



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA - 2023 HAVA ELECTION SECURITY GRANT - PROGRAM NARRATIVE

Program Description

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is very pleased to receive the funds authorized under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 (Public Law 117-328), to “make payments to states for activities to improve the administration of elections for Federal office, including to enhance election technology and make certain election security improvements, as authorized under Title I Section 101, 103, and 104 of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA).” Specifically, we intend to use these funds and our matching funds for Voter Registration Systems and Management and utilization of a Commonwealth of Pennsylvania William and Hannah Penn Fellow for an Artificial Intelligence (AI) enhanced project relating to online services surrounding elections.

Funds will be retained with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to provide continued services across many entities including county election offices. While we are still in the process of election modernization and implementing the new SUREVote IT system, this funding will assist current efforts needed to maintain the security and integrity of the aging statewide voter registration database (SURE). Also, monies may be allocated for continued changes and customization needed as the SUREVote IT system prepares to go live. Lastly, a William and Hannah Penn Fellow may be assigned to the Department of State to assist with an AI-enhanced customer service project to expand the communication channels for voters to access online services related to elections and voter registration.

Background and Approach

The PA Department of State (Department) continues to push election modernization efforts around the state. From the onset of the Election Security Grants, \$22,252,884 in both federal and state-matched dollars have been provided to counties to replace outdated voting machines; increase personnel and equipment as needed due to changes under Act 77 of 2019 (Act 77); increased funding related to in cyber and physical security, increased expenditures to expand vote by mail and other voter services; and county needs due to the ongoing

modernization efforts of the voter registration system.

The Department continues to utilize the funds towards statewide efforts including post-election audits; election security and technology enhancements for both counties and the Commonwealth pertaining to voter registration and other cyber systems; voter education relating to changes in voting and elections under Act 77 including the ability for all voters to vote by mail; and election modernization as it relates to the implementation of the Commonwealth SUREVote System.

The 2023 Election Security award will allow the Department to hire a William and Hannah Penn Fellow starting July 3, 2023, and remain through June 2025 costing approximately \$262,000 over the course of the engagement, to manage an AI-enhanced customer service project deriving from the Department's substantial web presence and management of online services related to elections and voter registrations. The Department receives between 350,000 and 1,000,000 online voter registration transactions in each federal election cycle. In addition, the Department handles between 25,000 and 80,000 phone calls and emails during each federal election cycle, which requires the bureau to borrow staff from other program areas and hire temporary clerical staff. More than half of the incoming requests are for information that can be obtained through the Department's online voter services tool, including voter's registration status and location of polling place. The goal is to identify voter services customers use most often as well as to identify and catalogue key words/phrases customers might use to describe these services. The fellow will be tasked with conducting outreach to stakeholders and individual customers; identifying the best AI tool(s) available to the Department; collaborating with the Commonwealth Information Technology team to develop AI tools that can provide automated responses to general questions; automating certain functions within each customer communication channel; and proactively initiating contact with customers regarding application approvals, status changes, and other customer events.

Additionally, the Department will utilize the remaining FY23 grant dollars along with the required state match to continue to maintain the security and integrity of the current voter registration system while election modernization efforts continue to move forward. This includes funding to cover ongoing application maintenance contracts. The Department is approaching a date to formally go live with the new SUREVote system, however, go live will occur only after necessary modifications and bug fixes are completed and the department and county election officials have adequately tested the system. Lastly, as efforts progress, there may be a need for additional enhancements to the SUREVote system which grant funds can assist with.

Budget, Timeframes, and Progress Reporting

Pennsylvania will use the funds provided under the FY23 funding for activities consistent with the laws described in Section 101 of HAVA and will not use the funds in a manner that is inconsistent with the requirements of Title I. It is our intent to spend down Pennsylvania's \$2,205,840 grant award as the authorized expenditures are made and funds utilized. Pennsylvania will also contribute its twenty percent match of \$441,168 by FY 2023-2024, which will be used for continuation of upgrading the Commonwealth's Voter Registration systems and management. The Department will submit any required financial and program narrative reports that track the Commonwealth's and counties' progress as required by the grant.

Conclusion

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is pleased to accept the funds authorized under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 (Public Law 117-328), to improve the administration of elections for Federal office, by using federal and our matching funds for Voter Registration Systems and Management and utilization of a Commonwealth of Pennsylvania William and Hannah Penn Fellow for an Artificial Intelligence (AI) enhanced project relating to online services surrounding elections.

EAC FY23 HAVA GRANT - BUDGET WORKSHEET

OMB#: 3265-0023 Expiration Date: 9/30/2025

GRANTEE NAME: Pennsylvania Department of State
 AWARD TYPE: FORMULA MATCH %: 20%
 PROJECT PERIOD START DATE: 3/23/2018 INDIRECT COST % (IF APPLIED):
 PROJECT PERIOD END DATE: INDIRECT COST TYPE:

SECTION A: GRANT BUDGET	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE	YEAR FOUR	YEAR FIVE	TOTAL:
FEDERAL AMOUNT	\$ 13,476,156.00	\$ 15,175,567.00	\$ 2,205,840.00	\$ 2,205,840.00		\$33,063,403.00
NON FEDERAL MATCH	\$ 673,808.00	\$ 3,035,114.00	\$ 441,168.00	\$ 441,168.00		\$ 4,591,258.00
TOTAL:	\$ 14,149,964.00	\$ 18,210,681.00	\$ 2,647,008.00	\$ 2,647,008.00	\$ -	\$37,654,661.00

SECTION B: BUDGET CATEGORIES (Federal Only)	Voting Equipment	Voting Processes	Voter Registration Systems	Election Auditing	Cyber and Physical Security	Voter Education	Accessibility	Other (Provide description in this box)	Other (Provide description in this box)	TOTALS	% Fed Total
PERSONNEL						\$ 262,000.00				\$ 262,000.00	1%
FRINGE RELATED TO SALARY										\$ -	0%
EQUIPMENT	\$ 525,000.00				\$ 2,000,000.00					\$ 2,525,000.00	8%
TRAINING				\$ 189,000.00						\$ 189,000.00	1%
CONTRACTUAL			\$ 1,943,840.00							\$ 1,943,840.00	6%
OTHER (Describe)			\$ 5,779,920.00			\$ 600,000.00		\$ 184,567.00		\$ 6,564,487.00	20%
OTHER (Describe)										\$ -	0%
SUBGRANTS	\$ 13,476,156.00		\$ 1,102,920.00						\$ 7,000,000.00	\$ 21,579,076.00	65%
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	\$ 14,001,156.00	\$ -	\$ 8,826,680.00	\$ 189,000.00	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$ 862,000.00	\$ -	\$ 184,567.00	\$ 7,000,000.00	\$ 33,063,403.00	100%
INDIRECT COSTS (if applied)										\$ -	0%
TOTAL PROGRAM BUDGET	\$ 14,001,156.00	\$ -	\$ 8,826,680.00	\$ 189,000.00	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$ 862,000.00	\$ -	\$ 184,567.00	\$ 7,000,000.00	\$ 33,063,403.00	100%
PERCENTAGE BY CATEGORY	42%	0%	27%	1%	6%	3%	0%	1%	21%		

SECTION C: NON FEDERAL MATCH RESOURCES	STATE FUNDS	OTHER	TOTAL:
Voting Equipment	\$ 673,808.00		\$ 673,808.00
Voter Registration System	\$ 3,917,450.00		\$ 3,917,450.00
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			\$ -
	\$ 4,591,258.00	\$ -	\$ 4,591,258.00