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DoD ANNOUNCES GRANTS PROGRAM TO EASE VOTING PROCESS*\$15,500,000 available for research and technology*

May 19, 2011 – DoD announces the availability of \$15,500,500 in federal funding to support research and development to advance the electronic options for military and overseas citizens when voting absentee. State, county and city or township governments are eligible to apply for the grants.

The program, known as the Electronic Absentee Systems for Elections (EASE), will for the first time allow the Department of Defense to competitively offer grant assistance to election officials.

In 2008 the number one failure for military and overseas voters was in ballot transmission (<http://www.fvap.gov/resources/media/18threport.pdf>). Local election officials, or those receiving the voted ballots, reported they did not count uniformed services and overseas civilian ballots because they were received after the deadline more than any other reason. Greater online access and automation of these FVAP tools will make the *UOCAVA* voting process easier, more intuitive, and more seamless for *UOCAVA* voters.

Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) Director Bob Carey said, “FVAP continuously researches how to improve these rates. One way to improve the success rates of voted ballots is to research the technology used by the voters. This money gives the states a chance to experiment with products and see what helps military and overseas voters most.”

These tools will help military members, their voting age dependents and overseas voters overcome difficulties in registering to vote from abroad by:

- Decreasing the delivery time for registration, ballot requests and blank ballot delivery
- Improving how election officials are notified of changes of address;

Eligibility, Evaluation, and Application Information

Grants will be awarded to State, local and territorial election administration offices through a competitive selection process. The selection process will evaluate the ability of the applicants to develop significant and sustainable tools to overcome difficulties such as slow mail delivery times to and from overseas citizens, especially military personnel and lead to the discovery of new information that develops new processes, products, or techniques. The [Grant Funding Opportunity Announcement](#) will be open for 35 days and can be found on [Grants.gov](#).

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Additional Information

FVAP's works to ensure military and overseas voters are able to cast a valid ballot, which is counted in the election, from anywhere in the world as easily as if they were at a polling place. FVAP can be contacted via 1-800-438-8683. Citizens may reach FVAP toll-free from 67 countries by using the toll-free numbers listed at www.fvap.gov/contact/tollfreephone.html.