

2023 HAVA Election Security Grant

State of Hawaii Program Narrative

The State of Hawaii has been awarded \$1,000,000 in 2023 HAVA Election Security grant funds. Hawaii is responsible to provide a 20% match, totaling \$200,000. States may use these funds to improve the administration of elections for Federal office, including to enhance election technology and make election security improvements.

The State of Hawaii, Office of Elections will be requesting and expending the funds. The 2023 HAVA Election Security grant funds will be used to maintain and expand on the matters noted below handled by the statewide voter registration system. Additionally, the funds will be used for the continued maintenance and security of the statewide voter registration system noted in State of Hawaii Program Narratives associated with the 2018, 2020, and 2022 HAVA Election Security grant funds, to the extent those earlier funds are fully expended.

Statewide Voter Registration System

As required by Section 303 of HAVA, the State is responsible for the development and management of the statewide voter registration system, which is "a single, uniform, official, centralized, interactive computerized statewide voter registration list." Section 303 lists a variety of requirements for the SVRS that may must be met by the State.

The security of the system is critical in that it contains sensitive information, such as, but not limited to, driver license numbers, state identification card numbers, dates of birth, residence addresses, mailing addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses for voters statewide. Additionally, elections have been designated critical infrastructure by the Department of Homeland Security under the Patriot Act. Critical infrastructure refers to "systems and assets, whether physical or virtual, so vital to the United States that the incapacity or destruction of such systems and assets would have a debilitating impact on security, national economic security, national public health or safety, or any combination of those matters." Section 1016(e) of the Patriot Act. The statewide voter registration system clearly meets that definition.

The SVRS is the linchpin for the running of our elections. For example, the system handles the following:

- (1) voter registration, including online voter registration;
- (2) absentee voting applications;
- (3) ballot production;

- (4) online ballot marking;
- (5) voter information portal;
- (6) determination of voter residences based on geographic information system (GIS) information in relation to ArcGIS maps;
- (7) utilization of GIS tools to create geocoded points associated with an address, modify an existing geocoded point, and move geocoded points in relation to precinct lines;
- (8) HR functions related to recruitment and payroll of election day officials;
- (9) candidate filing, including online candidate filing;
- (10) ballot production;
- (11) election mailings;
- (12) generating of unique bar codes associated with ballots being mailed out to voters;
- (13) receipt of ballots based on bar code on return envelopes and recording of rejection and acceptance reasons;
- (14) absentee ballot issuance and receipt reconciliation reports;
- (15) assigning voter credit after the receipt of ballots;
- (16) image repository for all critical voter registration documents required by federal law;
- (17) receipt of death list information from the Department of Health to update the statewide voter registration system;
- (18) interaction with the U.S. Social Security Administration through a web service to confirm the identify of applicants to vote who provide the last four digits of their SSN when registering to vote;
- (19) synchronization with driver license officials and their vendor to permit the statewide voter registration system to be electronically updated with any motor voter transactions involving a registered voter or a driver who wishes to register to vote, and
- (20) ability to interact with the driver license system through a web service to confirm the identity of applicants who provide a name, date of birth, and driver license or state identification card number.

The statewide voter registration system is housed on the Hawaii State Government Private Cloud and involves significant interactions between the Office of Elections and the Office of Enterprise Technology Services, as it relates to security and similar network matters. The system uses encryption, virtual private networks, next generation firewalls, and other cutting edge security.

The Office of Elections administers the Statewide Voter Registration System. This system allows Hawaii residents to register to vote, update their information, request an absentee ballot, and view a sample of their ballot online. This system operates on a cloud environment that is managed by the state.

The prior 2018 HAVA Election Security grant funds were focused on improving software and hardware, augmenting staffing, and providing staff training

in relation to the current Statewide Voter Registration System. In contrast, the 2020 HAVA Election Security grant funds were focused on the expansion and improvement of the Statewide Voter Registration System in regard to its interaction and coordination with other databases, consistent with federal law. The 2022 HAVA Election Security funds were meant to focus on maintaining and expanding on the matters noted above handled by the statewide voter registration system. The 2023 HAVA Election Security funds are meant to focus on the expansion and improvement of the Statewide Voter Registration System in terms of its use by the general public and election officials.

Given this, the State plans to contract with the statewide voter registration system vendor for additional services to maintain and expand upon the above noted matters handled by the statewide voter registration system. We have budgeted \$200,000 in Fiscal Year 2024 and \$200,000 annually thereafter for an additional four years to retain these services. The fiscal year for the State is from July 1st to June 30th.

State Match

Hawaii is required to provide a 20% match of \$200,000. This requirement will be met by utilizing state funds and applying the 10% indirect rate on Modified Total Direct Costs that the State is permitted to charge on grant expenditures toward the match.

Timeline

The state intends to draw down the entire amount of \$1,000,000 upon submittal of this narrative to the Election Assistance Commission. However, the monies will be expended over the course of the five-year budget period of this fund. The expenses and timeline are summarized in the table below for this narrative.

Activities Prior to the 2024 General Election

As provided for in the 2023 HAVA Election Security Grants submission guidelines, we have established this section to restate immediate improvements/activities that are underway and longer-term activities leading up to the 2024 election and beyond.

One of the functions of the statewide voter registration system is to assign voters to their proper voting precinct. A voting precinct's boundaries are developed in relation to federal, state, and county district lines, to ensure that all voters within the precinct are eligible to vote for the same contests on the same unique precinct ballot. Given the importance of properly assigning a voter to their proper precinct, this is best done by geocoding the voter's address so that it has specific latitude and longitude coordinates that permit it to be located within its proper precinct.

With the above in mind, we expect to revisit the current geocoding and addressing that the statewide voter registration system uses. This will involve migrating to a new geocoding and addressing solution. The end result should be an improvement in the experience of voters interacting with the statewide voter registration system through the online voter registration component. Likewise, the experience of election officials interacting with the system for purposes of precinct assignment should be improved.

Conclusion

Given the importance of the statewide voter registration system to the administration of elections, we see the expenditure of these funds toward that system as an important part of ensuring the integrity of our elections.

State of Hawaii, 2023 HAVA Election Security Grant Budget Timeline

| Fiscal Year | Expense | Amount |
|--|--|---------------------------|
| <i>Statewide Voter Registration System</i> | | |
| 2023-2024 | Statewide Voter Registration System Vendor | \$200,000 |
| 2024-2025 | Statewide Voter Registration System Vendor | \$200,000 |
| 2025-2026 | Statewide Voter Registration System Vendor | \$200,000 |
| 2026-2027 | Statewide Voter Registration System Vendor | \$200,000 |
| 2027-2028 | Statewide Voter Registration System Vendor | \$200,000 |
| <i>Total</i> | | <i>\$1,000,000</i> |

