We're there to solve problems, not create problems. So, part of it's our structure in New Hampshire. Part of it's the way we work in our particular town hall, and many town halls across the state are the same way. We have a system that's designed to solve problems. The reason we have same-day registration is because it doesn't matter if your form got fouled up, the clerk lost it, whatever happened, you can register. And there's no limitation. If you show up and you think you were registered to vote and you're not, no big deal. We'll fill the paperwork. If you came to register to vote and you left your license at home, we can solve that problem. And we can solve pretty much any problem the voter has, of course assuming they are qualified to vote. So, we have a system designed that works with the voters. We have a goal to have very short lines and we do what it takes to make the process smooth,

efficient, and pleasant for the people there. We have a bipartisan group of people working together on the election side and that defuses a lot of the kind of tension. We have campaign observers, lawyers, and so on, at our polling place frequently. I am sure for this Presidential election I'll have lawyers from both parties present. But we find ways to work in an open, positive way with everyone, so at the end of the day everybody goes home with a smile on their face and they're not feeling that they were butting heads all day. And the voters feel like they got their vote and they know their vote counted. They got a chance to vote and their vote was counted. If they wanted to stand and watch it be counted they can.

So, I guess my thoughts or the things I would share is the fundamental most important person in that whole process is the voter. And what we need to do is just focus our people from whatever level, on what it takes to work the process so the voter can successfully vote, and they're confident in the results.

DR. KING:

Okay, thank you Robert. Matt?

MR. DAMSCHRODER:

I guess two thoughts in closing. And one, the first kind of goes back to a conversation we were having earlier about Election Night results being unofficial, and kind of that post-election period where there's still Thanksgiving dinner to clean up and those kind of

things, which is a great metaphor. And I think one of the -- so one of the things that I wonder about as we go into this year is with what we saw in terms of polling in Great Britain and polling in Canada, whether or not we'll see a return to the primacy of election results as the actual predictor of what happened on Election Day, and that that will be, you know, the real authority at the close of polls because -- either because of non-response bias or, you know, the advent of cell phones or the ubiquity of cell phones, you know, and the challenges that that poses to pollsters, you know. There just might not be that quick rush to judgment at the close of polls as we go from east to west this November, you know. I think back to 2012 in Ohio, where it was actually reversed and a national pundit was saying, "Wait, we can't call Ohio yet because their election results are all -- are notoriously late." And it was like, "No, we're at 80 percent and it's ten o'clock and it's, essentially, we know who has won based on the margin." And so, I think that will be an interesting thing, whereas, we've kind of had a period of a number of years where the expert analysis was the estimated election result and I think we might have a period now where the expert result is the actual result.

And then, so I think the sum up for me as we go into '16 is that one of the things that I think has changed the most over the last 12 years, maybe more, is we've moved from Election Day to an

election period; not only that post-election period, but also, for all of the states, I think almost all of us here have some type of early voting or no-fault absentee, and so, the challenge that poses to elections officials for whom a very wise man once told me, the only thing you can't get more of is time, you know, that lops a month off of your preparation. So, whatever you normally were doing at the end of September you need to now be normally doing at the end of August, as an election official, because that, you know, Election Day in Ohio is the day after the close of registration, the 29th day before the election. So that -- all of that creates a number of challenges for election officials, that if they start working now, which all of us across the country are, preparing for that can be something that's easily managed.

And, you know, the thing I always remind folks, and it's probably mostly election officials here, or watching online, is make sure you thank your poll worker on Election Day, because they're the ones at the end of the day who are actually making this process work.

DR. KING:

Okay, thank you Matt, very thoughtful. Luanne?

MS. CUTLER:

Excellent point by the way. Without the poll workers none of us would even have a job to do. They're the most important people in

the line of fire on the first lines and they're the ones who have to deal with the activists, the observers, the lawyers from the other states that come in to observe. The voters and the poll workers are the two groups of people that I personally feel the most responsible for. I want to protect them from overzealous activity happening in the polling place, and in order to do that, it's all about that communication that we've been talking about all afternoon. Try to communicate, do the best that we can, reach out to the parties, reach out to the groups, make sure that they know our laws ahead of time before they come to our state and observe, make sure that we are prepared well in advance. If there's any advice to give to other election officials, be prepared in advance. That's critical. Make sure your maintenance is on schedule and continues on even a better track than you might normally do maintenance.

And I'd like to also throw in a little, like I had mentioned to you earlier, Merle, I like to stand on my chair and yell "Yeah, early voting." In Nevada, we have two full weeks of early voting which gives you that opportunity that if a voter does have an issue when they come in to the polling place to vote, you still have time to make that right for that voter. You can correct whatever the issue is so that you're not up against, for us, seven p.m. on Election Night, and you don't have a way to let that voter cast his ballot. So, early voting is a good thing in many ways, and I encourage all of you to

push that, maybe, with your legislators, in your next legislative session. People love the convenience. We have more people turnout for early voting than Election Day.

And, in summary, I would like to say that 2016 is definitely going to be a year for the history books. We want all of our voters in the polling places. No matter how many get registered, that isn't really the important point, it's how many show up to vote on Election Day that really matter. So, we need to try to push for that as much as we can.

DR. KING:

Thank you Luanne, Secretary Cortés?

SECRETARY CORTÉS:

I was going to make it simple. I was going to say ditto to Luanne and to Matt and Robert...

[Laughter]

SECRETARY CORTÉS:

...because they have very nicely summarized. For me, I'm thinking about three things to keep in mind and the takeaways in what I'm anticipating doing over the course of the next several months working very closely with the counties, the local officials is going to be, first, transparency, you know. There's going to be plenty of that. You have to, whether it's technology or otherwise, you're going to be -- almost anything you do, people are going to find out,

and you might as well get ahead of that and just be very transparent. And again, I cannot emphasize enough about communications.

Preparation, to which Luanne alluded, as well, again, if we go back to the initial conversation about voting systems; the inspection, the maintenance, the repairs, if needed, of the legacy systems, and you have that backup plan to make sure that contingency plan so that if you -- if there's anything that goes wrong -- my approach, and I think Secretary Pate said the same, I wish for the best, but I prepare for the worst. And that's the mindset that we have, so that, preparation.

And finally, consistency and uniformity as much as possible, understanding we have in Pennsylvania 67 different counties and 67 different cultures, but when it comes to certain elements of the administration of elections, it's fairly standard whether it's what constitutes a vote, or what are the appropriate steps if you need to use emergency ballots, what happens if somebody needs to use and access a provisional ballot. In the end, I wholeheartedly agree with Robert, it's about the voter. And I certainly protect my staff, but it's about the voter, and making sure that experience is positive, because to the extent that that's the case, if the voters have a good experience, if you're being transparent and you have collaborated with the media and others, including the parties, the hope -- and

you pray for large margins, is the day after the election the news is about how well the election was run, as opposed to, you know, the people contesting the results and stuff.

DR. KING:

Okay, thank you, Brian?

MR. CORLEY:

I'm probably going to sound redundant, but I want to echo the unsung heroes of elections known as poll workers. You're absolutely right, thanks for bringing that up Luanne, for the life of me, I sometimes can't fathom logically why someone would want to be a poll worker if you think about it...

[Laughter]

MR. CORLEY:

...what we put them through, the hours, you know. I often say, in my jurisdiction, you know, we have great volunteers and someone will say, "Well, you pay them." Well, if you -- what we -- the training, what they go through, they don't get paid nearly enough, I assure you. But inversely, someone once told me that there's a group of people known as poll workers for whom we put our political and professional lives on the line, because if a poll worker makes an error and gives out the wrong ballot, I can't say it was Fred or Susan the poll worker, I have to own that.

So, what my takeaways are again, redundant, but preparation. It's not enough to have -- you know, if you don't have a continuation of operations plan, you need one. And I'm going to go ahead and do -- mea culpa on this. I have one but someone said earlier it's not enough to have it. You need to act it out in advance of the emergency. And that's a huge takeaway for me. Sometimes with those contingency issues can breed ingenuity. That's one of the great things about America. In 2004 a hurricane came through Central Florida, and a particular county, Charlotte County, the vendor, VR Systems, actually went down there. They had no way to check in voters. And VR Systems went down there and had, in essence, what became ebooks or electronic poll books at the time. So, it became an impromptu beta testing on the spot, if you will.

Secretary Cortés hit the nail on the head with transparency, you know. You can't do enough of that whether it be with your voters or certainly your media, if you make a mistake, clearly you have to own it. And one of the great things, how many times have you seen on Twitter -- self-admitted Twitter hollercare, where one of your friends or someone you know has put @ and a particular name a company. That company gets back to them real quickly doesn't it? So when a voter puts @Corley, you know, "I had a

problem” I’m going to get back to that voter rather quickly. So that’s certainly a good thing, the transparency.

Education, sometimes I wonder, everyone in this room on the panel and those watching, I sometimes think we take for granted, we live, eat and breathe this stuff. But do we really properly convey all of the options, all of the education to the voters, which, as Robert eloquently pointed out, is clearly the most important stakeholder. With no disrespect or malice to the candidates or the committees or the political parties, the most important stakeholder is that voter, and I think we must never, ever forget that.

And so, those are my takeaways. I just want to again thank the EAC. It’s been a great panel, excellent topics and great discussions. So, thank you.

DR. KING:

Thank you, Brian. We’re going to skip the Commissioner for now. Sandra?

MS. JUNO:

The three things that I think are most important as we look to the 2016 election is, first of all, we should be transparent in anything that has to do with elections. There isn’t anything that should be secretive about that. So, you know, I think if you’re open with people they won’t make things up to fill in that space. So, that’s

important. As long as a lot of planning, you can never have too much planning.

We'll be educating the electors. The laws change from year to year. Different ballots have different instructions. We'll be incorporating absentee voting limited hours. You can only do it weekdays between eight a.m. and seven p.m., so that's a change from what we did in 2012, plus we're having photo ID. So, there's a lot of education that needs to be done to the general population, to the poll workers, to the staff. So, we want to make sure that everybody knows what they need to do, so that we have fair and consistent practices within the state.

And we also have the opportunity to go back and look four years ago to see what kind of historical data we have to compare, you know. A Presidential election is totally different than any other election you go. We go from 20 percent voter turnout to 70 percent, so we need to prepare to know how many ballots we need, how many poll workers are needed at the various polling locations. But we can prepare ourselves by going back and looking at that data to give us a map as to what our needs should be.

And finally, the other thing is I can't stress enough how important technology is. We try and incorporate technology as much as we can because whenever we can use that we have opportunities to practice that ahead of Election Day. We can test

the equipment. We know what's going to happen. On Election Night that data can be sent, in our case, electronically, via modem to our county offices. We try and avoid having to do anything that involves a manual calculation because that tends to be where human error occurs. So we look at technology as a great tool to help us gather data quickly and transmit it accurately.

So that's it.

DR. KING:

Thank you very much Sandra. Secretary Pate?

SECRETARY PATE:

Well, I want to thank Merle for moderating this, and Christy, I want to thank you and the Association for -- the Commission for helping put this together.

Working together -- I'll go back to what I started out with, it's about training. It's training and that preparation. And we're going to continue to do that in our state. We have a very good relationship and respect to working with the county auditors and our Secretary of State office. We certify well over a hundred of our local county election officials for every election cycle. They go through a certification process of a lot of hours of training and preparation. That speaks to, I think, offering people some assurances.

Communication has been talked about a lot here today. I think that's imperative. We remind people they have more than seven ways to register to vote now in the State of Iowa. I think that's pretty generous. We have over four ways you can vote, as well, reminding people that Election Day really isn't one day, it's 45 days with the early voting going on. This is all changing the process.

I would encourage people to, again, acknowledge any mistakes we make when we're doing the election process, perform the triage you have to perform and -- but differentiate the impact on what this thing might be. Is it really an impact on the election, or is it just something that happened that we'll fix? Because that will clarify it for people as you go forward.

But I think we need to focus on the future and where we're going. And I know, as a part of the National Association of Secretaries of State, we work on an elections committee to look at all the technologies that are coming out and we need to do that because our poll workers for our state, we have nearly 2,000 precincts. They're aging out, to put it politely, so if we don't utilize technology we're going to have some issues. That means we have to look at vote centers. That means we have to look at the electronic poll books. It means we have to do these things if we're going to offer the kind of services we want to offer.

And I want to point out, it was talked about earlier, we're a very mobile society. Voter registration lists are hard to keep clean. With online voter registration we can do some of that in our own state. We're partnered up with the Kansas compact where we work with states. There's ERIC out there, that we work with other states. I just had a run-in with Florida. I had a local radio guy who complained that he was registered to vote in Florida and in Iowa. And I said, "Well, if you try it you're going to go to jail." But...

[Laughter]

SECRETARY PATE:

...pointed out, you know, we're working together to get these things taken care of. I hope the Federal Government will help us with some of that, too, because we have 1,800 active -- excuse me -- 1.8 million active voters in Iowa but we have over two million registered voters. There's a lot of people there that we need to get off the lists, but we need a little help.

So, I think this is a good start, and I want to thank you for letting us do that. I think we're on the right track; integrity and encouraging participation, we're on the right track. Thank you.

DR. KING:

Thank you Secretary Pate. And Kirk, and Secretary Williams about one minute each.

MS. SHOWALTER:

All right, I'll be very brief. The biggest message that I've heard here, and personally I feel, is do it ahead. There will always be something that comes out of the woodwork completely no matter how well you plan, unexpectedly, right before the election that will demand your attention and your time, just at a time when you're in a peak activity. So, if you can take care of it now, do it now.

Communications is essential with your voters and that feeds right into the do it ahead. Get your voters to update their registration now. Educate them about November, so they start paying attention now. And you need to actually focus on how you deliver that message to the different groups that you have. For example, in my locality I have some of the poorest people in the state and some of the wealthiest people in the state and everything in between. I have lots of college kids. So I will be crafting my message to each and all of those groups. You can't just focus on one.

And lastly, collaboration with your colleagues, one of the reasons I've expressed this privately, but one of the reasons I love to participate in these sorts of things is I'm always bringing new ideas back that I can implement in Virginia. And my colleagues in Virginia are not shy about sharing their ideas, and I have pulled a lot in the voting equipment transition, so my thanks to them. The more you talk with your colleagues at every opportunity, the better

your voters can be served and I think that's our ultimate goal of everybody around this table.

DR. KING:

Thank you, Secretary Williams?

SECRETARY WILLIAMS:

Thank you for the opportunity to participate. I want to thank my colleagues for their insights that they've shared.

I want to end with three P's to try and keep things simple; planning, process and partners. And in the planning we've talked about the need for contingencies and, you know, we provide for certification for our election officials and planning for the communications process and how you're going to ensure that transparency is there.

The process, how do we assure that people are confident in the process, how do we make sure it actually works. Having the judges, working with the parties to ensure that sufficient judges are there and what's the process going to be for watchers? We've just gone through an extensive stakeholder process to establish rules for watching in a polling place election that's now really a mail ballot election. What is that voter intent going to be? Establishing those things ahead of time so people have confidence in the process.

And then, lastly, recognizing the partners that we have, the candidates, the parties, the activities, the press, the judges, the

counties and the states as we work together to ensure that people know that their choices are reflected accurately, that they have the opportunity to vote and that those votes are recorded accurately.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate.

DR. KING:

Thank you very much. With that, I'd like to now turn to Commissioner McCormick and ask her for her closing thoughts.

COMMISSIONER McCORMICK:

Sure, there are so many great takeaways here today and just playing on what Secretary Williams said, you know, the EAC is here to be a partner with election administrators across the country. We are also ready and available to the states and the localities in getting ready and getting through the elections this year. We have -- we are assisting states in providing advice and information on preventative maintenance with their voting equipment, which we heard today was so very important. We are also working with jurisdictions who are brave enough to purchase new equipment, on tips for purchasing that equipment, helping them with creating and viewing RFPs and RFIs and those kinds of matters, and also, testifying and certification issues of those new -- that new equipment. We provide information and best practices, such as poll worker training manuals and election management guidelines, language glossaries for those communities that have many covered

languages, which is also a whole other issue for many jurisdictions, Quick Tip Guides, which, many were updated this year, that you can use and download from our Website. We've got scads and scads of information on our Website for election administrators across the country.

We've partnered with FVAP, the Federal Voting Assistance Program, to work with the USPS on postal issues. Now that so many jurisdictions are going to mail-in balloting, those issues are going to be a forefront this year. Some of them are already coming to light and we're hoping to cut those off before they become a problem later on. We're also working with FVAP in assuring that all of our overseas citizens and our military members have the resources and the links they need to register and to cast their ballots.

We're providing help with contingency plans, we heard a lot about that today, for emergency situations and making sure that the localities and the states have plan B's ready whether it's a Super Storm Sandy or whether it's just a power outage at your local high school.

We're finally -- the number one request that we get is for voter registration information from voters. We are constantly asked "How do I register to vote?" And we provide, on our Website, direct links to the states for -- to their Websites for voter information --

voter registration information, and also provide the universal National Voter Registration form so that all eligible voters have the opportunity to vote.

And I want to thank each and every one of our panelists here today. Thank you very much for your time. I know in preparation for the 2016 election that your time is very precious and something we can't get back. So, thank you very much for taking the time to come and join us and provide this information and your insights to election administrators across the county.

I'd also like to thank Dr. Merle King, who always does an incomparable and amazing job in moderating our roundtables and we appreciate your hard work on this. It's not a small task to come up with these questions and keep the conversation going, so thank you so much Merle.

I'd like to thank our EAC staff who does amazing work behind the scenes to get these meetings ready for us and to keep the Commissioners on track. I'd like to thank my fellow Commissioners, also, who have also put a lot of time and effort into working on getting this together and getting our participants to come and be with us today, and for their insights, as well.

And especially, I'd like to thank our election administrators across the country. We have over 8,000 jurisdictions in the United States, and all of those election administrators work very hard to

run the best elections in the world. And most of the time it's a thankless job except when something goes wrong, and then, all of the spotlights are on them.

[Laughter]

COMMISSIONER McCORMICK:

So, we want to thank those of you out there who are watching and keep up the good work. And we look forward to a great election cycle this year, hopefully flawless, but we're preparing for the worst.

So, thank you all very much for attending and I'll pass this back over to Merle.

DR. KING:

Thank you Commissioner McCormick. To all the panelists who joined us here today, thank you so much. Thank you not only for your contributions today, the efforts to travel, whatever it is that you set aside to do this. But larger than that, thank you for your dedication to this art that we practice in each of our various states. As always, it's a privilege to do this. I thank the EAC for the opportunity to do that.

And consistent with my record, we will end on time. And so, with that, I adjourn this roundtable and safe travels to everybody.

CHAIRWOMAN McCORMICK:

Thank you for attending.

[Applause]

[The EAC roundtable adjourned at 4:58 p.m. EST.]