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

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

December 19, 2011 — Arlington, Va. – The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) is pleased to announce the next five recipients of the Electronic Absentee Systems for Elections (EASE) grants program. The funding total of \$2,892,300.00 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 61,856 military and overseas voters will be served by the jurisdictions receiving grants. FVAP looks forward to announcing the next awardees in the coming weeks.

Bexar County, Texas will receive \$466,939.00. This grant will enable military and overseas voters to register to vote and request their absentee ballots online. Voters will also be able to receive and track their ballots online.

Boone County, MO will receive \$740,116. This grant will allow all counties in the State of Missouri to utilize electronic systems such as online registration and absentee ballot requests. Voters will also be able to retrieve their ballots online.

Louisiana will receive \$350,000 to upgrade their online voter registration system as well as enable voters to utilize electronic systems such as absentee ballot request and blank ballot delivery. The Louisiana grant will also research the functionality of automated ballot duplication as well as the functionality of the use of smart phone application for blank ballot delivery and ballot marking.

New Jersey will receive an \$802,845.00 grant to develop a system that will automatically match a voter's vote-by-mail request to that voter's specific ballot based on their residential municipality, ward, and district. A tool will also be developed which will allow overseas and military voters to request, receive, and track their ballots online. The New Jersey grant will also research the functionality of automated ballot duplication using pdf scraping technology.

Utah will receive a \$532,400 grant to develop a system that will enable military and overseas voters to register to vote online, request absentee ballots online, and retrieve and track their ballots online.

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

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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.

Federal Voting Assistance Program (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.

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 www.fvap.gov or contact the FVAP at 703-588-1584 (toll free 1-800-438-VOTE) or email the program at 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 to receive timely election information.