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September 30, 2010

ELECTRONIC OPTIONS MOVE THE VOTE

All voters have at least one option for getting a blank ballot electronically

Voting for military members, their families and overseas citizens is easier now than ever before. More than half the States post absentee ballots online for military and overseas voters. Additionally, voters from all 55 states and territories can use the FVAP online Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot automated assistant to vote for at least all federal candidates. For specifics of what each of these states has available including links to the state specific sites, see the attached Electronic Voting Systems Fact Sheet.

In 2009, President Obama signed the Military and Overseas Voters Empowerment Act (MOVE Act) into law. MOVE Act requires all states to provide blank absentee ballots in at least one electronic format – email, an online ballot delivery system or fax – at least 45 days before an election.

To jump-start the electronic voting support process for military and overseas voters, FVAP offered the federally funded Electronic Voting Support Wizard (EVSZ). This system develops State-designed and operated absentee ballot delivery websites, accessible through FVAP.gov, that allow voters to mark their precinct-specific absentee ballots, and then print, sign and submit by the methods allowed (mail, email, fax or online delivery system). In addition to EVSZ, other States produced their own online ballot marking systems. As these systems vary by state, refer to the Electronic Voting Systems Fact Sheet for specifics.

Finally, FVAP produced the online Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot automated assistant which allows voters to access and mark an online ballot for federal elections. This is a back-up ballot if the voter does not get their regular State absentee ballot, where the voter can select their candidates online, print the ballot with the choices printed out on the ballot, sign the oath and return the ballot package by whatever means is allowed by the state (mail, email, fax or online system). The automated assistant provides voters a complete federal ballot specific by Congressional district with all instructions necessary to return the ballot to the election office.

In the end, the voter gets more time to review, mark, and return their ballot by the State deadlines. Being stationed or living away from home means it takes longer for ballots to get to and from voters. Past research shows late delivery of ballots is a top reason why absentee ballots from military and overseas voters are not counted. The combination of these systems and early ballot availability means that voters can have their ballot in hand to vote and return 45 days or longer before an election.

Additional information

For more information, visit FVAP at: www.fvap.gov.

We want your feedback! If you would like more information on the Federal Voting Assistance Program or need help with the absentee voting process, please contact FVAP at www.fvap.gov, 1-800-438-8683, DSN (312) 425-1584, or at vote@fvap.gov. Toll-free phone numbers from 67 countries are listed at:

www.fvap.gov/contact/tollfreephone.html. With your feedback, we can make this even more helpful for the next election.