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DoD AWARDS GRANTS FOR STATE & LOCAL MILITARY/OVERSEAS VOTING SYSTEMS

Six new recipients of Electronic Absentee Systems for Elections (EASE) grants program announced

January 5, 2012 — Arlington, Va. – The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) is pleased to announce the next six recipients of the Electronic Absentee Systems for Elections (EASE) grants program. The funding total of \$1,569,533.00 is being distributed to these awardees to enable military and overseas voters to utilize electronic systems such as online registration, absentee ballot requests, and blank ballot delivery; however, no funding was provided for the electronic transmission of a voted ballot except in instances of mock elections. A total of 140,358 military and overseas voters will be served by the jurisdictions receiving grants. FVAP looks forward to announcing the next awardees in the coming weeks.

California has received \$468,522.00 to create an interactive voter registration website to serve military and overseas voters. The website will include key questions from the Federal Postcard Application that will enable military and overseas voters to both register to vote and request an absentee ballot online.

City of Chicago, IL has received \$375,300.00. Military and overseas voters of Chicago will soon be able register to vote online. They will also have the ability to use online services to request, receive and track their ballots. The Chicago Election Board's program also will employ an automated ballot-duplication system to help protect the secrecy of every ballot.

District of Columbia has received \$96,898.00 to develop, deploy, and test the use of touch screen computing devices for absentee ballot requests and voter registration.

Minnesota has received \$226,255.00 to enhance features of their website to include video tutorials about how to use tools on the site, a new feature to allow voters to see the candidates and questions that will appear on their ballot, and a customized tool for the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot that will provide voters the names of the candidates they have to choose from in federal, State, and local races.

Montana has received \$160,027.00 to create and research the effectiveness of online voter registration. Military and overseas citizens will also be able to request and receive their ballots online. The system will allow seamless integration of the Federal Post Card Application, a voter specific ballot, the ability to mark the ballot, and will also provide links to allow voters covered under UOCAVA to contact county or State election officials.

Okaloosa County, FL received \$242,531.00. Systems developed by the Okaloosa County grant will allow military and overseas voters to register and request their ballots online. This grant will



include access to a Vote-Print-Mail Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot. They will also develop mobile applications that will enable these voters to register and request ballots using their smart phones.

In 2008 the number one failure for military and overseas voters was in ballot transmission ([FVAP's Eighteenth Report to the Congress](#)). Local election officials receiving voted ballots reported they did not count numerous uniformed services and overseas citizen ballots because they were received after the deadline. Greater online access and automation of voter registration and absentee ballot systems could make the UOCAVA voting process easier, more intuitive, and more seamless for UOCAVA voters while maintaining the integrity of the process.

FVAP Director Bob Carey said, "FVAP continuously researches how to improve these UOCAVA ballot acceptance rates. One way to improve the success rates of voted ballots is to research the technology used by the voters. These grants give the States a chance to test technologies to learn what helps military and overseas voters most."

Last May, DoD announced the availability of \$16,400,000 in federal funding to support research to advance the electronic options for military and overseas citizens when voting absentee. DoD has increased the funding level to \$20,600,000. US State, territory, and local governments were eligible to apply for the grants. With these grants, the total amount distributed to date is \$16,904,743.56.

The evaluation of applications under the Broad Agency Announcement H98210-BAA-11-0001 for the FVAP Electronic EASE grants program have been completed and award recommendations have been transmitted to the Defense Human Resources Activity (DHRA) Grants Officer. Discussions with the recommended grant recipients are ongoing.

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If you'd like more information on the Federal Voting Assistance Program or need help with the absentee voting process please go to the FVAP.gov web portal or call FVAP at 703-588-1584 (toll free 1-800-438-VOTE or DSN 425-1584). Email vote@fvap.gov and don't forget to "like" us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/DoDFVAP and follow [@FVAP](https://twitter.com/FVAP) on Twitter for election updates throughout 2012.