

Overview – NCSL Election Materials and Conference
The Future of Elections - Williamsburg, VA, June 14-16, 2017
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Main Themes:

- 1) Security/Cybersecurity
- 2) Updating/modernizing voting systems
- 3) Funding/resources for local election officials
- 4) Clean voter registration databases
- 5) Accessibility – disabled, military and overseas, special populations (Indian reservations)

1 - Security/Cybersecurity

- Can't be 100% secure, but can manage risk
- DHS – designated voting systems and elections technology as “critical infrastructure” = technical assistance and education priorities, but no money at this point
- Keys to security/vulnerability are the local election administrators and the vendors.
 - Election administrators are not security experts, need to have expert help and operationalize security procedures.
 - Need careful, systematic examination of vendor products, require them to meet identified needs, not the other way around
- What states can do:
 - Enhance security protocols for statewide voter registration system- they are being targeted
 - Mandate cyber security awareness training for local election officials
 - Update voting system certification process to account for new threats
 - Funding
- What legislators can do:
 - Engage in dialogue with state and local election officials
 - Ensure legal authority exists to share information between state agencies
 - Appropriate funding – spending money wisely (some states had task forces headed by Sec. of State's Office)
 - Clarify audit requirements
 - Make sure statutes (and administrative rules) are neutral in terms of brands, time, and technology

2 - Updating/modernizing voting systems

- Aging technology and systems – every state local government facing this reality – “impending crisis” – no replacement parts and/or technology no longer supported platforms
- All phases of election administration affected:
 - Pre-election:
 - Voter registration database – applications, interface with other agencies, uploading, maintaining, securing the data
 - Pre-election certification and testing of all systems
 - Ballot design and printing and interface with counting systems – in Montana, ballots designed for optical scan systems
 - During election
 - Poll books – some states have electronic poll books
 - Verification of voter registration and eligibility to vote
 - Systems used to cast a vote – in Montana the issue is for disabled persons because we use paper ballots, not electronic voting
 - Post-election
 - Voting tabulation equipment – in Montana this means scanning the paper ballots and machines the count the votes cast
 - Post-election audits
- No more federal HAVA money

3 - Funding and Resources for Local Election Officials

- Direct appropriations
 - New Mexico, Arkansas, Rhode Island, North Dakota
- Cost sharing
 - Michigan, Maryland, others
- Grant program or low-interest loans
 - Nevada, Minnesota, Utah, Nebraska, Missouri
- Purchase equipment in bulk (pooling to take advantage of economies of scale)
 - Colorado, Florida, Kansas
- Dedicated special revenue (i.e., earmarked fees)
 - Mississippi, Louisiana
- Statewide bonding
 - California
- Leave funding as the responsibility of local governments
 - Traditional Approach
 - Some larger jurisdictions exploring how raise money and obtain efficiencies
 - Los Angeles, San Francisco, Travis County in TX, Denver

4 - Clean voter registration databases

- Federal law – National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) – regulatory floor
- State laws also set additional parameters, may not conflict with NVRA
- Potential resources for election administrators to keep “clean” lists
 - USPS national change of address data base
 - Social Security Administration
 - U.S. Department of Homeland Security – Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlement (SAVE)
 - In-state crosschecks with other state agencies (e.g., vital statistics, motor vehicles)
 - Felon records
 - Jury lists
 - Interstate cross-checks
 - Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) – nonprofit governed by board of directors made up of first 20 member states. Members are:

Alaska	Alabama	Colorado	Connecticut
Delaware	Illinois	Louisiana	Maryland
Minnesota	Nevada	New Mexico	Ohio
Oregon	Pennsylvania	Rhode Island	Utah
Virginia	Washington	Washington D.C.	West Virginia
Wisconsin			

.. “the sole mission of assisting states to improve the accuracy and efficiency of state voter registration processes. Formed in 2012, ERIC provides sophisticated data matching services to the member states in order to improve a state’s ability to identify inaccurate and out-of-date voter registration records, as well as eligible, but unregistered residents. States can then contact the voters, compliant with federal regulation, to encourage individuals to register or update their existing registration. ERIC is owned, governed, and funded by state election officials.” – *Extract from ERIC Technology and Security Overview brief*

- Interstate Voter Registration Crosscheck System – Kansas-based system
 - The Interstate Crosscheck Program was an initiative started by the office of Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach in December 2005. The stated intention of the program was to create a database of data on registered voters to prevent voter fraud in the interests of election security. Kobach and the secretaries of three other states (Iowa, Missouri, and Nebraska) signed the original Memorandum of Understanding to participate in the program, which was put into practice in 2006. By 2013, 22 states were participating in the program, which remained under the administration of the office of the Kansas Secretary of State. By May 2016, the program had grown to 30 participating states. The program uses its shared database in an attempt to prevent any individual voter from registering to vote in more than one state.

5 - Accessibility – disabled, military and overseas, special populations (Indian reservations)

- Military and Overseas Electors
 - NV – legislation approved to allow digital signatures, grant from federal voter assistance program
 - MD – legislative change to allow use of last 4 of SSN to be considered a signature
 - Other states allow electronic delivery of blank ballots
 - Iowa – bar code tracking of mailed ballots
 - Electionmail.org – joint project of Democracy Works and Bipartisan Policy Center – collects and reports problems with USPS and election mail
 - Council of State Governments – offers info and assistance
 - Federal Voting Assistance Program is the federal program for overseas and uniformed electors

- Need to be mindful of and responsive to challenges of mail and access to voting systems for voters residing on Indian reservations or in very rural/frontier areas Disabled voters

- Technologies and voting systems need to be responsive to needs of disabled electors (MT is a paper ballot state, challenges in matching the systems that allow for electronic marking of a ballot to system that will print a uniform ballot that can then be optically scanned like any other ballot

- Election modernization and technology (also relevant under section 2 of this summary, above)
 - NM voter registration interface with motor vehicle information for photo ID
 - Committee for Ranked Choice Voting
 - Illinois – automatic voter registration bill – SB 250
 - Denver Elections Director – “ballot trace” for mail ballots, e-sign data for electronic signature checks, mobile vote centers
 - PEW – Voter Information Project - works with states to provide official information to voters about where to vote and what’s on their ballots. VIP is a partnership between The Pew Charitable Trusts, Google, and the states to ensure that voters have the official information they need to answer basic questions like "Where is my polling place?" "What's on my ballot?" and "How do I navigate the voting process?"