

Kitsap County

Sponsor of Votes Away

Washington Consortium of Counties

Response to

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Volume I Technical Proposal

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Volume I

Technical Approach and Justification

1. Executive Summary

This application is presented by the *Votes Away*, a coalition of 23 Washington Counties, to request funding in support of our acquisition and implementation of a web-based electronic ballot delivery system for our military and overseas citizens. Our goal is to provide greater access to online services and tools to make the voting process easier, less confusing and more effective for our growing Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) population. Improvements will additionally create efficiencies in the processing of ballots returned by UOCAVA voters.

Votes Away represents over 27,600 known UOCAVA voters currently registered in our 23 participating counties. We recognize that UOCAVA voters traditionally have a lower voting percentage than domestic voters and that the MOVE Act was passed to narrow the gap between UOCAVA and domestic voters. A web-based voter services and ballot delivery system will ensure that our participating counties will be in full compliance with the MOVE Act with the goal of eliminating the voting and ballot return gap between UOCAVA and domestic voters.

Votes Away has selected two vendors who have successful histories providing services to election offices around the country. The vendors for this project are Democracy Live, in partnership with Microsoft Corporation, and Runbeck Election Services.

Democracy Live in partnership with Microsoft Corporation and with guidance from the University of Washington Center on Technology and Disabilities developed *LiveBallot* technology - a comprehensive set of voter services tailored for UOCAVA voters and built on the Microsoft SQL Azure Platform.

LiveBallot has been used in over 500 U.S. elections since 2008 and has been approved for funding by both the Department of Health and Human Services under HAVA Section 261 and the Department of Defense, through the Early Voting Support Wizard (EVSZ) pilot and the 2012 EASE Grant.

Constructed on a “secure cloud” model, the team of Democracy Live and Microsoft will deploy a web-hosted, on-demand ballot delivery system that is proven to work with our wide array of counties and their respective Voter Registration (VR) and balloting systems.

Democracy Live has worked with Runbeck Election Services to develop accurate and reliable technology to automatically duplicate returned ballots onto official ballot stock using a 2D barcode generated through the voter’s use of onscreen marking. Runbeck’s Ballot on Demand (BOD) printer reads the barcode containing the voter’s ballot style and selections and prints an official replicate ready for tabulation.

The *Votes Away* coalition is grateful for the opportunity to apply for the EASE 2.0 Grant. We look forward to working with the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) and contributing to FVAP’s one-stop portal for millions of UOCAVA voters.

2. Goals and Objectives

The primary goals of this project are to increase UOCAVA voter participation in the participating counties, improve the processing of returned UOCAVA ballots, and collect and provide comprehensive data detailing UOCAVA voter activities. More specifically:

- Develop and deploy a comprehensive UOCAVA balloting solution that will work with our existing VR and balloting systems to provide complete web-based voter services for our UOCAVA voters. Our goal is to deliver a complete voter life-cycle Web tool which will include, but is not limited to, UOCAVA voter registration tools, ballot request, on-demand ballot delivery, ballot tracking and ballot auto duplication.
- Implement Ballot on Demand printers to efficiently process returned UOCAVA ballots.
- Develop and deploy innovative data tools to provide comprehensive data collection and statistics to illustrate the UOCAVA voter services and activities for each election
- Reduce our overall long term costs of managing and supporting MOVE Act compliance and UOCAVA services.

Key objectives for this project include:

- Provide tools for eligible *Votes Away* voters to register to vote, determine their UOCAVA eligibility, complete an absentee ballot application, and complete and return an absentee ballot in time to be tabulated.
- Improve ballot access for *Votes Away* UOCAVA voters, while at the same time, lowering long-term MOVE Act and UOCAVA voter services costs.
- Provide a means for *Votes Away* to deploy a web-based system where any computer in the world can become the balloting tool, without the need for election officials to individually email ballot packets to voters.
- Reduce the time it takes election officials to process returned UOCAVA ballots.
- Provide a UOCAVA solution that *Votes Away* can build upon in the future as legislative needs catch up with the available technology.
- Provide analytical information regarding the usage and cost effectiveness of the solution.

To successfully meet the above stated goals and objectives for *Votes Away*, the resulting solution must offer:

A Reliable, Proven System

Any system with this level of importance must be proven and reliable. Democracy Live and their proposed system has been used in over 500 U.S. elections, delivering ballots to thousands of voters in over 95 countries and every continent in the world since 2008.

LiveBallot is hosted on Microsoft's Secure Government Cloud platform, called Windows Azure, providing proven 99.99% up-time reliability. Windows Azure delivers millions of transactions each month and is capable of automatically scaling up to meet any influx of voters to the system.

Runbeck Election Services introduced the Sentio Ballot on Demand Printing System in 2008. Since then, it has deployed 242 units across 33 U.S. counties and printed more than 4.5 million ballots.

Improve the Voting Experience for Our Voters

LiveBallot offers a variety of features and functions that directly improve our voters' balloting experience. By providing an easy to use, online interface, our voters can access their ballot at their convenience, using a web-browser of their choice, on any web-connected computer available to them, and with varying degrees of online speed. It is especially important that UOVAVA voters be able to access their ballot the same day they become available, thereby providing most of the 45 day limit to return their ballot in time to be counted. The LiveBallot administrative interface allows us to customize the way the information is presented to our voters. Instruction text, forms, graphics, theming and ballot look is all highly customizable to make the process feel seamless and localized to our UOCAVA voters.

Reduce the Failure Rates of UOCAVA Voters

This proposal has the specific goal to increase the success rates for our UOCAVA population at each stage of the absentee voting process. The key areas of focus are:

- Ballot Delivery
- Ballot Return
- UOCAVA Voter Registration

Historically, the biggest challenge in UOCAVA participation is slow ballot delivery and return. This grant will enable us to deliver new initiatives and technologies to meet our goal of eliminating the gap between our domestic absentee and UOCAVA voters.

Grant funding will allow us to provide voters with an intuitive process to register online and receive notification of ballot availability. In addition it will greatly improve the speed by which ballots are delivered to and from our UOCAVA voters. Streamlining this process will reduce the failure rates of UOCAVA voters.

Onscreen Marking

LiveBallot allows for intuitive onscreen ballot marking which conforms to the highest usability standards and may be used by voters with disabilities. Onscreen marking reduces voter confusion and overvoting by disallowing more selections than permitted in a contest. Selections can be reviewed on screen and changes made before printing out the marked ballot to mail, fax, or email return.

Save on Costs and Overhead

LiveBallot utilizes the cost benefits of a cloud-based solution by using Microsoft's Windows Azure platform. Using a web-based application, we do not need to acquire additional IT personnel, purchase or maintain any server equipment, spend time developing and testing software, or worry about managing updates. Additionally, when an election drives heavy voter traffic, we are not limited due to pricing plans or server resources, nor will we incur extra charges due to high bandwidth usage. Savings will also be achieved by eliminating the mailing of paper ballots.

Provide a UOCAVA Solution Capable of Advancing with Technology

LiveBallot is built on a solid core foundation with a robust modular architecture. The LiveBallot architecture provides three key advantages: reliable updates, components that can be enabled

when we are ready, and nothing to install or download onto our IT infrastructure. The Democracy Live team is able to keep our solution current with automated updates while continuing to build new features and improvements to meet any emerging or future needs.

The Democracy Live team understands the dynamic nature of technology and its effect on the election process. They understand our desire to utilize the best technology, as well as the necessity of never disrupting the voting process. The LiveBallot architecture will enable us to achieve both of these objectives while delivering uninterrupted service to our UOCAVA voters.

UOCAVA Improvement Projections

We project that by fully deploying the proposed solution we will dramatically streamline and speed the balloting process for our UOCAVA voting population, as well as save significant staff time complying with the mandates of the MOVE Act.

- We anticipate our ballot return rate will improve through timely delivery of ballots early in the absentee voting period and through the use of custom ballot return materials that will prevent voter mistakes.
- We anticipate UOCAVA voter registration will increase with the addition of intuitive online tools that reduce voter confusion.
- We anticipate that our UOCAVA voter participation rate will increase with the addition of automatic email notification of ballot availability and ballot return.
- We anticipate the percent of ballots delivered to ballots received will climb with the addition of email notification and ballot access from any web-connected computer.
- We anticipate voter confirmation (ballot tracking) will climb with the addition of automatic email notifications to the voter.
- We anticipate that our UOCAVA statistical reporting metrics and data aggregation tools will dramatically improve.
- We anticipate that our staff time complying with the new MOVE Act requirements will fall substantially, while improving accuracy in all areas.

Absentee ballot return rates are estimated to be similar to the national ballot return rates of 91% for the general population and 67% for UOCAVA voters. The key metric for *Votes Away* is to improve the ballot return rate for UOCAVA voters equal to or greater than the percentage of ballots returned by the general population.

The Proposed *Votes Away* UOCAVA System

The FVAP funding will ensure *Votes Away* offers an intuitive, one-stop, seamless process to register online, receive notification of ballot availability, access and mark the ballot online, and dramatically improve the ballot return rate. Once a ballot is returned, funding will dramatically cut the time it takes to process UOCAVA ballots by automating the ballot duplication process.

Summarized below is an overview of our proposed LiveBallot system and its key features, which offer us the specific tools to meet our goals and objectives for this grant.

– Voter Specific, On-Demand Ballot Lookup

The LiveBallot system offers a Web-based, on-demand, voter specific ballot lookup. Using the LiveBallot system, voters from anywhere in the world can access their specific ballot online the

moment the system goes live. This is a key feature of LiveBallot and eliminates the need for our staff to manually send individual email or paper ballots to each registered UOCAVA voter.

– *Online UOCAVA Registration*

The LiveBallot system features customizable links and tools for a voter to electronically complete and submit their registration forms to ensure they are properly registered in time for the election.

– *Interfaces to External Systems*

The LiveBallot system has been deployed in multiple U.S. jurisdictions using a wide variety of voter registration and vote tabulation systems. LiveBallot was designed to handle structured data exports (.txt, and .csv, .edx, and .xml) from the major election management and voter registration systems. In the LiveBallot account setup, the administrator simply selects the system used in the individual jurisdictions. The Data Import Tool then presents import steps specific to the system we identified. A simple mapping tool allows us to quickly and easily upload, import, and interact with the data to insure it is accurately imported into LiveBallot.

– *Data Import/Export Interface*

Our vendor team understands the wide range of election technologies in use today and encourages the standardization of election data. If, however, we require customization, or have a unique data structure, a custom importer/exporter can be quickly created by implementing the LiveBallot Data Import/Export Interface.

– *Customizable Ballot Packages*

LiveBallot delivers a voter's ballot in a return package which includes either a pre-marked or blank ballot along with relevant and required documents such as instructions, oath of voter, and return envelopes. Using the LiveBallot set-up tools, we have the option to fully customize the ballot return packages or to use the default documents provided by LiveBallot. Our own documents can be simply uploaded to the LiveBallot system and included in the package to be delivered to the voters. Customizable return packages enable us to meet federal, state, and local delivery requirements.

– *Flexible Ballot Display and Print Capability*

LiveBallot supports both standard US (8.5x11) and European (A4) sizes. Ballots printed through LiveBallot use standard computer printer paper sizes. Voters have the option to print a blank PDF ballot to be marked by hand or they may mark their selections online before printing. Ballots are downloaded to the voter's computer in a standard PDF format and are sized to print on any home printer.

– *Ballot Tracker Module*

UOCAVA voters may return to our LiveBallot website to monitor the status of their ballot. We have the ability to include multiple tracking dates and/or messages in our voter registration file. Ballot Tracker then displays voter specific tracking information from our voter registration file. Absentee ballot request, ballot access, and returned ballot dates are examples of some of the tracking dates that we may choose to display to the voter.

– *Accessibility Qualifications*

The LiveBallot electronic balloting tool has been federally reviewed and approved by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and is Section 508 reviewed and approved. Additionally, LiveBallot has been evaluated and shown to have the highest levels of accessibility by the Center for Disabilities and American Council for the Blind. LiveBallot strives to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 specifications where possible.

– *Multilingual Support*

LiveBallot's flexible layout engine allows for multi-lingual or single language ballot displays. Ballot data and on-screen instructions are managed by a translation system. Translations may be directly entered into LiveBallot or a translation file may be uploaded. If a translation file is not available, we can download a translation file from LiveBallot, enter translations, and then re-upload the file.

– *Reporting*

LiveBallot tracks voter events to offer a number of valuable statistical reports. The LiveBallot dashboard allows a quick view of the number of visitors and other statistics for our jurisdiction. Examples of some of the reports provided by the LiveBallot system are:

- Election data proofing reports
- Number of visitors to our LiveBallot website
- Number of ballots downloaded
- Delivery method usage statistics
- Customized reports derived from LiveBallot data

– *Ballot Delivery*

LiveBallot offers selectable options for ballot delivery to our voters. This includes mail, fax and email ballot return packages that include all of our required documents.

– *Auto-Duplication*

We expect to see a significant increase in returned ballots from our UOCAVA voters due to this implementation. LiveBallot is compatible with an optional ballot-on-demand system which automates manual ballot duplication. The LiveBallot auto-duplication package reduces duplication time by over 90%.

– *Protect our voter's privacy and information*

Our vendor team understands that the security of voter information and election data is one of our most important concerns. The Microsoft solution protects the voter's privacy, as well as our election data, with its combined front and back end security. LiveBallot ensures the privacy of all data by providing protection both in transit and in storage.

LiveBallot protects voter data on the front end using highly secure SSL encryption, automatic expiration of a voter's session on the website, and limitations on the information stored in the voter's session. Voter information and election data uploaded to LiveBallot is safely stored on Microsoft's Azure platform and is protected by Microsoft's security standards. The Windows Azure platform offers the highest level of security and was designed with a focus on confidentiality, integrity, and availability of customer data. Microsoft employs some of the

leading security and cryptographic experts in the field with subject matter expertise in online security.

LiveBallot is hosted domestically in the United States utilizing the scalability and security of Microsoft's Windows Azure platform. LiveBallot complies with federal and state elections laws and will continue to meet the laws of federal and state elections rules. With billions of transactions securely hosted and delivered, the Azure platform offers us the highest degree of confidence our data will be protected and available when needed.

– *Help Desk and Support Statistics*

The LiveBallot Support Team provides 24/7 support during elections and is available for assistance when needed. The Support Team maintains help desk statistics on call volume, resolution, and response time. Help desk reports are made available upon request.

3. *Schedule and Milestones*

The phases of this project would consist of documenting our requirements to allow for the configuring of the LiveBallot system. During this phase, we will perform the following tasks that allow us to identify our business requirements as they pertain to electronic balloting:

Requirements Gathering

- Provide onsite workshops demonstration of the LiveBallot tools
- Setup working group sessions to document our business and technical requirements
- Identify election file import requirements
- Identify onscreen instruction requirements
- Identify user roles and associated permissions for the LiveBallot tools
- Identify Return Ballot Packages and custom ballot package form requirements

The Planning/Development phase consists of the following activities:

- Analyze the results from requirements gathering and determine configuration
- Configure the tools to address election file import requirements
- Develop onscreen instruction requirements based on requirements
- Setup user roles and associated permissions for LiveBallot based on identified requirements
- Create Return Ballot Packages and custom ballot package forms

The testing phase will consist of performing the following activities:

- We will conduct a test pilot in the production environment using the LiveBallot tool
- We will conduct acceptance testing procedures to ensure that the requirements identified in the requirements phase are satisfied
- Perform remediation configuration activities on the LiveBallot tool to address any issues/problems uncovered during the pilot test exercise
- We will develop a Test Report that documents Acceptance Test procedures and resulting using the pilot test users

Project Phase / Milestone

- Initial Meetings

- Request for Information
- Determine point of contact and escalation (roles/responsibilities)
- Formalize Requirements
- Sign-off of Requirements Documents
- Configuration (and Customization)
 - Administration Configuration
 - Setup jurisdiction contact information
 - Core Configuration
 - Online Ballot Instructions
 - Ballot Package (Mail, Fax, Email) Completed
- Email Notification to Voter
 - Discuss and verify email notification process
 - Define our PIN Generation Process
 - Discuss Email Reporting (what and when)
 - Formalize notification workflow
- Discovery and Analysis (import data)
 - Upload VR Data
 - Upload and Import Election Data
 - Analyze data for completeness
 - Proof Election Data Mapping
- Internal Testing
 - Verify election ballot data
 - Verify ballot delivery settings
 - Verify county page content and links
- Initial UAT
 - Conduct UAT Prep Meeting
 - Conduct Initial UAT Requirements and Functionality Walk-through
 - Send UAT results and issue tracking XLS
 - Get UAT results confirmation and acceptance
 - Address initial UAT gaps
- Final UAT
 - Schedule Final UAT Meeting
 - Conduct Final UAT Requirements and Functionality Walk-through
 - Send Final UAT results and issue tracking XLS
 - Get Final UAT results confirmation and acceptance
- Exercise Support Process
- Conduct Final Walkthroughs and Data Validation
- Go-Live
- Execute Workflows (e.g. Notification)

4. *Reports*

This grant will allow us to develop and deploy a wide range of detailed reports specific to our UOCAVA Enhancement Project. Previously we had neither the tools nor resources necessary to fully implement a UOCAVA reporting system. With this grant we expect to implement the following reporting capabilities:

- UOCAVA Enhancement Cost Tracker
 - Tracks time spent preparing deploying electronic ballots for our UOCAVA voters.
- UOCAVA One-time and Annual Payments to our selected vendor
- UOCAVA Enhancement Trend Analysis
 - Measures the rate of improvement for each of the following metrics:
 - Voter Registration
 - Ballot Delivery
 - Ballot Return
 - Time Spent on the Site
 - Voter Access vs. Downloads
 - Voter Registration to Download Trends
 - Voter Access by Geography

Management Approach

The Washington Secretary of State implemented the Washington Election Information (WEI) system almost a decade ago as a web publishing solution. Recognizing the limitations of WEI and lack of State funding to improve functionality, the counties of Kitsap and Walla Walla pursued a project with Democracy Live, funded by Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funds in 2009, to enhance online voter services through the provision of video voter guides. As an adjunct to the 2009 project, both counties accepted the opportunity to pilot Democracy Live's eballoting technology for UOCAVA voters. Recognizing the success of eballoting technology in Kitsap and Walla Walla, and the desire of numerous counties to follow their lead and similarly enhance services to their UOCAVA voters, an informal consortium of 23 Washington counties was formed, known as *Votes Away*, to seek EASE 2.0 grant funding. Kitsap County was selected to act on behalf of the counties as grant applicant and grant administrator.

Our management approach represents a proven development approach that provides for well-defined phases that take into account development of requirements, architectural design, detailed software design, software development, system testing, and managed release cycles.

Phases for the solution approach that are involved in this project are shown below:

- **Envisioning:** Envisioning involves creating a business vision and defining an approach to bring the vision to reality.
- **Planning and Development:** Planning continues through the development of functional requirements and a project plan for the project.
- **Stabilization:** Our team in cooperation with the vendor will test the solution and make modifications as needed.
- **Deployment:** The Deployment phase includes deployment of the solution and final testing.

Key Activities during the project will include the following:

- Kick-off and Vision and Scope meeting
- Define roles and responsibilities
- Outline key information needed to complete the project
- Confirm project approach
- Build and confirm project plan.

Five Criteria Areas

Votes Away endorses the five criteria areas that are used to measure and evaluate this UOCAVA program. Those areas are:

Significance/Impact

This Grant Request has the specific goal to increase the success rates for our UOCAVA population at each stage of the absentee voting process. The key areas and metrics that we focus on are:

- UOCAVA Absentee Ballot Requests
- Ballot Delivery
- Ballot Return

Historically, the biggest challenge for the UOCAVA voter population has been in “ballot return”. LiveBallot will help meet the goal of eliminating the gap between domestic absentee voters and UOCAVA voters in all the key metrics, especially ballot return. By providing web-based ballot access the same day they become available voters may have most of the 45 day limit to return the ballot in time to be counted.

In addition, the FVAP grant will be allow us to ensure that all voters, regardless of deployment within, or outside of the U.S. will always have a reliable method to register, access, and return their ballot. *Votes Away* has nearly 1.5 million registered voters and we are an increasingly mobile population with a growing rate of military personnel. There is no way of knowing who or when a voter may be out of the country or mobilized. A truly comprehensive MOVE Act and UOCAVA solution must be able to touch each of our registered voters, since any one of them may become UOCAVA eligible at any time. The system we are selecting must be capable of addressing the mobility needs of every voter in our voter registration system.

Sustainability

Our elections offices are understaffed and under-resourced. Accordingly, *Votes Away* has designed this project to meet the following criteria:

- Low long-term costs - Our vendor’s long term payment model offers an option where the County only pays for what we use. For example, beyond the grant years, our jurisdiction will only pay based on the number of ballots actually downloaded.
- Secure, cloud-based systems are proven to offer significantly lower server and hosting costs.

- To ensure long-term sustainability, the LiveBallot solution offers a suite of applications that can be deployed to ensure our UOCAVA voters are getting a broad-based level of use from a wide variety of features and tools.

Scalability

Scalability, security and stability are the key reasons LiveBallot is hosted in the Microsoft Azure cloud environment. With a proven 99.99% uptime and real time, multi-geographic server redundancy our voters can be assured their ballot will be available. Elections are a classic case for a cloud-based application. The LiveBallot server environment will automatically scale to meet the spikes and voter rush typically associated with elections. Using a cloud-based auto-scale environment our staff need not worry if we have enough server capacity. Microsoft Azure will ramp up automatically at no additional cost.

With tens of millions of monthly transactions, Azure is the second largest server network in the United States, second only to the U.S. Department of Defense. We are confident in the scalability of this system.

Strategic

Votes Away considers the UOCAVA project a highly strategic opportunity to dramatically ease the process of balloting for overseas and military voters. In addition this project will secure the tools necessary to ensure any of the registered voters in our counties are able to easily register and become an eligible UOCAVA voter, when necessary.

Our strategy is to offer our UOCAVA voters a one-stop, turn-key electronic ballot and registration tool that offers a dynamic and flexible platform that will reflect our current and future electronic balloting requirements. The end result will be significantly easier access to awareness, registration, online ballot marking, return, and tracking of the ballot for all eligible UOCAVA voters.

Long-term strategy may involve expanding the system to offer UOCAVA voters a multi-platform, electronic ballot application that is available via Facebook, mobile phone, search or any number of emerging platforms, beyond our website. The elections expertise of Democracy Live and resources of Microsoft offer capabilities to grow with our laws, and our imaginations.

Collaborative

A key objective for *Votes Away* is to offer a seamless, integrated solution in collaboration with each of the elections jurisdiction in our counties. *Votes Away* has the extended benefit of sharing innovative ideas and providing for cross-county communication on best practices and procedures while offering a similar balloting experience to each jurisdiction's UOCAVA voters.

Strategic goals

Votes Away considers the UOCAVA project a highly strategic opportunity to dramatically ease the process of balloting for overseas and military voters. In addition this project will secure the tools necessary to ensure any of the registered voters in our counties are able to easily register and become an eligible UOCAVA voter, when necessary.

Key strategic goals for this project are as follows:

- Improve ballot access for UOCAVA voters, while at the same time, providing a positive solution/experience for the local election officials.
- Provide a solution that can build upon in the future as legislative needs catch up with the available technology.
- Provide an overall long term cost-effective solution for our elections.
- Provide analytical information regarding the usage of the solution.

Our working hypothesis for this project states:

- A complete lifecycle Web-delivered UOCAVA voter services will;
 - Reduce barriers to UOCAVA voter registration, access and information
 - Decrease the voting and ballot return gap between domestic and UOCAVA voters.
 - Decrease cost of MOVE Act compliance, while increasing UOCAVA voting.
- Comprehensive data collection will;
 - Demonstrate effectiveness
 - Enable comparison both over time, and between jurisdictions.
- Use of common data formats, particularly those emerging from IEEE standards will;
 - Enable data mining of statistics from many jurisdictions.

Our strategy is to offer our UOCAVA voters a one-stop, turn-key electronic ballot and registration tool that offers a dynamic and flexible platform that will reflect our current and future electronic balloting requirements. The end result will be significantly easier access to awareness, registration, online ballot marking, return, and tracking of the ballot for all eligible UOCAVA voters.

Long-term strategy may involve expanding the system to offer UOCAVA voters a multi-platform, electronic ballot application that is available via Facebook, mobile phone, search or any number of emerging platforms, beyond our website. The elections expertise of Democracy Live and resources of Microsoft offer capabilities to grow with our laws, and our imaginations.

Analysis and measurement of current processes

We agree with the authors of the MOVE Act that due to logistical, geographical, operational and environmental barriers, military and overseas voters are burdened by many obstacles that impact both the voter registration process and, most importantly, their right to vote. Most critical are problems transmitting balloting materials and not given enough time for ballot delivery.

As the MOVE Act underscores, localities clearly play a critical role in addressing the challenges UOCAVA voters face and providing appropriate solutions.

Votes Away's UOCAVA voter population has expanded over the last decade due in part to increases in the number of military personnel deployed overseas and an increasing global world. We estimate nearly two thirds of our UOCAVA personnel are affiliated with the armed services. In order to serve this growing constituency, we traditionally have deployed a variety of tools to ensure timely access to the ballot. These measures include links to the FPCA and the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) on our elections home page. Additionally, we mail and email ballots to eligible UOCAVA voters.

We endorse the spirit and goals of the MOVE Act which is why we are working to meet the challenges the new requirements of the law, while working with an overburdened election team during the critical days of an election. The MOVE Act law requires electronic ballot delivery 45 days prior to a federal election; this requires staff to spend precious election time just keeping the jurisdiction in compliance with the new law.

Our elections administrators have determined that we have narrowed the gap between our domestic and UOCAVA population in areas of voter registration and voter participation. However, we still have a significant gap in ballots returned in time to be tabulated. Our key success metric is to improve the process of successfully transmitting and receiving the ballot in time to be accepted and counted.

Our current procedure is a labor-intensive process that has been magnified due to the MOVE Act requirements. This grant funding will allow us to acquire new technologies to automate our registration, transmittal and the processing of UOCAVA ballots for our voters, thus significantly increasing our ballot return rate for our military and overseas voters.

Identification of each process and the elements that are related to the process

Our UOCAVA voter population has expanded over the last decade. In order to serve this growing constituency, our current process is as follows:

- Voters apply to vote as a UOCAVA voter using the Federal Post Card Absentee Application or MyVote (Washington State's online voter registration system)
- Once registered and in the system, we mail and or email a physical ballot to the voter. Over the past few years we have emailed a ballot and the requisite balloting information to those voters on file with a valid email address.
- Our goal has been to send our registered UOCAVA voters a ballot at least 45 days in advance of an election.
- The ballot is returned by the voter, along with the signed affidavit attesting to their validity as a registered, eligible voter.
- Emailed ballots are typically duplicated, or re-made onto a ballot that may be tabulated.
- Eligible ballots are processed and submitted for tabulation.

Identification of potential risks and mitigating strategies

We believe the rewards of implementing an automated, fully compliant MOVE Act solution that has been used and tested in hundreds of localities around the country greatly outweigh the risks associated with deploying a new technology. However, any successful project must understand that there are risks associated with initial deployments. These risks entail:

- Newer technology in the early part of the life cycle
- Lack of voter awareness of new electronic balloting tools

In order to mitigate the above listed risks we plan to deploy the following risk mitigation strategies:

- We will conduct a test pilot in the production environment using the new technologies.

- We will conduct acceptance testing procedures to ensure that the requirements identified in the Envisioning Phase are satisfied.
- Perform remediation configuration activities on the LiveBallot electronic ballot tool to address any issues/problems uncovered during the pilot test exercise
- We will develop a Test Report that documents Acceptance Test procedures and resulting using the pilot test users.
- Revise and refine our back end processes to handle the expected increase in UOCAVA ballots.

The deployment phase will consist of the following activities:

- Execute operational test procedures to ensure the technology is functioning properly
- Provide our team access to the tool to allow execution of administrative procedures and to run reports
- Provide operational support during an election to ensure the electronic ballot solution is made available to our voters

The following general procedure will be used to manage project issues and risks:

- Identify and document
- Assess impact and prioritize
- Assign responsibility
- Monitor and report progress
- Communicate issue resolution

A mutually agreed upon issue escalation process will be defined at the outset of the project.

Formalization of performance indicators for each process

It is critical for us to be able to manage and compile reports for each of our key performance metrics. These metrics include a wide array of measurables, including detailed statistical reports on the voter registration, balloting activity and cost tracking. LiveBallot tracks voter events to offer statistical reports for our jurisdictions. The LiveBallot dashboard allows a quick view of the number of visitors and other statistics for each jurisdiction.

Justification for the modification to the existing processes

Our current UOCAVA process is a labor-intensive, manual environment in which our elections staff must spend a disproportionate amount of time. We believe that every eligible voter should have access to their ballot the same day it becomes available. Therefore, regardless of the time it takes, our staff will ensure the ballots get delivered and processed. Our key objective is to narrow the gap between domestic ballot return and UOCAVA ballot return. By automating the process with the LiveBallot system, our UOCAVA voters will be able to register to vote, access, mark their ballot, and track the status of their ballot, on-demand and online. In addition, automating the MOVE Act compliance requirements will free up our staff to do other necessary elections critical activities that relate to all our voters, domestic and abroad.

We are confident that an automated, Web hosted solution will greatly narrow the gap between UOCAVA and domestic voters, while reducing the costs associated with a manual process. By deploying the LiveBallot system we can offer voter registration, ballot access and ballot return at a quicker rate than our traditional manual process. As a result of LiveBallot, we expect that at least 50% less work-hours will be spent on UOCAVA related voter registration, ballot delivery, ballot processing and ballot duplication.

The LiveBallot system will be available to every eligible voter around the world, on-demand, without relying on any one individual to mail or email a ballot package. Every laptop or computer with a browser will become an electronic ballot tool, delivering the correct ballot to the correct voter, no matter where in the world they live, regardless of physical disabilities.

Finally, our selected system has been reviewed and approved for the highest level of accessibility for disabled voters by the University of Washington Center on Disabilities Council for the Blind. Using the LiveBallot system, every eligible UOCAVA voter, no matter their location, will have access to their ballot, where and when they want it.

Projections of the Effectiveness of Modifications

The LiveBallot solution is projected to increase the UOCAVA ballot returns and decrease the gap between UOCAVA voters and domestic absentee voters. UOCAVA voters will have access to their ballots sooner and will have more time to return them before the 45 day limit.

Measurements of performance

Our objective is to continually assess, measure, and track our improvement relating to our UOCAVA population. The technology we have chosen offers an array of reporting tools to ensure we are able to performance measure what we are managing. The reporting tools include, but are not limited to:

- Number of voters requesting a ballot
- Number of visitors viewing a ballot
- Number of ballots downloaded
- Delivery method requested/downloaded
- Ballot sent to ballot received ratio
- Ballot sent to ballot downloaded ratio
- Locality and Region of voter activity
- UOCAVA Enhancement Cost Tracker
- UOCAVA Enhancement Trend Analysis

Semi-annual progress reports will be submitted as well as data reports 60 days after each federal election. A final performance report will be submitted 90 days after expiration of the grant award.

Current and Pending Project Proposal Submissions

We currently have no current or pending projects that overlap with this initiative. The 2009 HAVA 261 funding for accessible video voter guides in Kitsap and Walla Walla counties has

expired. The EASE 2.0 proposal seeks funding for annual licensing fees for Kitsap and Walla Walla counties for 2014-2018 and full funding for implementation and annual licensing for the 21 additional counties through the grant period.

Qualifications

Democracy Live, Inc., our technology and solution provider is a pioneer in the emerging voter information technology industry. With decades of elections experience, Democracy Live has successfully deployed innovative voter information technologies in hundreds of jurisdictions. The Democracy Live system has been used in over 500 U.S. elections since 2008, delivering ballots to thousands of voters in over 95 countries.

Microsoft Corporation is the worldwide leader in software, services, and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential. Microsoft has been supporting the Department of Defense, Microsoft's largest customer in the world, for more than 30 years. Microsoft has been providing on-line services to hundreds of millions of users for more than 15 years. Microsoft has invested both financial and technical resources into Democracy Live and its balloting technologies.

Specifically, Microsoft Corporation has extensive experience developing the Washington State Statewide database and working on the New York State Voter Registration project. Microsoft was the Prime contractor for the 2010 FVAP Project, using Democracy Live technology. Microsoft's largest customer is the U.S. Department of Defense, the sponsor of the FVAP funding.

Volume II

Budget Proposal for Votes Away

Through the use of the requested FVAP grants funds the Washington consortium of counties (known hereafter as *Votes Away* or the consortium) will be able to purchase and implement a comprehensive, automated UOCAVA Voter Services and eBalloting system. Additionally, the deployment of the *LiveBallot* UOCAVA system will lower long term operational costs while significantly increasing services to our UOCAVA voter population.

As noted previously in this Proposal, we project that by fully deploying this technology we will dramatically streamline and speed the balloting process for our UOCAVA voting population, as well as save significant staff time complying with the new mandates of the MOVE Act.

- We anticipate that our UOCAVA voter participation rate will increase with the addition of automatic email notification of ballot availability and ballot return.
- We anticipate our ballot return rate will improve through the timely delivery of ballots early in the absentee voting period and through the use of custom ballot return materials that will prevent voter mistakes.
- We anticipate the percentage of ballots returned by voters will climb by reducing connectivity challenges and manual voter processes.
- We anticipate voter confirmation (ballot tracking) will climb with the addition of automatic email notifications to the voter.
- We anticipate that UOCAVA statistical reporting metrics and data aggregation tools will dramatically improve.
- We anticipate that staff time spent complying with the new MOVE Act requirements will fall substantially, while improving accuracy in all areas.

Ballot return rates are estimated to be similar to the national ballot return rates listed below:

Absentee Ballot Return Rates:

91%= General Population

67%= UOCAVA voters

The key metric for *Votes Away* is to improve the ballot return rate for UOCAVA voters by at least 50% over the next election cycle, and moving towards our future goal of eliminating the gap between UOCAVA voters and domestic voters by 2018.

Return on Investment

Cost Benefits

Votes Away has over 1,500,000 registered voters. The award of this EASE grant will enable participating counties to deploy a comprehensive, automated MOVE Act and UOCAVA services tool for years to come – a solution that can touch each of our registered voters anytime one of them may become UOCAVA eligible.

We expect to offer the LiveBallot system to every UOCAVA voter for every election. We believe that a Uniformed or other eligible voter should have equal access to the ballot, regardless of the size of the election.

LiveBallot delivers a voter's ballot in a return package which includes a blank ballot along with relevant and required documents such as instructions, oath of voter, and return envelopes. Using the LiveBallot set-up tools, we have the option to fully customize the ballot return packages. Our own documents can be uploaded to the LiveBallot system and included in the package to be delivered to the voters. Customizable return packages reduce voter confusion and facilitate timely processing of returned ballots.

Voter's use of LiveBallot onscreen ballot marking generates a 2D barcode that automates the manual ballot duplication process. The LiveBallot auto-duplication package reduces duplication time by over 90% freeing staff time to focus on activities that serve all voters.

We anticipate significant savings from the reduction of manual staff time currently required to comply with the MOVE Act. This grant will enable us to deploy a perpetual system with manageable annual fees that will dramatically lower costs and provide substantial returns on investment.

Return on Investment (ROI) Measures

In addition to the tangible dollar benefits that will be realized from using LiveBallot, we believe that the proposed project will result in added returns on investment that should be taken into account in determining the justification for this project, to include:

- We expect UOCAVA voter registration to increase as a result of online intuitive tools to register and confirm UOCAVA voting eligibility.
- We expect UOCAVA absentee ballot applications to increase through use of online tools designed to make the process less confusing.
- We expect information inquiries to decrease as a result of the intuitive online tools reducing voter confusion.
- We expect the number of ballots downloaded will be significant in response to the convenience it affords UOCAVA voters regardless of their time-zone.
- We expect voters' marking of the ballot to improve as a result of online marking capability and available information to reduce voter confusion.
- We expect the percent of ballots delivered to ballots received will climb as a result of UOCAVA ballot availability on the first day they are ready allowing for most of the 45 day limit to return the voted ballot to the elections jurisdiction.

Itemized Budget:

The itemized budget will contain a detailed list of the following:

a) Direct Labor:

We do not expect to incur any additional labor costs associated with this project.

b) Administrative and clerical labor:

Kitsap County, as the sponsor county of the consortium, will incur administrative costs equal to 2% of the overall consortium budget to administer funds to the participating consortium counties.

c) Fringe Benefits and Indirect Costs (F&A, Overhead, G&A, etc.):

We do not expect to incur any additional fringe benefits and other overhead costs.

d) Consultants:

We do not intend to use nor request funds for any outside consultants for this project.

e) Materials and Supplies:

Ballot on Demand (BOD) Systems for Auto-Duplication of Voted Ballots
(as described in detail in the Technical Approach and Justification)

COUNTY	Ballot on Demand System	Five (5) Year Licensing Fee*
Adams	\$ 14,550	\$ 17,500
Asotin	14,550	17,500
Benton	14,550	17,500
Chelan	14,550	17,500
Columbia	14,550	17,500
Cowlitz	14,550	17,500
Douglas	14,550	17,500
Garfield	14,550	17,500
Grays Harbor	14,550	17,500
Island	14,550	17,500
Jefferson	14,550	17,500
Kitsap	14,550	17,500
Kittitas	14,550	17,500
Mason	14,550	15,000
Pacific	14,550	17,500
Pend Oreille	14,550	17,500
San Juan	14,550	17,500
Skamania	14,550	17,500
Snohomish	19,100	17,500
Spokane	14,550	17,500
Thurston	14,550	17,500
Walla Walla	14,550	17,500
Whitman	14,550	17,500
Subtotal	\$ 339,200	\$ 400,000
BALLOT ON DEMAND CONSORTIUM TOTAL		\$ 739,200

*Includes training and support

f) Other Direct Costs:

Item Description	Years	Pricing (estimate)
<p>LiveBallot</p> <p>Includes: One-Time set-up fee & license</p> <p>Hosting and deployment, 25 hours onsite training and Project management, Subscription and Support (including version upgrades).</p>	5	See table in supporting documentation below
<p>Post Grant Period: 2019 and beyond</p> <p>Subscription and Support – Includes all version upgrades.</p>		\$1 per download ballot
<p>Ballot on Demand Solutions for Auto-Duplication</p> <p>Includes: License fees; printer; scanner; per-copy costs (if any); ballot card stock; toner, ink, or photoconductor units (if needed)</p>	5	See detailed table in supporting documentation below

Other Direct Costs (f) – continued

LiveBallot UOCAVA eBalloting System

(as described in detail in the Technical Approach and Justification)

One Time Fee (to include Licensing and Annual Support) per County through 2018:

Consortium County	Implementation¹ and Annual License Fee 2014 - 2018²	License Fee² Only 2014 -2018
Adams	\$ 35,000	\$
Asotin	35,000	
Benton	75,000	
Chelan	35,000	
Columbia	35,000	
Cowlitz	75,000	
Douglas	35,000	
Garfield	35,000	
Grays Harbor	35,000	
Island	75,000	
Jefferson	35,000	
Kitsap		80,000
Kittitas	35,000	
Mason	35,000	
Pacific	35,000	
Pend Oreille	35,000	
San Juan	35,000	
Skamania	35,000	
Snohomish	200,000	
Spokane	150,000	
Thurston	150,000	
Walla Walla		14,000
Whitman	35,000	
LIVE BALLOT CONSORTIUM TOTAL \$1,344,000		

¹Includes implementation and training

² Licensing and support

TOTAL CONSORTIUM BUDGET	\$ 2,083,200
2% Administrative Fee	\$ 41,664
TOTAL GRANT BUDGET REQUEST	\$2,124,864

Form SF-424
Item 14

AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT

Below is a list of the 23 participating consortium counties. The 23 counties have over 1.5 million registered voters, collectively, as 2013.

County	Congressional District
Adams	4
Asotin	5
Benton	4
Chelan	4
Columbia	5
Cowlitz	3
Douglas	4, 8
Garfield	5
Grays Harbor	6
Island	2
Jefferson	6
Kitsap	6
Kittitas	8
Mason	6, 10
Pacific	3
Pend Oreille	5
San Juan	2
Skamania	3
Snohomish	1, 2, 7
Spokane	5
Thurston	3, 10
Walla Walla	4, 5
Whitman	5

Form SF- 424
Item 16

PROGRAM/PROJECT CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

Below is a list of the 9 congressional districts affected by the proposed program/project.

- WA – 001
- WA – 002
- WA – 003
- WA – 004
- WA – 005
- WA – 006
- WA – 007
- WA – 008
- WA – 010