

2006

Help America
Vote Act
HAVA

The Status of the Help America
Vote Act (HAVA) in Iowa

Provided by Secretary of State
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July 2006

OVERVIEW

Since the last Status Report on the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) implementation in Iowa (December 14, 2005) the office of the Secretary of State and the 99 county auditors have been busy acquiring and testing new HAVA compliant voting machines, training and operating the new statewide voter registration system, finishing accessibility projects for polling place and putting in place new precinct election official training programs. It's been a very busy 6 months.

This abbreviated 6 month report is a summary of those activities.

Legislative Activity

The 2006 session of the General did not pass any bills of major impact in HAVA implementation.

The Secretary of State adopted several sets of administrative rules in the last 6 months dealing with:

- Duplicate and felon voter processing in IVOTERS
- Voting equipment setup and testing
- Voting system security
- Repeal of Voter Registration rules for local systems

Financial Oversight

Attached is a current, end of fiscal year 2006 report of HAVA receipts and expenditures. This report was produced July 17 and does not include the final fiscal year data.

Please note the higher than expected revenue from investment interest. This is due to the delivery of voting systems to counties at dates that were later than originally budgeted. Also note that almost \$24 million of the \$31.5 million budget has been expended.

Most counties have received all of their respective allocation for voting systems. See the separate spreadsheet for voting systems payments. A few counties have not submitted final requests for payment but are expected to do during fiscal year '07. It is expected that all of the funds budgeted for voting systems will be spent by the counties.

The IVOTERS voter registration project is now complete. Unspent funds in that line item of the budget will be re-allocated to the maintenance and support of the IVOTERS system.

ACCESSIBILITY AND DISABILITY ISSUES

Every precinct had new accessible voting equipment for the June primary. Anecdotal reports on usage varied considerably. No problems were reported on ease of use.

Extensive outreach efforts took place in many counties, which included public demonstrations of the new equipment and special outreach efforts by organizations that serve the disability community.

Physical accessibility to polling places has improved considerably since 2005. In the 2004 election cycle, over 250 polling places were listed as inaccessible to the handicapped. For the June primary, 3 had such designation. For the November election, the number is expected to be 1.

VOTER REGISTRATION SYSTEM

The initial project phase of designing and introducing the new voter registration software known as IVOTERS was completed this spring. All counties were actively on-line using the voter registration function on January 1, 2006, the HAVA deadline. Additional election management functions of the software were introduced throughout the spring and additional functionalities will be introduced in the summer.

Training for county end users of the system took place at numerous locations throughout the late winter and spring. Additional training sessions will be scheduled in the fall.

The Help Desk for the system is being run from the SOS office, with support from Saber Consulting. Servers are located at two Des Moines area locations.

Consultations with county auditors continue on a regular basis to obtain constructive comments for system wide improvements. SOS senior managers attended all 6 district meetings of auditors during June to lead a discussion of desired IVOTERS improvements. A 7 member Customer Advisory Council (CAC) has been appointed to make recommendations for software and support improvements. A copy of the June report of the CAC is attached.

A support services agreement has been reached with Saber Consulting to provide services through December 2008.

ELECTIONS SYSTEMS (EQUIPMENT)

New voting equipment and support systems have been delivered in all 1780 precincts in Iowa and were successfully used in the June primary. Only 1 major issue arose in the primary. That the county auditor successfully addressed issue without any significant disruption to the election process and with all votes properly accounted for.

Concerns were high before the primary as deliveries of voting equipment and the associated software did not occur as early as the SOS and county auditors preferred. A few software-programming errors were detected and corrected on or before election day. Vendor technical support was not consistently at the quality level preferred by election officials. These concerns have all been communicated to the vendors and plans are being formulated by the respective equipment user groups to address these concerns before the fall elections.

TRAINING & EDUCATION

The training and public education plans discussed in the December report have been implemented. Final agreements have been signed with the SEAT committee to establish a precinct election official certification program. The first students have graduated from that program. Additional classes are scheduled for August and September.

Training for county officials on equipment setup and testing occurred in the spring. An additional round of equipment testing classes is scheduled for late August.

Outreach efforts this spring were targeted at the disability community and in those counties that had a major change in the type of voting equipment. SOS staff and county auditor staff held numerous public demonstrations of new equipment. The New Iowans curriculum was finalized and distributed throughout the state.

Additional outreach efforts regarding new equipment will be conducted in the fall. The biennial voter guide will also be mailed to all Iowa households.