

Linda H. Lamone  
State Administrator, Maryland State Board of Elections  
Remarks to the  
Presidential Commission on Election Administration  
September 4, 2013  
Philadelphia, PA

- State Administrator of Elections for the State of Maryland since July 1997
- Centralized election administration in Maryland with the goal of uniformity
  - State Board of Elections overseeing election administration
  - 24 local boards of elections implementing the State's policies and procedures
- Under leadership, implemented:
  - Uniform, statewide voting system and planning for the implementation of a replacement statewide system
  - Statewide voter registration system
  - Sophisticated candidate and election management system
  - Web-based campaign finance and reporting system for all candidates
  - Various online services, including online delivery of absentee ballots
- Overview of Voter Services Website
  - Along with the web-based campaign finance and reporting system, Maryland's online services have significantly changed election administration and dramatically improved customer service to our voters
    - Voter Look-Up website – find out:
      - If registered to vote
      - Registration and mailing address on file
      - Polling place assigned to registration address
      - Whether polling place is accessible and if not, why it isn't
      - Sample ballot
    - Online Voter Registration System
      - Use to register to vote and make changes to voter records
      - Military voters and voters who reside outside the US can use system to request absentee ballot – no paper form required
      - To use system:
        - Domestic, civilian voters must have driver's license or ID number issued by State's Motor Vehicle Administration, date license or number issued, and last 4 digits of Social Security number
        - Military voters and voters who reside outside of the US can use last 4 digits of Social Security number
    - Online Blank Ballot Delivery System with online ballot marking tool (funded by FVAP grant)
      - Deliver blank ballots to military voters and voters who reside outside of the US
        - Automatically and efficiently provides voter with the correct ballot and other voting information
        - Voter authenticates self to access ballot - provides

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- Name
- Date of birth
- Zip code
- Unique alpha-numeric password generated by SBE and provided to voter via email
- Voter can:
  - Print blank ballot and vote ballot by hand or
  - Use online ballot marking tool to make selections and print ballot with selections
    - Eliminates issues of voter intent
    - Improves readability of ballot
- Voter must return voted ballot by mail – **no** online return
- Online blank ballot delivery system first used in 2010 elections
- Online ballot marking tool added to system for 2012 General Election
- Conducted penetration testing on ballot wizard and system performed very well
- 2012 General Election statistics
  - Over 12,500 ballots delivered electronically
  - 73% of military and overseas voters opted to receive their ballots electronically
  - 2/3 used on the online ballot marking tool
- Ballot duplication during canvass
  - Problem with ballots delivered electronically
    - Cannot be read by the State's optical scan voting unit
    - Therefore, must re-create ballot that can be read by voting unit
  - Options:
    - Manually duplicate ballot – very time-consuming and potential for error – or
    - Automate ballot duplication – used in 2012 General
      - If voter uses wizard to make selections, a QR barcode prints on ballot
        - Barcode contains ballot style and numbers that represent the selections
        - But does not include any personal information about voter
      - Use software to read barcode and print a ballot that can be read by voting unit
      - Bipartisan team of election officials compares two ballots – the ballot printed by the voter and the ballot printed from the barcode
        - If discrepancy in ballots, ballots printed by the voter wins

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- Generally quicker than manual duplication process but ensures accuracy of counted ballot
- 2012 post-election survey of military and overseas voters (conducted by the Overseas Vote Foundation)
  - Very positive feedback about online services
  - Want to be able to return ballot online
  - Recognized benefits of online ballot marking tool – “obvious who I voted for” and “not worried about making mistakes”
- Future Enhancements
  - Starting next month, all voters – not just military voters and voters who reside outside the US – will be able to use the online system to request absentee ballots
  - For 2014, all voters – not just military voters and voters who reside outside the US – will be able to use online ballot delivery system to receive blank ballots
  - Improve process for canvassing ballots marked by online ballot marking tool – quicker to print ballots (ballots will be printed in batches, instead of individually)
  - Incorporate suggestions from voters to make website more usable
    - More direct path for voter to find out status of absentee ballot
    - Improved instructions on which zip code to enter (some military and overseas voters forgot their Maryland zip code)
- Next project to improve service to military and overseas voters
  - Create single point of contact at SBE (if funded by FVAP)
  - SBE will handle all contacts with UOCAVA voters
    - Voter information – including portal with links to other election-related information (e.g., information about candidates and ballot questions, political parties)
    - Voter registration and ballot requests – processed by SBE – greater uniformity in processing and improved data quality
    - Issuance of absentee ballots – issued by SBE or its vendors
    - Return of absentee ballots – returned to SBE and SBE distributes to appropriate local election office
  - From the UOCAVA voter’s perspective, everything comes to and from SBE
    - UOCAVA voter no longer needs to figure out which county to send requests to
  - If awarded grant, will be in place for 2014 election with voter information web portal ready for 2016 elections

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- Election Assistance Commission
  - Voting system standards are outdated (latest version is 2005)
  - Certification of laboratories to test voting system cannot be approved
  - NIST is not working on the Technical Guidelines Development Committee projects, especially those applicable to UOCAVA voters
  - Number of viable voting systems are diminishing
  - Alternatives to the EAC
    - National Association of State Election Directors re-assume the testing and certification program
    - NIST? NIST does not want to take over the program
    - FEC? Not a good fit
- Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC)
  - Non-profit organization with the two missions – (1) assisting states to improve the accuracy of America’s voter rolls and (2) increasing access to voter registration for all eligible citizens.
  - Founding states (2012): Colorado, Delaware, Maryland, Nevada, Utah, Virginia, and Washington. More states are expected to join in 2013 and beyond.
  - Sophisticated tool that allows states to securely and safely compare voter data, thereby improving the accuracy of their voter rolls.
- Tool that compares information on eligible voters against official data sources submitted by the states, such as records from the voter registration rolls and from the state motor vehicle agency, and reports back to the states where there is a highly confident match indicating a voter moved or died, or the existence of a duplicate record.
- States can then begin the process under federal and state law to clean up the voter rolls, targeting their efforts based on solid data.
- Receiving actionable information earlier in the election cycle will reduce costs and administrative burdens to state election officials, while also reducing the incentive for unregulated third-party registration groups to engage in large scale registration efforts.
- Benefits of ERIC
  - Reduced costs:
    - Election officials keep records up-to-date year-round
    - Discourages the high volume of inefficient paper registrations driven by third party groups close to major elections
  - More accurate voter rolls with the near elimination of duplicate and invalid registrations
  - Reduced opportunity for and perception of potential election fraud
  - Improved protection of voters’ privacy
- Recommend that the Presidential Commission on Election Administration endorse ERIC – the more members there are, the better the data will be.