

Rockwall County
Sponsor of
YOUR TEXAS - YOUR VOTE
Texas Consortium of Counties
Response to

Defense Human Resources Activity
Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP)

Volume I Technical Proposal

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Enhanced UOCAVA Voter Services and eBalloting System

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Technical Approach and Justification

1. Executive Summary

This application is presented by *Your Texas - Your Vote*, Texas to request funding in support of our acquisition and implementation of a web-based electronic ballot delivery system for our military and overseas citizens. Rockwall County has opted to be the lead sponsor for the main consortium of Texas counties applying for the Effective Absentee Systems for Elections (EASE) 2.0 Grant. The name of our Consortium is *Your Texas – Your Vote*. The goal of *Your Texas – Your Vote* is to provide greater access to online services and tools in order to make the voting process easier and simpler for our growing population of Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) voters.

Your Texas – Your Vote represents over 15,500 known UOCAVA voters registered in our 50 participating counties. Our consortium recognizes that UOCAVA voters traditionally have a lower voting percentage than domestic voters and that the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (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 while reducing the voting and ballot return gap between UOCAVA and domestic voters.

The vendor we have selected for this project is Democracy Live, in partnership with Microsoft Corporation. Democracy Live has worked with Microsoft to develop and deploy a comprehensive set of UOCAVA voter services for Texas. This solution offers the Democracy Live *LiveBallot* solution built on the Microsoft SQL Azure Platform.

The *LiveBallot* technology was developed by Democracy Live in partnership with Microsoft and guidance from the University of Washington Center on Technology and Disabilities. *LiveBallot* has been used in over 500 U.S. jurisdictions since 2008 and has been approved for funding by both the Department of Defense, via the Early Voting Support Wizard (EVSU) pilot, and the Department of Health and Human Services under the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) Section 261.

The team of Democracy Live and Microsoft will deploy a hosted, web-based solution, 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.

The resulting solution will enable Rockwall County and all of the *Your Texas – Your Vote* consortium counties to provide enhanced voter services to our UOCAVA voters. Voters will be provided full services such as voter registration tools, absentee ballot notifications, on-demand, accessible ballot delivery and ballot tracking to any voter from any web-connected computer, anywhere in the world. Through this program, *Your Texas – Your Vote* will be able to provide complete usage data and reporting

of UOCAVA participation.

Your Texas – Your Vote 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 the UOCAVA voter participation base in the participating counties, as well as gather 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 absentee 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, voter registration tools, ballot request, on-demand ballot delivery, and ballot tracking.
- Develop and deploy innovative data tools to provide comprehensive statistics of 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 *Your Texas – Your Vote* voters to determine their UOCAVA eligibility, receive their ballot on demand, complete an absentee ballot application, and return an absentee ballot in time to be tabulated.
- Improve ballot access for *Your Texas – Your Vote* UOCAVA voters, while at the same time, lowering long-term MOVE Act and UOCAVA voter services costs.
- Provide a means for *Your Texas – Your Vote* to deploy a Web system where any computer can become the balloting tool, without the need to individually email ballot packets.
- Provide a UOCAVA solution that *Your Texas – Your Vote* 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 *Your Texas – Your Vote* the resulting solution must offer:

A Reliable, Proven System

Any system with this level of importance must be proven and reliable. Our vendor's

proposed system has been used in over 500 U.S. elections, delivering ballots to tens of thousands of voters in over 60 countries since 2008.

LiveBallot is hosted on Microsoft's Windows Azure platform, providing 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.

Improve the Voting Experience for Our Voters

LiveBallot offers a variety of features and functions that will directly improve our voters' balloting experience. By providing an easy to use, online interface, our voters can access their ballot at their convenience. This is especially important to overseas military voters who have unpredictable schedules and changeable locations. The *LiveBallot* administrative interface allows us to customize the way the information is presented to our voters. Instruction text, forms, graphics, theme 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:

- Voter Registration
- Ballot Delivery
- Ballot Return

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 exceedingly 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.

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.

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 the automated updates while continuing to build new features and improvements to meet our 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 this new 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. Specifically we anticipate:

- Our ballot return rate will improve by well over 50% with the goal of eliminating the ballot return gap between UOCAVA and domestic voters.
- Our UOCAVA voter registration will increase by over 35%.
- Our UOCAVA voter participation rate will increase by over 35%.
- The percent of ballots delivered to ballots received will climb by over 40%.
- Voter confirmation (ballot tracking) will climb by over 75%.
- Our UOCAVA statistical reporting metrics and data aggregation tools will dramatically improve, enhancing our overall data metric reporting by over 75%.
- That our staff time complying with the new MOVE Act requirements will decrease by over 60%.

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

Absentee Ballot Return Rates:

- General Population: 91%
- UOCAVA Voters: 67%

The key metric for this state is to improve the ballot return rate for UOCAVA voters by at least 50% over the next election cycle and moving toward our ultimate goal of eliminating the gap between UOCAVA voters and domestic voters by 2018.

The Proposed *Your Texas – Your Vote* UOCAVA System

The FVAP funding will ensure *Your Texas – Your Vote* offers an intuitive, one-stop, seamless process to check UOCAVA eligibility, provide online registration tools, request an absentee ballot, receive notification of ballot availability, access and mark

the ballot online – all dramatically improving the ballot return rate.

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 email or paper ballots individually 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. The proposed solution will not provide online voter registration or FPCA tools, but will link voters to already existing Federal/State/Local online voter registration and FPCA tools.

– *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 identified. A simple mapping tool allows quick and easy upload, import, and interaction with the data to ensure 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 a blank ballot along with relevant and required documents such as instructions, oath of voter, and return envelope labels. 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 (8.5 x 11) and European (A4) sizes. Ballots

printed using *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
- *LiveBallot* visitors' origin of access (i.e., state/country)
- Number of ballots downloaded
- Delivery method usage statistics
- Return method selection 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 and Direct Tabulation Ready

Texas counties will not be utilizing available and optional ballot duplication technologies. There are no budgetary considerations for this technology in the proposed solution.

– 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 (NOTE – dates are estimated based on date of contract/award):

Requirements Gathering (Q4 2013)

- Provide onsite workshop demonstrations of the *LiveBallot* tools - October 2013
- Setup working group sessions to document our business and technical requirements - October 2013
- Identify election file import requirements - October 2013
- Identify onscreen instruction requirements - October 2013

- Identify user roles and associated permissions for the *LiveBallot* tools - October 2013
- Identify Return Ballot Packages and custom ballot package form requirements - October 2013
- Identify requirements for election set-up and county inheritance of state-wide data, when applicable - October 2013

The Planning/Development phase consists of the following activities (Q4 2013):

- Analyze the results from requirements gathering and determine configuration - October 2013
- Configure the tools to address election file import requirements - October 2013
- Develop onscreen instruction requirements based on requirements - October 2013
- Setup user roles and associated permissions for *LiveBallot* based on identified requirements - October 2013
- Create Return Ballot Packages and custom ballot package forms - October 2013
- Setup the tool to support state-wide elections set-up and county inheritance of state-wide data (as appropriate) - October 2013

The testing phase will consist of performing the following activities (Q4 2013):

- We will conduct a test pilot in the production environment using the *LiveBallot* tool - November 2013
- We will conduct acceptance testing procedures to ensure that the requirements identified in the requirements phase are satisfied - November 2013
- Perform remediation configuration activities on the *LiveBallot* tool to address any issues/problems uncovered during the pilot test exercise - November 2013
- We will develop a Test Report that documents Acceptance Test procedures and resulting using the pilot test users - November 2013

Project Phase I Milestone

- Initial Meetings (Q4 2013) - October 2013
 - Request for Information
 - Determine point of contact and escalation (roles/responsibilities)
 - Formalize Requirements
 - Sign-off of Requirements Documents
- Configuration (and Customization) - November 2013
 - Administration Configuration
 - Setup jurisdiction contact information/ Core Configuration
 - Online Ballot Instructions
 - Ballot Package (Mail, Fax, Email) Completed
- Email Notification to Voter - November 2013

- 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) - November 2013
 - Upload VR Data
 - Upload and Import Election Data
 - Analyze data for completeness
 - Proof Election Data Mapping
- Internal Testing - November 2013
 - Verify election ballot data
 - Verify ballot delivery settings
 - Verify county page content and links
- Initial UAT - November 2013
 - Conduct UAT Prep Meeting
 - Conduct Initial UAT Requirements and Functionality Walk-through
 - Send UAT results and issue tracking XLS
 - Get VAT results confirmation and acceptance
 - Address initial UAT gaps
- Final UAT - December 2013
 - 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
- Go-Live - December 2013
- Exercise Support Process - December 2013
- Conduct Final Walkthroughs and Data Validation - December 2013
- Execute Workflows (e.g. Notification) - December 2013

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

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

Your Texas – Your Vote endorses the five criteria areas that are used to measure and evaluate this new UOCAVA program. Those areas are:

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:

- Voter Registration
- 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.

In addition, the FVAP grant will 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. *Your Texas – Your Vote* has over 4.1 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. The system we are selecting must be capable of addressing the mobility needs of every voter in our voter registration system. *LiveBallot* is a comprehensive MOVE Act and UOCAVA solution that is can touch each of our registered voters, since any one of them may become UOCAVA eligible at any time.

We expect to offer the *LiveBallot* system to every UOCAVA voter for every election honoring their right to equal access to the ballot, regardless of the size of the election. Therefore, we expect to use this solution for a minimum of three elections per year.

Strategic goals

Your Texas – Your Vote considers the UOCAVA project a highly strategic opportunity to dramatically ease the process of balloting for overseas and military voters. Additionally, this project will secure the tools necessary to ensure any of the registered voters in our Consortium 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 be built 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 of 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 the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) standards will:

- Enable data mining 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.

Our long-term strategy may involve expanding the system to offer UOCAVA voters a multi-platform, electronic ballot application that is available via social media (e.g., Facebook, etc.), 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.

Sustainability

Our elections offices are understaffed and under-resourced. Accordingly, *Your Texas – Your Vote* 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.

Collaboration

A key objective for *Your Texas – Your Vote* is to offer a seamless, integrated solution in collaboration with each of the elections jurisdiction in our consortium of counties. *Your Texas – Your Vote* 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.

The deployment of the *LiveBallot* solution will eliminate the need for elections staff to manually register a UOCAVA voter's application and send a paper or email ballot. *LiveBallot* is a one-stop solution where UOCAVA voters may access online registration tools, access and mark their ballot, print, fax, or mail all the required materials, and track their ballot. We anticipate a significant reduction on our coalitions' staffing and resources while enhancing services to our UOCAVA voters and still fully complying with the MOVE Act.

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 timely delivery.

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

The consortium'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 have traditionally 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 well-intentioned spirit of the MOVE Act and are rising to the challenge of meeting the law's new requirements with an already taxed election team during the critical days of an election. The MOVE Act requires electronic ballot delivery 45 days prior to a federal election; this requires staff to spend precious election time to keep 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 area of voter registration and are making progress in the area of voter participation. There remains, however, 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 is amplified by 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.
- Once registered and in the system, we mail or email a ballot to the voter. Recent efforts have included emailing a ballot and the requisite balloting information to requesting UOCAVA voters with a valid email address.
- Our goal has been to send our registered UOCAVA voters a ballot no later than 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 pilot test 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 results using the pilot test.
- 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 measurable elements, 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 equal access to the ballot. Therefore, regardless of the time it takes, our staff will ensure the ballots gets 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 and 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 nearly a 60% 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, and 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, from Waziristan to Walter Reed will have access to their ballot, where and when they want it.

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 measure the performance of 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

An annual final report will summarize the entirety of the data and financial reports. This is the report that is to be made available to FVAP by the 15th of February for each of the grant supported years, but at least through 2018.

1. *Current and Pending Project Proposal Submissions*

Rockwall County was awarded a Health and Human Services (HHS) 261 grant in 2012 for a web-based sample ballot delivery system. The funding expires in 2014. A complement to the web-based sample ballot delivery system is *LiveBallot*, a web-based on-demand ballot delivery system for UOCAVA voters. Rockwall County was afforded participation in a pilot project by the vendor Democracy Live, to deploy *LiveBallot* to enhance services to UOCAVA voters in elections through 2014. Award of the current EASE 2.0 proposal would sustain Rockwall County's *LiveBallot* license from 2014 through 2018 to continue electronic ballot access to the county's UOCAVA voters.

2. *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 60 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.

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 *Your Texas – Your Vote*

Through the use of the requested FVAP grants funds the Texas consortium of counties (known hereafter as *Your Texas – Your Vote* 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 new 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. The funding of this grant will allow us to meet the following goals by 2018:

- We anticipate our ballot return rate will improve by well over 50% with the goal of eventually eliminating the ballot return gap between UOCAVA and domestic voters.
- We anticipate UOCAVA voter registration will increase by over 35%.
- We anticipate that our UOCAVA voter participation rate will increase by over 35%.
- We anticipate the percent of ballots delivered to ballots received will climb by over 40%.
- We anticipate voter confirmation (ballot tracking) will climb by over 75%.
- We anticipate that our UOCAVA statistical reporting metrics and data aggregation tools will dramatically improve, thus enhancing our overall data metric reporting by over 75%.
- We anticipate that our staff time complying with the MOVE Act requirements will fall by over 60%.

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 this consortium is to improve the ballot return rate for UOCAVA voters by at least 50% over the next election cycle, and moving towards future goal of eliminating the gap between UOCAVA voters and domestic voters by 2018.

We believe that the proposed project will provide substantial return on investment that should be taken into account in determining the justification for this project, to include:

- Vital data and statistical data gathering to further inform both the consortium counties and FVAP of UOCAVA balloting and voting experiences.
- Valuable lessons learned and experience applicable to future voting technology initiatives for UOCAVA voters;
- Improved voter awareness of the availability of voter assistance programs; and
- Improved voter satisfaction with the voting process.

1. 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:

Rockwall 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:

Item Description	Years	Pricing (estimate)
<p><i>LiveBallot</i></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>	<p>5</p>	<p>See table in supporting documentation below</p>
<p>Post Grant Period: 2019 and beyond</p> <p>Subscription and Support – Includes all version upgrades.</p>		<p>\$1 per download ballot</p>

f) Other Direct Costs:

Contractor, Subcontractor Awards

LiveBallot UOCA VA 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	Five (5) Year Licensing Fee* *Includes training and support	Three (3) Year Licensing Fee* *License Fee Only 2016-2018
Anderson	\$ 35,000	
Angelina	35,000	
Bastrop	35,000	
Brazoria	75,000	
Burnet	35,000	
Caldwell	35,000	
Cameron	75,000	
Cherokee	35,000	
Coryell	35,000	
Ellis	150,000	
Fannin	35,000	
Fort Bend	150,000	
Galveston	n/a	\$ 18,000
Grayson	75,000	
Gregg	35,000	
Guadalupe	75,000	
Harrison	35,000	
Hale	35,000	
Hardin	35,000	
Hays	75,000	
Henderson	35,000	
Hidalgo	150,000	
Hood	35,000	
Hunt	35,000	
Jefferson	n/a	18,000
Johnson	75,000	
Kaufman	35,000	
Kendall	35,000	
Kerr	35,000	
Lamar	35,000	
Lampasas	35,000	

Consortium County	Five (5) Year Licensing Fee* *Includes training and support	Three (3) Year Licensing Fee* *License Fee Only 2016-2018
Liberty	35,000	
Navarro	35,000	
Nueces	n/a	18,000
Orange	35,000	
Parker	75,000	
Potter	35,000	
Randall	75,000	
Rockwall	n/a	8,400
Rusk	35,000	
San Patricio	35,000	
Smith	75,000	
Titus	35,000	
Tom Green	35,000	
Upshur	35,000	
Val Verde	35,000	
Victoria	n/a	8,400
Williamson	n/a	36,000
Wise	35,000	
Wood	35,000	

OVERALL CONSORTIUM TOTAL BUDGET	\$2,351,800
Adjusted Pricing (based on 1% of Active Voter Registration)	\$291,400

Form SF-424
Item 14

AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT

Below is a list of the 50 counties participating in the consortium. The 50 counties have over 6.1 million registered voters, collectively, as of November 2010.

<u>County</u>	<u>Congressional District</u>
Anderson	5
Angelina	1
Bastrop	10, 17, 27
Brazoria	14, 22
Burnet	25
Caldwell	27, 35
Cameron	34
Cherokee	5
Coryell	25
Ellis	6
Fannin	4
Fort Bend	9, 22
Galveston	14
Grayson	4
Gregg	1
Guadalupe	15, 35
Hale	19
Hardin	36
Harrison	1
Hays	21, 25, 35
Henderson	5
Hidalgo	15, 28
Hood	11
Hunt	4
Jefferson	14
Johnson	25
Kaufman	5
Kendall	21
Kerr	21
Lamar	4
Lampasas	25
Liberty	36
Navarro	6
Nueces	27

Orange	3
Parker	12
Randall	13
Rockwall	4
Rusk	1
San Patricio	27, 34
Smith	1
Titus	4
Tom Green	11
Upshur	4
Val Verde	23
Victoria	27
Williamson	31
Wise	12, 13
Wood	1, 5

Form SF- 424
Item 16

PROGRAM/PROJECT CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

Below is a list of the 20 congressional districts affected by the proposed program/project.

TX – 001
TX – 004
TX – 005
TX – 006
TX – 010
TX – 011
TX – 012
TX – 013
TX – 014
TX – 015
TX – 017
TX – 021
TX – 022
TX – 023
TX – 025
TX – 027
TX – 028
TX – 034
TX – 035
TX – 036