

## Resource Guide

All of this material, and more, is on the Google listserv – Google, Google Groups, lwvmo early voting study

We hope you find this useful in your discussions.

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Thank you for participating in the League study.

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# Resource List

## Early Voting and / or No Excuse Absentee Voting

Articles are in this notebook as follows. Because of multiple sources, we were unable to number the pages for the Leader's Guide. Most of these articles also are on the Google listserv and may be read or downloaded; there are more resources on the listserv than included in the Leader's Guide notebook.

**Absentee Ballot Application** – sample showing the acceptable reasons for voting “absentee.” **Absentee Ballot Envelope** (Jackson County, Mo.)-- ballot goes into this envelope. Envelopes vary from county-to-county.  
**Helpful for question 1.1, 1.4** (These two items are not on the listserv)

### Alternative Voting Methods

How other states are currently voting. Compare and contrast Missouri's current laws. **Helpful for questions 1.1 – 1.8, 9**

### Responses from Other Leagues About Early Voting Study

State President Lois Detrick contacted other Leagues to determine what they were doing regarding early voting. **Helpful for questions 1.1 through and including 1.8, 14**

### Summary of the 2008 Elections – Secretary of State Robin Carnahan

Review of the election. **Helpful for questions 1.4, 1.7**

### Surrounding States' Early Voting & Absentee Voting Status

Review of adjacent states' voting laws. **Helpful for questions 1.5, 14**

### Additional Study Material

#### **Absentee and Early Voting – Trends, Promises and Perils. James Fortier.**

An American Enterprise Institute article, Fortier acknowledges that many states offer either or both, acknowledges the benefits and takes a cautionary approach to both early voting and no excuse absentee voting.

#### **County Clerk Survey Response**

We sent surveys to all 114 county clerks to get their opinions on early voting and no excuse absentee voting. Interesting in that some feel voters are “customers.” Other think voting is just more work and expense. **Helpful for questions 1, 1.8, 9, 13**

**County Clerk Survey Map**

Outline of the County Clerks and Local Election Administrators (LEAs) who responded to the survey as of the date we copied the material. Some Leagues will be interviewing their clerks; we'll add their comments to the information on the Google listserv; this information should be downloaded if you feel it is important to see the cross-section of counties that responded. We have not tied their response to their county. Helpful for question 2

**Description of Current Absentee System** – Summary of Missouri's procedure based on interviews of election administrators.

**Missouri House Interim Committee Report on Early Voting**

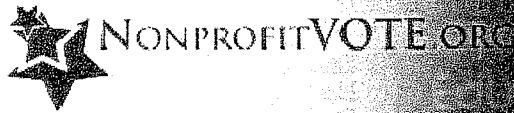
Report from a public hearing held in conjunction with the Missouri Assoc. of Counties annual conference.

**Proposed Legislation** – S.B. 95 and H.B. 59.

Text of bills proposed in 2009.

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## Early Voting In Person/ Vote by Mail

### What Is Early Voting In-Person and Vote-by-Mail

**Early Voting In-Person** allows voters to vote ahead of Election Day in-person in the weeks before an election. There are two types of early voting.

1. A voter casts their ballot early in-person at a public building like the county election office or at designated voting centers using the regular voting method like a voting machine.
2. A voter votes early in-person at their county election board or town hall using an absentee ballot.

**Vote-by-Mail**, generally known as **Absentee Voting**, allows voters to use an "absentee" ballot and return it by mail. State laws vary on whether a voter needs an excuse to use an absentee ballot, and also whether a voter can sign up to permanently receive mail-in ballots or if they must reapply for each election.

### Where Is Early Voting Used?

**Early Voting In-Person** – More than 30 states currently allow early in-person voting, with only three states and DC requiring an excuse to do so.

**Mail-In Voting** – The majority of states allow "no excuse" mail voting. A voter does not need an excuse to use an absentee ballot.

**Mail Only Voting – Oregon** only allows voters to use a mail-in ballot. **Most of Washington's** counties have enacted vote-by-mail laws similar to Oregon's.

**For state by state list – visit the [Early Voting Information Center](#).**

### Background: Why Tuesday

Voting on a Tuesday workday has challenged voters almost since the start of this tradition in the 1840's. Tuesday voting was originally set after the harvest to convenience a rural, - oriented population.

150 years later workday voting creates multiple issues for voters working two jobs, adults balancing children and older parents, an ever more mobile population and many commuting to and working far from their voting precinct. Census surveys suggest it remains a top challenge to voters. States have begun to experiment with a variety of expanded early in-person and mail voting options.

*More on Why Tuesday:* [History – Election Day-Wikipedia](#)

### Benefits of Early Voting Options

- Early voting helps more voters participate, particularly in lower profile elections.

#### August 4th Webinar

#### On This Page

[What is Early Voting In-Person and Vote-by-Mail](#)

[Where Is It Used](#)

[Background: Why Tuesday](#)

[Benefits of Early Voting Options](#)

[Challenges of Early Voting and Issues To Be Addressed](#)

[Other Alternatives: Weekends or Holidays?](#)

#### Back to Other Pages

[Election Administration Issues](#)

[Election Day Registration](#)

[Early Voting/Vote by Mail](#)

[Ex-Offenders and Voting](#)

[Ranked Choice Voting/IRV](#)

[Public Campaign Financing](#)

[Redistricting](#)

[Replacing the Electoral College](#)

[Voting Rights Issues](#)

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- Voters with long commutes, significant travel, multiple family commitments or without easy access to their assigned poll location have a longer time period in which to cast their ballots than they would with a traditional Tuesday elections.
- The use of early voting has risen with every election. Voters like the option.
- Voters have adequate time to read and contemplate complicated ballot issues in their homes instead of in a voting booth.
- It saves money for election administrators.
- It is, for now, a likely more viable option than making all elections holidays (though once every four years would be nice!), weekend voting used in other countries or voting online.

## Learn more about Early Voting and Vote by Mail

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[Election Reform Project of the  
American Enterprise Institute and  
Brookings](#)

[Early Voting Information Center](#)

[No Vote By Mail Project](#)

## Challenges of Early Voting and Issues To Be Addressed

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Early voting, especially absentee or vote-by-mail, is not without notable challenges and problems.

- Mail is subject to errors and lost ballots. Mail delivery failure is the greatest-cited problem both in applying for an absentee ballot by mail and in receiving and returning the ballot by mail.
- Election administrators don't always process or count mail-in votes properly. It adds a layer of confusion for voters and election administrators that, particularly for voters, is aggravated by procedures being different in the 50 states.
- Researchers have noted a bias found in mail-in voting towards upper-income, regular voters. This may be attributed to the greater use of mail, more stable addresses and experience in voting of higher-income and older voters. Vote-by-mail appears to be less used by lower-income and younger voters who change addresses more frequently and/or do not use regular mail as often as others. These groups are more likely to prefer in-person early voting options.
- When mail is the only option, the secret ballot is, to a degree, compromised. It is both a plus and a minus when voters convene to discuss their ballots as they fill them out, given the opportunity for undue influence in certain settings.

## Other Alternatives: Weekends or Holidays?

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### Would it be better to vote on a weekend?

Many countries vote on Sunday. Some U.S. jurisdictions use Saturdays. In the U.S. weekend voting may conflict with weekend traditions from religious observance, sports, using weekends to travel or that for many people weekends are workdays.

### What about Election Day as a holiday?

Election Day is a holiday in Puerto Rico and other places. A problem for the United States is how many elections are held every year. All elections can be important and decisive from primaries, generals, local contests, etc. Most countries don't vote as often as we do. Still, a popular option remains the idea of a "Democracy Day" holiday, at least every two or four years on November Election Day.

[\[Back\]](#)

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KANSAS CITY BOARD OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS • 1828 Walnut St. K.C.MO 64108 • (816) 842-4820 ext. 225  
 • Absentee Fax (816) 221-3348

## ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATION

I, \_\_\_\_\_, for the purpose of securing an absentee ballot

**PRINT NAME**

for the election to be held on **November 3, 2009**, hereby declare that I am a registered voter at the following address:

\_\_\_\_\_

<b>RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS</b>	<b>ZIP CODE</b>	<b>PHONE#</b>
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In Kansas City, Jackson County Missouri; that I am entitled to vote by absentee ballot at said election; that the reason for requesting an absentee ballot is:

**PLEASE CHECK ONE BOX**

- Absence on Election Day from the jurisdiction of the election authority in which I am registered to vote.
- Incapacity or confinement due to illness or physical disability, including caring for a person who is incapacitated or confined due to illness or disability.
- Religious belief or practice.
- Employment as an election authority, as a member of an election authority, or by an election authority at a location other than my polling place.
- Incarceration, although I have retained all the necessary qualifications for voting.

**Note:** Applicants who registered by mail and are voting for the first time must attach a copy of ID issued by MO State, an agency of the state, or a local election authority of the state; ID issued by the US Government or agency thereof; ID issued by an institution of higher education located within the state of MO; a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other government document that contains the name and address of the voter; driver's license or state ID card issued by another state; or other ID approved by the Secretary of State.

I hereby declare under the penalties of perjury that the foregoing reason is true and correct and that I truly expect to be prevented from going to the polls on Election Day due to the reason checked above.

**PENALTY FOR VIOLATION** – If any person shall willfully make any false certification, affidavit or statement required to be made under Missouri Election Laws, such person, upon conviction thereof, shall be deemed guilty of a class one election offense.

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date of Birth**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Last 4-digits of SSN**

**Mailing address if different from above:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**ZIP**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 SIGNATURE OF VOTER (AS REGISTERED)      \_\_\_\_\_  
 DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
 SIGNATURE OF PERSON REQUESTING APPLICATION  
 FOR VOTER OR ACTING AS WITNESS IF VOTER SIGNS  
 WITH AN "X" OR REQUIRES ASSISTANCE

\_\_\_\_\_  
**RELATIONSHIP TO APPLICANT\***  
 \*(IF MAKING APPLICATION FOR A RELATIVE, YOU MUST APPLY IN PERSON)

This application, if properly completed and signed, may be delivered in person, mailed to the address shown above, or faxed to the Board at 816-221-3348. If received by the Board no later than 5:00 P.M. on October 28, 2009, a ballot will be mailed.

☞NOTE: Missouri Statutes now allow election authorities to automatically send absentee applications to all voters who are permanently disabled. If you consider yourself to be in this classification, and would like to request your name be included on this list, check here .

WARD \_\_\_\_\_

PRECINCT \_\_\_\_\_

STATE OF MISSOURI  
COUNTY OF JACKSON, CITY OF KANSAS CITY

I, \_\_\_\_\_, a registered voter of  
(print name)

Kansas City (Jackson County), declare under penalties of perjury that I expect to be prevented from going to the polls on election day due to (check one):

- Absence on Election day from the jurisdiction of the Election Authority in which I am registered;
- Incapacity or confinement due to illness or physical disability, including caring for a person who is incapacitated or confined due to illness or disability (notarization NOT required 115.283);
- Religious belief or practice;
- Employment as an Election Authority or by an Election Authority at a location other than my polling place;
- Incarceration, although I have retained all the necessary qualifications for voting.

I hereby state under penalties of perjury that I am qualified to vote in this election; I have not voted and will not vote other than by this ballot at this election. I further state that I marked the enclosed ballot in secret. If I am blind, unable to read or write English, or physically incapable of marking the ballot, the person of my choosing indicated below marked the enclosed ballot at my direction. All of the information on this statement is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Voter

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address of Voter

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address (if different)

**THIS BALLOT MUST BE NOTARIZED**

(Unless you are ill, incapacitated or caring for someone who is ill or incapacitated.)

Subscribed and sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_

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**Signature of Notary**  
(or other officer authorized to administer oaths)

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**My Commission Expires**

---

**Official Capacity**

---

**County of Commission**

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**Commission Number**

The above voter needed assistance in marking and signing the ballot because of blindness, other physical disability, inability to read, or inability to read English. I marked the ballot enclosed in this envelope at the voter's direction, when I was alone with the voter, and had no other communication with the voter as to how he or she was to vote. The voter swore or affirmed the voter affidavit above and I then signed the voter's name and completed the other voter information. Signed this day under penalties of perjury:

Signature of assisting person \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name of assisting person \_\_\_\_\_

Address of assisting person \_\_\_\_\_

**THIS ENVELOPE MUST BE NOTARIZED - REASON FOR VOTING ABSENTEE MUST BE CHECKED IN APPROPRIATE BOX**

# Alternative Voting Methods

## Summary

Missouri League of Women Voters  
Early Voting Study 2009

This report, summarized for the Missouri League of Women Voters 2009 Early Voting Study, was prepared in 2008 by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC).

**The bipartisan commission was created as a result of the 2002 Help America Vote Act (HAVA), established to help state and local governments administer Federal elections.**

Section 241(b) (10) of HAVA requires EAC to study **“The feasibility and advisability of conducting elections for Federal office on different days, at different places, and during different hours, including the advisability of establishing a uniform poll closing time and establishing:**

- A. A legal public holiday under Section 6103 of Title 5, United States Code (USC) as the date on which general elections for Federal office are held;
- B. The Tuesday next after the first Monday in November in every even numbered year, as a legal public holiday under such section;
- C. A date other than the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November in every even numbered year as the date on which general elections of Federal office are held;
- D. Any data described in subparagraph D as a legal public under such section.

The study says that each alternative voting method is feasible in nearly every State because the changes to current election administration practices mostly require legislation at the local, State and / or Federal level.

The full report is at [www.eac.gov/](http://www.eac.gov/) -

(Please look for the final draft of the alternative voting methods study)

The purpose of this summary is to provide Missouri League of Women Voters with a brief review of alternate voting methods, specifically early voting, including no excuse absentee ballots, in use in other states.

We have highlighted a few items we believe will be useful for the consensus discussions.

## Texas – Early Voting

### LWV-MO - Texas takeaways:

System has been in place since **1987**, tweaked over the years.

Originally there was considerable election administrator **resistance** to rolling out early voting.

Expanded service hours, to 12 hours the week prior to the election, shows a dramatic increase in early voting. “Local election officials should consider these data when implementing an early voting process.

“If two weeks of early voting proves too expensive, the **same convenience** voting effect may still be achieved in **one week of early voting**, because it appears that most voters decide to vote as close as possible to Election Day.”

**Implementation** is beyond the scope of the study; we are sharing this information for discussion during the consensus process to show how early voting is administered in other states.

### Texas history of early voting

**1987:** Texas began implementing early voting in 1987—expanding absentee voting to allow all voters to cast a ballot before Election Day. Counties were required to offer “absentee voting in-person” at any one of their permanent election office branch locations.

**1991:** Texas State law changed to provide a **minimum standard** for the **number of early voting locations** within each county. The law also permitted creating temporary branch locations specifically for early voting.

**2003:** All counties required to implement early voting 17 days before an election.

**12 days:** Registered voters may vote between 4 and 17 days prior to the election. If the 17<sup>th</sup> day falls on a weekend, the start of early voting must occur on the first business day afterwards to reach the 12-day voting period.

**More Texans vote early:** Secretary of State Office statistics show that an increasing proportion of voters choose to vote earlier, although the total number of voters hasn’t increased.

**Election official benefits:** Election officials say shorter lines mean fewer complaints and a more efficient Election Day environment.

**Election officials reluctant to change:** Although the Texas election officials were resistant to implementing early voting, characterizing it as an unfunded mandate, today they have incorporated any costs associated with early voting into their budgets and report that they favor the alternate voting method.

**Security / fraud:** No data shows that multiple voting occurs; real-time connectivity between early voting sites and the central office poll book mitigates that threat.

**Sites:** Counties with a population of less than 100,000 are required to maintain early voting locations at the main office of the county election official and any permanent branch locations. There are statutory requirements to ensure that early voting sites are fair and politically neutral.

#### **LWV-MO background information**

Missouri Census Data Center: Of the 114 Missouri counties, these nine have more than 100,000 residents according to the 2000 census: Boone, Clay, Greene, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, St. Charles, St. Louis and City of St. Louis. The counties' total population is 3,165,813, or more than half of Missouri's population of 5.6 million. Four more counties have more than 50,000 residents: Buchanan, 85,998; Christian, 54,285; Cole, 71,397; Franklin, 93,807, totaling 305,487.

So out of 114 Missouri counties, using the Texas model, nine generally urban or basic counties with larger communities, could be affected.

**Going above and beyond:** Some Texas counties have established mobile early voting locations, intended to serve particular areas.

**Costs:** Tarrant County, which includes Ft. Worth, said the cost was \$1.70 per early voters in 2004. Harris County, with 1.9 million registered voters said the '04 Presidential election cost was \$1.14 per voter. Most expenses are attributed to personnel costs. Daily poll workers earn \$6.00 - \$7.50 an hour, supervisors at early voting locations earn \$8.49 an hour and election clerks earn \$7.92 an hour.

**Please note:** We are asking the Missouri County Clerks for election costs for comparison and to provide more data for LWV discussions.

**Technology:** There is off-the-shelf software available. Harris County, the largest county in Texas, now is using Geographic Information System (GIS) software to analyze voter trends to anticipate the need to move early voting locations to reduce lines.

**Voter turnout:** More voters vote early, but the total number of active voters generally remains the same.

**LWV-MO takeaway:**

**Conclusion: now both the public and election officials have embraced early voting.** Voters have the flexibility of choosing a convenient time and place to cast their ballots, something they may be unable or unwilling to do on Election Day; long lines at polling places and resulting consequences become less likely for local election officials on Election Day.

Continued increases in the proportion of the electorate choosing to use early voting signal that the alternative voting method has become an integral part of the election process by Texas voters.

**Illinois and Maryland: Public Holiday**

**(Please note, a state public holiday is beyond the scope of the LWV-MO study.)**

Nine states have an Election Day holiday: Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland, Montana, New Jersey and West Virginia. The EAC studied Illinois and Maryland.

Maryland made Election Day a holiday in 1882; Illinois 1943. The basis for the holiday is to make it easier, more convenient, for working people to vote, although it is not a Federal holiday and those offices are open and services available.

The two most significant benefits are the ability to use schools as a polling place and the availability of state workers as poll workers.

EAC statistical analysis shows little difference in voter age population voting between states with a holiday, 50.6 percent compared to the national turnout of 50.0 percent in the 2000 election.

## Oregon – Vote by mail

**LWV-MO takeaway:** although voting by mail now is popular, it took an initiative petition to overcome legislature resistance to change the Oregon voting system to allow mail-in ballots, starting in 1981 with mail-in ballots for non-candidate (issue only) elections. Now both citizens and elected officials embrace early / mail-in ballots.

**1981:** The Oregon legislature approved vote-by-mail for local elections in which no candidates were on the ballot. The process has evolved now to include special elections, statewide elections, primaries and Federal elections. Today election officials now administer all elections exclusively with vote-by-mail.

**1987:** Vote-by-mail option made permanent. The legislation required all county clerks be certified to conduct vote-by-mail elections. However, county clerks maintained the option to conduct precinct-based or vote-by-mail elections; statewide primary and general elections were excluded.

**1993:** First special statewide election by mail garners 39 percent turnout

**1995:** Second special statewide election by mail has 44 percent turnout  
Legislature passes a bill to use vote-by-mail for the Presidential preference primary.

**1996:** Oregon conducts general election by mail with 66 percent turnout and holds second vote-by-mail Presidential primary with 58 percent turnout.

**1998:** Initiative to expand vote-by-mail to primary and general elections is on the November general election ballot. The initiative passes by a 2 to 1 margin.

**2000:** First vote-by-mail Presidential general election: 79.8 percent turnout.

**2002:** Vote-by-mail general election – 69 percent turnout.

**2004:** Vote-by-mail Presidential election -86.5 percent turnout.

**2006:** Vote-by-mail general election, 70 percent turnout.

**Resistance:** Early on, legislators were hesitant to make vote-by-mail permanent, and as a result, election officials were unwilling to accommodate changing from precinct-based voting to a vote-by-mail system. Progressive Secretaries of State and increasing voter turnout helped encourage vote-by-mail.

**Ultimately it took a ballot initiative to get vote-by-mail in place.**

**Cost:** Oregon county election administrators estimate that a vote-by-mail election would cost about half the amount of a precinct-based

election with a high rate of absentee voting because of the cost to process absentee ballots.

**Vote by mail benefits:** No recruiting, training and managing poll workers, no need to secure numerous polling places. **Voter lists are more accurate** because ballots cannot be forwarded and the Post Office provides the new address when available. Vote-by-mail may cost less than precinct-based elections and may increase voter turnout.

**Security Plan:** Before the beginning of voting, the counties must file a security plan with the SoS office describing **security measures at ballot drop off sites** and for **transporting ballots to** the central office to be counted. The plan also covers off-premises sites used during the vote-by-mail election, including locations of vendors where ballots are assembled and mailed.

**Ballot process, protection:** Most counties use a three-envelope system that includes a secrecy envelope, a return-mail envelope and the original mail-out envelope. After voting, s/he seals the ballot in the secrecy envelope. The secrecy envelope goes into the return-mail envelope that includes voter identification information and signature. Election officials check to make certain the signatures match, and once approved, the secrecy envelope containing the ballot is separated. If the signature appears not to match, the voter is notified and has 10 days after the election to establish their identity.

The U.S. Post Office helps plan the ballot mass mailings, and on election day, allows election officials to pick up ballots at 8 p.m. for counting.

**Fraud, problems:** Some residents may move and not cancel their voter registration at that location, there was concern about "ballot parties," where voters would be coerced into voting one way or another but **all investigations have found no issues.**

The Help America Vote Act requires all voting systems must be available to the handicapped and the SoS has implemented several systems to assist them.

**LWV-MO point of information:** A legal challenge saying that the first Tuesday after the first Monday was the exclusive day for voting lost in the courts.

The 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit, upholding the District Court's ruling said: "the Supreme Court has provided the device for reconciling the federal election day

statute and the federal absentee voting statute: a definition of 'election' that treats election day as the 'consummation' of the process rather than any day during which voting takes place. Given that definition, and the force of the absentee voting statute, Oregon complies with the federal Election Day statute. Although voting takes place, perhaps most voting, prior to election day the election is not 'consummated' before election day because voting still takes place on that day." (The Voting Integrity Project, Inc. et al v. Phil Keisling, Secretary of State of Oregon, 259 F.3d 1169, 1176 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2001).

**Conclusion:** Today Oregon's vote-by-mail is widely supported by both the public and election administrators.

The **benefit to administrators** is improved oversight of the election—working in a vote processing facility, rather than in hundreds of precincts staffed by poll workers.

The **benefit to voters** is that it removes traditional barriers to voting, including transportation and inaccessibility and citizens can study ballot issues before voting.

## Colorado Vote Centers

**LWV-MO takeaway:** If Missouri instituted the Colorado voting center plan as described in the EAC study, and purchased electronic poll books for signature comparison, of the 114 Missouri counties, 90 counties have a population of more than 10,000 and would need electronic poll books (for voter rolls and signature comparison). The capital cost for poll books in Colorado are offset by reduction in election operating costs because of the need for fewer poll workers, sites and voting machines.

**Vote centers** are an alternative method of voting that provide additional convenience to voters on Election Day. Rather than using traditional neighborhood precincts, citizens may vote at any of the larger, strategically located polling sites located throughout the county on Election Day. Progressive election officials in Columbia, Mo., use vote centers.

Early voting begins **two weeks before Election Day**, in specific locations open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. In Larimer County, one of 20 Colorado counties using vote centers, their **five early voting sites convert to vote centers** on Election Day.

According to data collected following the '04 and '06 Federal elections, **finding the correct polling place is one of the biggest difficulties** faced by a voter on that first Tuesday in November.

Vote centers are located in high profile, major traffic areas. Vote centers could reduce the number of provisional ballots needed for each election, because any registered voter can choose to vote in any vote center.

**Easier to administer:** Larger centers are easier to administer than many smaller polling places. It's easier to find ADA-compliant facilities; election officials can use the most efficient workers at the vote centers, rather than trying to staff hundreds of small locations with whomever they can find to work. Workers are better trained: Larimer County, Colo., provides eight hours of training for the voting centers, plus training for their specific job. Electronic poll books track real-time voter information.

**Requirements:** Vote centers must be equipped with secure electronic connections for the poll book. The county clerk must consult with all parties during the site selection and have one vote center for every 10,000 voters. (LWV note: Missouri has 25 counties with a population of less than 10,000.)

**Costs:** Vote centers require larger polling locations, but the economies of scale offset some of administering an election because local officials need fewer poll workers, sites and machines. The county used existing servers and retired PCs, saving technology costs. The number of Election Day judges dropped 50 percent because of moving from precinct-based voting.

The poll book, designed to process a voter every 30 seconds, is a one-time \$165,000 cost, amortized across many elections. Today election officials can develop an electronic list of who has voted, thus helping campaigns with their get-out-the-vote activities.

**Communicate changes for success:** In May 2003, county clerk sent a letter to all county voters and included a form to request an absentee ballot. September 2003, a second mailing, including a signature card, went to voters to encourage early voting. Voters were encouraged to review the county clerk's elections web page. Editorials were sent to local newspapers, advertising, and fliers were used. Households interested in election dates, events and activities receive a quarterly electronic newsletter.

**Conclusion:** In a culture where home, work and recreation facilities may be distributed all across a metropolitan area and where extensive commuting is the norm, it makes sense to do what retailers have done for decades—provide multiple convenient locations for mobile Americans.

## Delaware, Louisiana and Texas - Weekend Voting

**LWV-MO takeaway:** our society has changed; we're more mobile, we have more schedule demands. For those with children, both (or all) parents tend to be in the workforce and are juggling day care, homework and work schedules.

Our current first Tuesday in November Election Day is based on an agrarian society.

Today the U.S. population is 285 million, and of that, less than 1 percent claim farming as an occupation.

The U.S. EPA (Ag 101) says there are fewer than 1 million (960,000) claiming farming as their principal occupation and about the same number who live on a farm, but have other occupations.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005, say that there are 75.6 million who earn wages or salaries at an hourly rate, or 60.2 percent of the total U.S. workforce of more than 125 million. Of these workers, more than 1.4 million earn less than the current minimum wage level (at that time) of \$5.15.

By far the largest category of farms is the residential / lifestyle farm, at 834,300, followed by 422,200 farms with crop sales of less than \$100,000.

As a point of information, Missouri's population is just over 5.9 million, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Federal elections cannot be conducted entirely on the weekend, but it is possible to allow citizens to vote over the weekend. Louisiana and Delaware allow Saturday voting/

Introduced in the U.S. Senate, the Weekend Voting Act proposed making the first Saturday and Sunday after the first Friday in November.

Since 1959, all **Louisiana** elections occur on Saturdays with the exception of Federal contests, required by to be held on that Tuesday in November. Louisiana believes it is more convenient for the workforce. Other benefits include voters feel less rushed the polls, since their personal schedule is more flexible, there are fewer poll worker errors because voting is spread out over the entire day, rather than the before and after work and during the lunch hour rushes.

Louisiana law requires all public buildings be available to host a polling place on Election without cost to the parish (county). Louisiana officials say turnout depends on the measures and / or candidates on the ballot.

**Delaware** has conducted primary elections on Saturdays. Because of pushback from both Jewish and Christian groups, Delaware moved their primary elections back to Tuesdays.

**Texas**, in its 1987 law requiring 12 days of early voting prior to the general Federal election, includes Saturday and Sunday. There has been no appreciable change in the total number of voters.

Texas state law allows the polling place to chare an additional fee for overtime and administrative overhead on top of the base rate. The average extra cost for a Saturday polling place is \$250.

Texas election officials say voter turnout is based on candidate and issues, rather than the specific Election Day.

Studies show there some additional costs for Saturday elections, including overtime pay, higher weekend pay for facility maintenance and security personnel and the increased cost to rent polling places. Both weekend days would cost more because of overnight ballot and polling place security.

The Election Assistance Commission says that weekend voting could lead to an increase for absentee ballots, with 31 states offering no-excuse absentee ballots.

**Puerto Rico** established absentee and early voting in 1974. In 1980 the state made provisions for prisoner voting; in 2004 Hospital and Domicile/Bedridden Voting. All alternative methods are restricted to specific groups of people. Prisoner, hospital and bedridden voting takes place the day before that Tuesday in November.

Absentee ballots, which must be requested 60 days in advance, are generally related to employment, for example, police officers, firefighters, students and active duty National Guard.

Those on essential duty can vote in person the day before the local election; eligible citizens include those working on Election Day and prison guards.

Voters who aren't found on the rolls cast a provisional ballot in a provisional precinct within the existing polling places. These ballots are authenticated before being counted, and are transported separately from other ballots.

### **Uniform Poll Closing**

**(Please note, this is outside the scope of the LWV-MO Early Voting Study.)**

HAVA requires discussing uniform poll closing time to ensure that voters on the west coast aren't affected by announced election returns from the east coast. Research shows that knowing the east coast results influences voters.

In 1985 the House of Representatives passed legislation regarding uniform poll closing. In 2002 the Senate passed similar legislation. According to the Constitution, the responsibility for regulating the time, place and manner for holding Federal elections rests with Congress.

A Congressional mandate to close the polls at 9 p.m. Eastern Standard Time would affect the closing time in 40 States. According to the National Association of Secretaries of State, States would likely resist any Federal mandate to change polling place hours.

The EAC report was to cover alternative voting methods to expand the ease and convenience of voting. A uniform poll closing would add to the inconvenience of voters in western time zones by shortening the amount of time available to vote and lengthening the poll times on the east coast.

## **Responses from other LWV about Early Voting Study**

### **South Carolina:**

Like LWVNC, the LWVSC didn't undertake a study of early voting. We have supported EV legislation for several legislative sessions, based on our position in support of government procedures that ensure citizen participation in democratic processes, including voting. Heavy voter turnout in the 2008 elections elicited a groundswell of support for early voting--from citizens and state election officials. However, a good bill got bogged down in the legislative session that recently adjourned when some legislators added a voter photo ID provision to EV. Their strategy--for EV to be the honey that makes the bitter photo ID pill go down--didn't work. But the bill will come up again when the session resumes in January. The LWV, in coalition with other non-partisan groups, is opposing photo ID.

Barbara Zia

President

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### **North Carolina:**

The LWVNC has not done a study but supported early voting in NC as a move to more open and accessible elections.. It has worked very well here and people like it a lot. One thing, it has not always solved the problem of long waits in line but people (like myself) like it because it's at their convenience. Many think it played a part in raising voter turnout in the 2008 elections.

The LWVNC worked with a coalition of groups to push this forward.

Mary Klenz

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**Texas:** I'm writing to let you know that we did not include early voting in our recent study of Voting Procedures to Increase Voter Participation, because the state of Texas has had early voting in place for about several years now. It seems to work very well, and when you are researching different states early voting procedures, I recommend you look at Texas statutes on it.

If you want to have your chairs contact me, I would be glad to give them a brief nutshell on how it is done here

Our voting procedures study included vote by mail, Internet voting, election day registration, election day centralized voting, and instant runoff voting.

Janet Imhoff

Program VP, LWV-Texas

## Wisconsin

### Election Administration Discussion/Consensus Responses – Janesville LWV

2-18-2009 Based on interviews with 3 municipal clerks (2 cities, 1 town)

#### 1. Early Voting Vs. Absentee Voting

**DISCUSS:** What are the advantages and disadvantages of early voting vs. in-person absentee voting?

- **Advantages:**

**Early voting:** fewer steps in the voting and counting process; mistakes can be corrected by the voter; spreads the workload out -- less burden on municipal clerk time prior to election day, poll workers don't have to take care of absentee ballots; voters see that their ballot actually registers on a counting machine.

**Absentee voting:** votes counted with ward totals –doesn't require an additional step.

- **Disadvantages:**

**Early voting:** How votes are secured -. a system would need to be developed.

Towns may not have regular "open hours" to accommodate standard state-wide early voting hours. Would county need to provide location for citizen residents outside cities? Real cost for machines and staff time should be researched.

**Absentee voting:** Requires many steps on part of clerk staff and poll workers. Each step means time = dollars. Process is more involved, resulted in long lines at clerk's office. Corrections handled by poll workers, if possible to interpret intent.

**Both:** Security of votes or ballots necessary. May increase opportunity for double voting – fraud. EX. Risk arrest and Vote early in one district, register and vote on election day in second district. Die after early vote is counted or absentee ballot is submitted. We recognize the incidence of these examples would be very limited.

**CONSENSUS:** Should Wisconsin move to a true early voting system?

Yes  no

If yes:

What precautions should be included?

- 1) Security for vote totals.
- 2) Recognize and accommodate different time and staff realities for towns and cities.
- 3) Continue absentee voting option for those who cannot vote in person.

Should the state provide additional resources (read \$) to municipalities for early voting, possibly based on the percentage of absentee/early voters in the last presidential election?

Would early voting really cost more? Possibly it would save money. Data is needed. This is not a good time to ask the state for more \$.

## **Election Administration Discussion/Consensus Responses - Janesville LWV**

**2-18-2009**

### **2. Expanding Access to the Polls**

Rate the following in preferential order for being the most effective and suitable to Wisconsin to expand access to the polls:

**Comments:** The list includes only two policies that we favor. We do not believe the other options would improve access and voter turnout.

#### **Support:**

Weekend voting

Early voting

#### **Do not support:**

Expanding voting hours

School holiday election day

Election day state holiday

Internet voting

Voting by mail

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**Election Administration Discussion/Consensus Responses – Janesville LWV**

**2-18-2009**

**3. Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS) Matching, Non-matches and Purging**

**DISCUSS:** Should the authority for setting the procedures for confirming voter eligibility remain with the Government Accountability Board or should it be a function of the legislature?

It should stay with the Government Accountability Board. The legislature is not trusted to create a system free of political bias.

**DISCUSS:** It **IS** current law, but should *not voting* within a four year period remove you from the voting list?

Yes. It cleans up the voter list. As long as folks can re-register at the polls when they discover (are reminded) that they have been removed.

**CONSENSUS:** Should the use of the HAVA checks of new registrations against other state databases remain a function of improving the quality of the Statewide Voter Registration lists? Yes

- comments:

Or should the HAVA checks of new registrations be used to determine voter eligibility resulting in purging names from the SVRS? No

- COMMENTS:

Additional ELECTION ADMINISTRATION issues the League should address?

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Study the possibility that Instant Run-off could eliminate the spring primary there by reducing the cost of the non-partisan spring election. We would question combining the non-partisan races with the partisan ones in the fall elections.



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ROBIN CARNAHAN  
SECRETARY OF STATE  
STATE OF MISSOURI

April 1, 2009

Dear Fellow Missourians,

Fair and secure elections are the foundation of our representative democracy. Every eligible Missourian has the right to cast a ballot and have their vote counted. As Secretary of State, I am committed to safeguarding the integrity of our elections through commonsense efforts that increase security and accessibility in our voting system.

In 2008, Local Election Authorities and poll workers across the state prepared diligently for high voter turnout. Thanks to their efforts, a record 2.9 million Missourians cast ballots in the November Presidential Election. Over 24,000 poll workers assisted voters by checking them in, setting up electronic voting equipment, managing long lines and ensuring ballots were counted correctly. In fact, all three statewide elections in 2008 went smoothly, which is a tribute to the hard work of Missouri's dedicated local officials and devoted volunteers.

This report, entitled *Voters First: An Examination of the 2008 State and Federal Elections in Missouri*, takes a closer look at the common themes that emerged during the February Presidential Preference Primary, the August Primary and the November General Election. It takes into account reports that my office received from voters, poll workers, local officials, and the media pertaining to the 2008 elections in Missouri.

With this report, I hope to provide not only a detailed record of the successes and challenges of the 2008 elections, but also ideas about how we can continue to improve our elections system for all Missourians.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Robin Carnahan'.

Robin Carnahan  
Secretary of State

## Executive Summary of the 2008 Elections

The 2008 elections saw more Missourians participate than ever before, with over 340,000 registering to vote for the first time in the state and record-breaking turnout on November 4<sup>th</sup>. This report examines all three elections: the February 5<sup>th</sup> Presidential Preference Primary, the August 5<sup>th</sup> Primary, and the November 4<sup>th</sup> General Election. The findings of this report include an analysis of more than 300 separate issues reported to the Secretary of State's office, as well as information from Local Election Authorities, poll workers, and news stories from around the state.<sup>1</sup>

Due to the diligent efforts of Local Election Authorities, polling places across Missouri were staffed with well-trained poll workers and supplied with enough ballots to meet the record turnout. Increased security checks on voting machines and expanded training for poll workers allowed a record number of Missourians to cast their ballots with confidence in a system that is accurate, fair and transparent.

There are areas in which Missouri election administration can be further improved to provide more confidence, convenience and privacy for voters. This report identifies opportunities to expand voter education efforts with regard to the primary election process and use of voting equipment. Military voters, in particular, are often unaware of opportunities available to expedite casting a ballot from overseas. Long lines, especially in urban areas, continue to be an obstacle for some voters. Additionally, voters were asked to present a photo or signature ID at some locations, despite not being required to under Missouri law. However, the number of such reports has decreased 50 percent compared to the 2006 General Election.

The most common issue reported during the 2008 election cycle related to the registration and eligibility of voters. Although over 500,000 Missourians updated their name or address before the November General Election, others reported that they were unaware of the requirements to update their address if they moved. Some voters reported that they believed they were properly registered but were not in the poll books on Election Day.

During all three elections, there were no reports of voter impersonation fraud. A statewide voter registration database allowed Local Election Authorities to verify the identity of new voters and ensure clean, accurate registration lists. Questionable registration applications were submitted in some counties but were identified before they were added to the rolls.

In summary, this report finds that Missouri's election system is secure and accurate; yet there is always room for improvement. Increased poll worker and voter education efforts, along with continued improvements to the voter registration system, will increase confidence and convenience for Missouri voters.

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<sup>1</sup> Any issue reported to the Secretary of State's Office was referred to the appropriate local official for review and any action deemed necessary.

## A. Registration and Eligibility

During the 2008 election cycle, the most common issue reported to the Secretary of State's Office concerned voter registration or eligibility. Local Election Authorities (LEAs) processed a record number of new voter registrations and address changes, with over 340,000 registering for the first time in Missouri before November 4<sup>th</sup>.

*One out of every three issues reported during the 2008 election cycle concerned voter registration and eligibility.*

On each Election Day, calls showed that many voters across the state were unsure of the process to register for the first time or update their address.<sup>1</sup> Even in situations where voters made efforts to register properly, there were still isolated incidents where their name did not appear in the poll book on Election Day.

### Voters Who Move: Confusion Regarding Registration

During the 2008 election cycle, over 500,000 Missourians updated their name or address. Several voters, however, called to report that they were not aware of Missouri law regarding registration requirements. In Missouri, voters must update their address and vote at the polling place for their current address. If a voter moves into a new voting jurisdiction they must re-register.<sup>2</sup> The Secretary of State's Office regularly fielded calls from voters who had moved and wanted to know what steps they should take in order to vote.

To assist Missourians who had recently moved to a new address, the Secretary of State's Office mailed voting information and a registration application to all registered voters who also appeared on the USPS National Change of Address (NCOA) list.<sup>3</sup> The mailing list included over 200,000 registered voters who, according to the postal service, had moved to a new address but had not updated their voter registration information. Nearly 25,000 registration applications were returned by voters, helping to ensure these Missourians could cast their ballot on Election Day.

*During the 2008 election cycle, over half of a million Missourians updated their name or address.*

In some situations, Missouri law allows those who have moved to vote even if they did not update their address before Election Day. If a voter moves within their county or city jurisdiction, they may update their address on Election Day provided they go to their

current polling place or a central location. If a voter moves to a new jurisdiction after the registration deadline, they may cast a ballot for federal and statewide issues from their new jurisdiction.<sup>4</sup>

Unfortunately, a handful of incidents were reported in which poll workers were not aware of these procedures. Frustrated voters called to report they waited in line at multiple polling places, only to be turned away. A St. Louis County voter "waited in line for two hours" at her old polling location. After she signed the poll book, poll workers directed her to her new polling place. She was then informed she would not be able to vote because she "already signed the book." Another voter, who moved after the registration deadline, was "told by St. Louis County that he needed to vote in St. Charles, and St. Charles told him that he needed to vote the "short" ballot in St. Louis County." In Jasper County, a

<sup>1</sup> Election Day Call Logs, appendix pg. 139-173

<sup>2</sup> Missouri statute, Section 115.135, RSMo

<sup>3</sup> National Change of Address mailer, appendix pg. 33-34

<sup>4</sup> Missouri statute, Section 115.277, RSMo

voter went to his “old polling location and was directed to [his] new location,” but the “new location sent him back to the old location.”



Although rare, these calls highlight the importance of poll worker training. If a voter is not listed in the poll book, they may cast a provisional ballot. Under Missouri law, provisional ballots will only count if cast at the correct polling place or a central location, so it is essential that voters understand this requirement.<sup>5</sup> In November, one voter reported that individuals at his polling place who were not in the poll book were “being sent away without a chance to vote a provisional ballot.”



***“One woman thought when she changed her address at the post office that included voting.”***  
***- November 4<sup>th</sup> Poll Worker***

### **Education Efforts by Local Election Authorities**

Across the state, LEAs reported that they expanded their voter education efforts compared to previous elections. Radio ads, articles, speaking engagements, emails, mailings and newspaper flyers all focused on making sure voters knew how to check their registration and where to go vote. Buchanan County created public service announcements to run on local television, sent out emails to all county and school employees, and ran a flyer in the local newspaper. St. Louis City mailed each registered voter a sample ballot and Election Day information. Other counties reported similar programs.

### **List of Registered Voters**

In preparation for the 2008 election cycle, the Secretary of State’s Office continued to work closely with LEAs to ensure voter rolls were accurate. Missouri’s first statewide voter registration database has been used since 2006. The Missouri Centralized Voter Registration system (MCVR) automatically compares the information of each new registrant against state and federal databases to confirm the identity of the voter. Since its implementation, the statewide database has enhanced the ability of LEAs to remove duplicates, deceased persons and felons from the rolls.



LEAs follow the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) while conducting their list maintenance activities. NVRA contains specific safeguards to ensure eligible voters are not improperly removed from the rolls during this process. The Secretary of State’s Office routinely provides reminders and training to LEAs, as well as monitoring their list maintenance activities.

***Over 340,000 voters registered for the first time in Missouri during 2008.***

During the 2008 election cycle, over 340,000 new voter registrations were processed by LEAs in addition to the 500,000 address or name changes. Despite improvements made in the voter registration system, approximately two dozen voters called to report that they were not listed in their poll books when they



believed they were properly registered to vote. Of these, five voters believed that they had registered at the Department of Motor Vehicles but their registration was not correctly processed. A Nodaway County voter reported “she asked to be registered when she got her Missouri driver’s license, but documents indicated she said ‘No.’” In response to this issue, one LEA remarked that the questions asked by the DMV can be confusing to voters: when asked “Are you registered?” many voters will answer “yes” without realizing they need to re-register in their new county.

<sup>5</sup> Missouri statute, Section 115.430, RSMo

Four voters reported that they were not able to cast a ballot because they were incorrectly listed as convicted felons in the poll books. One LEA confirmed that a voter's name matched that of a convicted felon and was incorrectly removed from the rolls. The LEA "got it straightened out... and changed in the computer. I called [the voter] back and they were allowed to vote." In another case, a LEA reported that the local parole officer was contacted, and they "assured the clerk [the individual was] not eligible to vote."

A few voters reported they were not in the poll book because, they believed, their registration was accidentally transferred to another county when a voter by the same name registered. In February, a Greene County voter reported they "cast a provisional ballot" when they were not in the poll book. The LEA confirmed that their "information had accidentally been transferred to Kansas City where another voter with the same name was registered," and "affirmed that the caller's vote would be counted." In St. Louis County, a voter reported that he was "dropped from the voting records" when he moved to St. Louis City because he "shares his name with his son." The voter reported that the LEA "verified" that the son's registration was updated "on the date that the father moved," rather than registering the father to vote.

### Identifying Questionable Registration Applications

Before the November 4<sup>th</sup> election, the LEA in Jackson County identified questionable voter registration applications that had been submitted. Due to the diligent efforts of election officials and the safeguards built into the Missouri Centralized Voter Registration system, these applications were identified before they were placed on the voter rolls. The Secretary of State's Office immediately recommended that the questionable applications be forwarded to the Jackson County Prosecutor and the United States Attorney.<sup>6</sup> The same recommendation was given when other questionable applications were identified in Clay County and Kansas City.

*Questionable applications were identified before they were added to the voter rolls.*

Anyone who knowingly submits a falsified voter registration application faces strict penalties under Missouri law. Anyone found guilty of this election offense faces a felony charge that includes permanently removing an individual's right to vote, imprisonment up to five years and a fine of up to \$10,000.<sup>7</sup> The Secretary of State's Office supports legislation that will increase penalties for these crimes and provides for stricter oversight of the voter registration process.

<sup>6</sup> Letter to Jackson County Board of Elections, appendix pg. 121

<sup>7</sup> Missouri statute, Sections 115.631, RSMo and 115.155, RSMo

## B. Voting Equipment

*November 4<sup>th</sup> was the first time  
Missourians voted for President  
using the new voting machines.*

Equipment-related issues were rare during the 2008 election cycle. When concerns were reported, most occurred because poll workers and voters were continuing to adapt to the operation of the electronic voting machines, which are relatively new in Missouri elections. November 4<sup>th</sup> was the first time Missourians cast a vote for President using the new technology. Post-election audits and multiple recounts have consistently shown that Missouri's new voting technology is reliable and accurate.

### New Voting Technologies

As part of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), Missouri Local Election Authorities (LEAs) completed phasing out the remaining punch-card voting systems in 2006. The vast majority of Missouri's 116 voting jurisdictions now rely on paper ballots as their primary voting method. Paper ballots are counted by an optical scan machine.

Federal law also requires each polling place to have one voting system accessible to individuals with disabilities, such as a direct-recording electronic machine (DRE).<sup>1</sup> DREs record votes using a digital touch screen, and are equipped with large-text or audio options for the visually or physically impaired. In Missouri, all DREs feature a voter-verified paper audit trail (VVPAT) so voters are able to double-check a paper record of their vote before it is cast.<sup>2</sup>

### Expanded Education Efforts

In preparation for the 2008 election cycle, the Secretary of State's Office developed and distributed additional resources to improve the security of voting equipment across the state. A manual for LEAs, "Best Practices for Voting System Security," includes recommendations for the secure storage and use of voting machines.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, the Secretary of State's Office provided poll workers with step-by-step videos and manuals for the set-up, start-up, troubleshooting, and shut-down of voting machines. More than 6,000 poll worker guides were distributed across the state.<sup>4</sup>

*Post-election audits and  
multiple recounts have  
shown Election Day vote  
totals are accurate.*

### Increased Security Checks

In order to increase voter confidence during the high-turnout November election, the Secretary of State's Office filed a rule to strengthen the post-election audit procedures.<sup>5</sup> Audit rules require comparison of electronically tabulated results with a hand recount of votes in randomly selected precincts in each county to ensure the



accuracy of voting equipment. The new rules increased the number of precincts audited after every election from one percent to at least five percent, giving Missouri one of the most stringent audit standards in the country.<sup>6</sup>

Post-election audits have confirmed that Election Day vote totals were accurate. To alleviate the

<sup>1</sup> HAVA, 2002, 42 USC 15481

<sup>2</sup> Map of Voting Systems Used in Missouri by County, appendix pg. 199

<sup>3</sup> Best Practices for Voting System Security, appendix pg. 131-134

<sup>4</sup> Training Materials for Poll Workers, appendix pg. 87

<sup>5</sup> Proposed Audit Rule, appendix pg. 135-137

<sup>6</sup> 15 CSR 30-10.110.

financial burden on Missouri's counties, any increase in cost associated with the revised audit rule was eligible for reimbursement by the Secretary of State's Office.

## Election Day Issues

In 2008, there were 12 reports of optical scan machines that were not functioning properly. In these cases, ballots should have been placed in a predetermined, secure location by poll workers. Voters reported in some cases that poll workers instructed them to put their paper ballots in a variety of places, such as “with the provisionals,” “in an envelope,” “in a pile under the machine,” or “in a cardboard box.” Several voters confronted with this situation expressed concern that their vote would not count. All poll workers should be trained on procedures for securely storing paper ballots if an optical scan machine is not functioning. Poll worker training on procedures to follow in the event of a non-functioning machine is essential for voter confidence and ballot security.

***Poll worker training on procedures in the event of a non-functioning machine is essential for voter confidence.***

***“Many voters became frustrated because they thought they could save time by using the touch screen, but found that it actually took longer.”***

***- Johnson County Poll Worker***

A few isolated incidents were reported concerning touch-screen DRE machines. In November, a Boone County voter reported that a DRE machine displayed “error – incomplete ballot” when he attempted to cast his vote. In St. Louis County, a voter reported that a DRE would only let her vote on ballot issues and not candidates. Another St. Louis County voter reported that a DRE “flipped” her

vote. However, she could see the error printed on the paper trail and was able to “easily correct it” before casting her ballot. The Secretary of State's Office only received one report of a non-functioning voter-verified paper trail from a voter in Kansas City.

The number of reports of voting equipment issues decreased significantly from 2006. There were 20 percent fewer reports of equipment issues in November 2008 compared with the General Election in November 2006. This suggests poll worker training and voter education efforts have been successful.

## Accuracy of Voting Equipment

Elections in Missouri are often close, with some contests being decided by very narrow margins. Missouri law provides that any candidate who was defeated by less than one percent of the votes cast shall have the right to a recount of the votes cast for that office.<sup>7</sup> During the 2008 election cycle, there were several close contests that resulted in the defeated candidate requesting a recount. Following procedures developed by the Secretary of State's Office, all LEAs in Missouri participated in the recount process in 2008. Vote totals from recounts closely mirrored the vote totals reported on election night, with most changes resulting from a closer examination of individual ballots to determine voter intent.

<sup>7</sup> Missouri statute, Section 115.601, RSMo

