

For Immediate Release

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EAC Issues Voluntary Guidance on Statewide Voter Registration Lists

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) has issued voluntary guidance on the implementation of statewide voter registration lists, which will help states make sure voter registration information is accurate, secure and updated on a regular basis. The guidance is available at www.eac.gov.

EAC's voluntary guidance will help states make informed decisions about the best ways to manage and maintain these lists. The implementation of statewide voter registration lists is a requirement of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA).

"Implementing statewide voter registration lists is a huge task for the states, and this guidance was issued to help them successfully meet this HAVA requirement," said EAC Chair Gracia Hillman. "This was truly a collaborative effort, involving election officials and other experts as well as the general public, all of whom worked with us to make sure this guidance would be useful and practical. We thank them for their efforts."

To formulate the voluntary guidance, EAC consulted with election officials, including those who were already using statewide voter registration lists, and technology and database experts. In May, EAC released draft guidance and received more than 300 comments from election officials, public interest groups and the general public. Each comment was considered and as a result, the document was reorganized to improve readability, definitions were expanded, and guidance about security, registration coordination and list maintenance was expanded.

The voluntary guidance includes definitions of common terms and covers topics such as the types of databases that meet HAVA requirements, coordination with state and federal agencies, voter verification, list maintenance, record retention and security protocols.

HAVA requires that each state develop, maintain and administer a single, statewide list of registered voters, and the law directs EAC to issue voluntary guidance to assist states in their efforts to interpret and implement these lists. HAVA stipulates that a statewide voter registration list must be a single, uniform, centralized, interactive, computerized list that is centrally managed at the state level.

This guidance is voluntary. States can choose to adopt this guidance to assist in their efforts to implement the HAVA-mandated statewide voter registration list, or they may create their own policies and procedures. EAC will continue working with election officials and experts to explore technical issues related to the maintenance and upgrade of these statewide lists and issue additional guidance as necessary.

EAC is an independent bipartisan commission created by HAVA. It is charged with administering payments to states and developing guidance to meet HAVA requirements, implementing election administration improvements, adopting voluntary voting system guidelines and serving as a national clearinghouse and resource of information regarding election administration.

There are three EAC commissioners -- Gracia Hillman, chair; Paul DeGregorio, vice chairman; and Ray Martinez III. One vacancy currently exists.