



NASS 2017 IDEAS Award Application

EASE (Effective Absentee System for Elections)

Nevada Secretary of State, Barbara K. Cegavske

Nominating State Office

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Project Title

Effective Absentee System for Elections (EASE)

General Subject Area of Nomination

Elections

Project Description

The Effective Absentee System for Elections (EASE) is an online ballot-delivery system that seamlessly integrates all the documents necessary for Nevada's uniformed-service members, their spouses and dependents, and qualified overseas voters to register to vote, update existing voter registration information, request an absentee ballot, and receive and mark a blank absentee ballot. Designed for efficiency, EASE dynamically integrates data from multiple sources to identify whether a user is registered to vote in Nevada and to compile the information necessary for the user to access and mark an absentee ballot all during a single session. The system also allows users to upload or manually attach a digital or electronic signature in order to sign required documents, which eliminates the need for a printer or scanner. By streamlining absentee voting procedures and creating an entirely electronic process, EASE eliminates many of the hurdles experienced during the traditional absentee balloting process. As a result, absentee voters who used EASE during the 2016 General Election had a lower ballot rejection rate than those who used the traditional absentee voting method.

Executive Summary

History

In 2012, the Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense hosted a bipartisan delegation of states' chief election officers and a representative of the U.S. Department of Defense's Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) who traveled to U.S. military installations in the Middle East to meet with active-duty troops, military voting representatives, and U.S. Embassy officials. Upon completion of the tour, the delegation prepared a report with observations and recommendations to continue to improve policies and procedures for military and overseas voters. One of the delegation's recommendations was to explore the use of the U.S. Department of Defense's Common Access Card (CAC) to enable the electronic transmission of absentee ballots.

The following year, FVAP provided 11 states and local jurisdictions with grant funding to research technological improvements for military and overseas voters. The Office of the Nevada Secretary of State was awarded one of the competitive research grants and developed the Effective Absentee System for Elections (EASE), an online ballot-delivery system that seamlessly integrates all parts of the absentee ballot process and uses digital or electronic signatures to streamline the process. Originally implemented by former Nevada Secretary of State Ross Miller, current Nevada Secretary of State Barbara K. Cegavske is continuing work on the EASE project and is submitting this innovative system for consideration for the 2017 NASS IDEAS award.

Nevada has some of the earliest election deadlines in the country. Applications to register to vote that are submitted by mail must be postmarked not less than 30 days before Election Day, while applications to register to vote online must be submitted not less than 20 days before Election Day. Those wishing to request an absentee ballot in Nevada must have their application received by local election officials no later than the close of business on the seventh calendar day prior to the election. In addition, the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act requires Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) voters to routinely reaffirm their eligibility. Because UOCAVA voters are regularly absent from their voting residence and are not easily reached by public service announcements and other election and campaign reminders, they are often unaware of and miss critical deadlines required to participate in the election process. The EASE system allows users to better navigate these deadlines by providing a one-stop resource for UOCAVA voters with everything necessary to request and return an absentee ballot during the users first contact with election officials.

While there are more transmission options for UOCAVA voters than regular absentee voters, challenges still exist. Many UOCAVA voters who receive or obtain forms and ballots electronically need to have access to technology (e.g., printer, scanner, or fax machine) that may not be readily available to them in order to mark, sign, and return documents in a timely manner. This technology limitation was a significant factor in developing a completely electronic system while maintaining the integrity of the absentee ballot process.

Several administrative goals also contributed to how the online ballot-delivery system would function. One goal was to minimize the number of times an eligible UOCAVA voter would need to contact local election officials in order to register to vote, update existing voter registration information, or request and receive a blank absentee ballot. EASE achieves this goal by seamlessly integrating voter registration into an online system for absentee ballot request and delivery. Because EASE provides the user with everything necessary to register to vote, update voter registration information, request an absentee ballot, and receive and mark a blank absentee ballot during a single online session, the number of times an EASE user will need to contact local election officials is significantly reduced, and in most cases will be only once. Transmitting all of a user's documents at the same time also benefits local election officials due to a reduction in the time necessary to assist the absentee voter and process their information. EASE combines all of the user's documents, including their marked ballot, into a single PDF document, ensuring that the user is returning all of the necessary documents to their local election official in a single communication. Additional goals included uniformity of the process, assurance that correct forms are used and completed accurately, as well as 24/7 availability to account for time differences between the voter and their local election official.

The Nevada Secretary of State's office utilized internal resources to develop EASE and continues to utilize these resources to maintain the system. The office has found this approach to be more cost effective over the life cycle of information technology systems. Additionally, internal maintenance of the EASE program allows modifications to be made quickly and efficiently. In-house staff has acquired the knowledge and experience necessary to maintain and further develop EASE.

EASE was first made available for use during the 2014 General Election by all Nevada's eligible military and overseas voters during a soft launch prior to the MOVE Act's 45-day federal election deadline. In addition to being promoted online and by Nevada's local election officials, EASE was also demonstrated to officials at Nellis Air Force Base and the Nevada National Guard by former Nevada Secretary of State Ross Miller. With a full launch of the EASE program scheduled for the 2016 General Election, the Nevada Secretary of State's office issued press releases and published a video online with step-by-step instructions of how to use EASE. In September 2016, Nevada Secretary of State Barbara Cegavske also visited approximately 120 members of the Nevada National Guard who were in pre-deployment training at Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas, to demonstrate to EASE program and answer questions about military and overseas voting.

Nevada has a strong history of taking significant efforts to promote and protect the voting rights of America's military service members and their families, as well as overseas citizens. In 2012, the Military Voter Protection (MVP) Project named Nevada one of 15 All-Star states. In 2015, the Council of State Governments (CSG) requested a demonstration of EASE at an Overseas Voting Initiative Technical Working Group sub-group meeting. The purpose of the demonstration was to share Nevada's experience with the CAC digital signature to develop recommendations and guidance for other jurisdictions looking to utilize digital signatures for military and overseas voters. In addition, elections staff from the Nevada Secretary of State's office is currently part of the CSG Working Group and sub-group providing input about how Nevada's EASE system utilizes digital signatures. Several state and local election officials from other jurisdictions have also requested information about Nevada's EASE system as they look to develop their own systems.

The Nevada Secretary of State's office has several EASE enhancements planned for the future. Currently, users accessing EASE with a Common Access Card (CAC) issued by the U.S. Department of Defense are able to populate certain fields and manually attach their digital signature available on their CAC. The first planned enhancement will allow CAC users to automatically attach their digital signature and populate additional fields. The second enhancement will utilize Nevada's online voter registration system to seamlessly register EASE users in real time. By integrating online voter registration with EASE, military and overseas voters will be able to register to vote during the additional days after the mail-in registration deadline. The third notable enhancement will integrate the use of the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) to take advantage of a state law permitting voter registration until seven days before an election when using a FWAB. Lastly, an enhancement is planned to have EASE function as an online voter registration system between elections when ballots are not available.

Significance

Nevada's online absentee ballot-delivery system is simple. It uses existing information to analyze and provide UOCAVA voters access to a complete absentee ballot, as well as applicable voter registration and ballot request documents, all during a single online session. EASE simplifies the absentee voting process by reducing required communication with local election officials, reducing participation time, and eliminating the need for UOCAVA voters to know the status and content of his or her voter registration information. The system does not retain or return marked ballots per the terms and conditions of the FVAP grant. Accordingly, EASE users must return their marked ballots independent of the system.

EASE provides UOCAVA voters with everything necessary to submit a military/overseas ballot without prior submission of an absentee ballot request. As a result, it is not necessary for users to actually contact the local election office to receive an absentee ballot. EASE generates a single PDF packet that includes all information and documents necessary for a user to register to vote, update existing voter registration information, request an absentee ballot, and submit an absentee ballot. Users must return

the documents generated by the system to local election officials. Once local election officials receive the necessary documents, they can register the user to vote, update the user's voter registration information, and submit the completed absentee ballot for tabulation. EASE ballots are processed and recorded by the county's election-management system the same way non-UOCAVA absentee ballots are processed and recorded.

EASE uses seamless integration of voter registration and ballot request documents and digital or electronic signatures to eliminate the need for UOCAVA voters to access multiple systems to register to vote; to update voter registration information; or to request, receive, and mark a military/overseas absentee ballot. This reduces the time voters and county election staff must devote to the process, as well as reduces the possibility of errors and missed deadlines due to the timeliness of the communication. The ability to electronically sign documents has a similar effect.

Dynamically integrating information from existing election databases into the EASE system also significantly increases accuracy. For example, the system provides users with the ability to review and edit their existing voter registration information. It also provides the user with the correct county-assigned ballot style based on either information available in an existing voter's record or an address in a county's street file. See Supporting Materials Section 1 for a description of how the system identifies and processes users with and without an existing voter registration record.

The ability for UOCAVA voters to electronically sign voter registration and balloting materials was added to state law during the 2013 Nevada legislative session. Prior to the passage of this law, most UOCAVA voters needed access to a printer and scanner in order to mark, sign, and return their documents by email. The ability to use an electronic signature, as well as the integration of the required attestations, has significantly reduced the rejection rate among Nevada's UOCAVA voters. The Nevada Secretary of State's office is currently researching how the additional security measures available with digital signatures can be utilized in the absentee ballot signing process to increase the integrity of the process without any additional burden on the voter.

EASE has been praised by local election officials in Nevada for its ability to save staff time. Not only has EASE reduced the amount of county staff time spent assisting military and overseas voters, but it also opens a line of communication between each user and their local election office. The system achieves this by sending two emails. First, an email notice is sent to the local election office upon access to the system by a user within their jurisdiction. Second, a confirmation email is sent to both the user and the local election office upon the creation of a ballot. These emails have been incredibly helpful to both the voter and county to ensure no mistakes are made in the process. For example, many voters use these emails to ask follow-up questions and to verify that they are returning their marked absentee ballot to the correct email address. Similarly, local election officials use these emails to follow up with the voter to request additional information or offer assistance as needed.

EASE was also developed to be sustainable and scalable. The system uses the state's voting system files to provide users with appropriate ballot contests, selections, and other information about the election. Designed as a drag-and-drop system, updating EASE for the next election is a quick and easy task that does not require manual data entry or configurations. Similar programming makes EASE extremely scalable. Using live data currently available in street address and voter registration databases, the system eliminates the need to add or edit static data and can be made available to all voters with minimal enhancements. Accordingly, EASE is anticipated to be a cost-effective system to operate and expand in the future.

Impact/Results

The State of Nevada is home to approximately 20,000 eligible UOCAVA voters. During the 2014 General Election, 1,852 total military/overseas absentee ballots were transmitted to voters, of which 955 were returned and counted, resulting in a 52 percent participation rate. The Nevada Secretary of State's office is committed to maximizing UOCAVA voter participation in elections and believes that more can be done. The UOCAVA participation statistics in Nevada provide evidence of two issues facing UOCAVA voters:

(1) a large number of Nevada UOCAVA eligible voters are not participating in the electoral process; and (2) those attempting to participate are experiencing difficulties which translates into an unacceptably high ballot non-return rate.

Eligible UOCAVA voters were previously required to know the requirements of multiple processes (e.g., voter registration, registration update, absentee ballot request, and absentee ballot return) in order to exercise their right to vote. The EASE system eliminates the need for UOCAVA voters to know these processes. Using EASE, UOCAVA voters are now able to complete the process in minutes during a single online session that is available 24/7 instead of engaging in multiple interactions with a local election official. Additionally, the system eliminates paper for users with a digital or electronic signature in their existing voter registration, DMV record, or as provided by the user to sign their registration, absentee ballot request, or other balloting materials.

Several findings demonstrate the need for the EASE system. During the 2014 General Election, military/overseas absentee ballots in Nevada were rejected for three main reasons: (1) missed deadlines; (2) oath not returned; and (3) lack of or problem with the voter's signature. Although specific details about each ballot's reason for rejection in the three categories were not tracked, most could have been avoided by using EASE. For example, EASE prevents users from forgetting a required attestation by automatically including both of the oaths required in Nevada (affirmation and declaration). The system also addresses most signature rejection issues by using an existing signature, when available, as well as including a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) with a user's balloting materials for the local election official to compare the signatures. Additionally, EASE users are less likely to miss the absentee ballot return deadline due to the entirely electronic process, the ease of email transactions, and the immediate return time for electronic transmissions.

Based on data gathered by the Nevada Secretary of State's office, in 2012 and 2014 election military and overseas voters were more likely to have their absentee ballot rejected due to missing the deadline than regular absentee voters. In contrast, the most common reason for ballot rejection among regular absentee voters was a problem with their signature. These statistics further substantiated the need to streamline the absentee process for military/overseas voters.

During the 2016 General Election, EASE was accessed by eligible Nevada UOCAVA voters 2,854 times, although many of these users did not complete their session. Of those accessing EASE, 2,218 users generated a ballot, and 1,610 were credited with vote history. Email was the most common method of return at 94.5 percent. In addition, 521 users that completed their session provided feedback. A sample of the feedback received is included in the Supporting Materials Section 2.

EASE Usage Statistics – 2016 General Election

Number of times EASE was accessed	2,854
Number of ballots generated	2,218
Number of ballots counted	1,610
Ballot acceptance rate	72.6%

EASE Ballot Return Method Selected – 2016 General Election

Return Method	# Returned	% of Total
Email	2,097	94.5%
Mail	79	3.6%
Fax	24	1.1%
Unknown	18	0.8%
Total	2218	100.0%

Supporting Materials

1) How the EASE System Identifies and Processes Users

The EASE system uses existing voter registration information, if available, to identify users. However, if the system is unable to identify the user in an existing county voter registration record, other databases are searched. The following is a brief explanation of how the EASE system identifies and processes users:

- If the EASE system is able to identify an existing voter registration record, the user is asked to verify or update his or her voter registration information, including his or her electronic signature. Based on this information, the system pre-fills a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) that is used to register the user to voter (or update the user's voter registration information) and request an absentee ballot. Based on the information used to populate the FPCA, the system provides the user with a blank absentee ballot that can be marked electronically and customized for the county/district/precinct in which the user is registered to vote. After the user electronically marks and confirms his or her ballot selections, the system provides the user with a PDF document. This document contains: (1) a pre-addressed return cover sheet based on the selected return method (email, fax, or mail); (2) a filled FPCA with the user's information and electronic signature; and (3) the user's marked absentee ballot. Because users must return the PDF document to their local election official independent of the EASE system, the system requires the user to affirm his or her understanding of this requirement when the PDF document is created. The system also sends a confirmation email to the user and the appropriate county election official when the PDF document is created. This confirmation email provides return instructions, contact information, and ballot tracking information.
- If the EASE system is unable to identify an existing voter registration record, the system will attempt to identify an image of the user's electronic signature in a database maintained by the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). If an image of the user's electronic signature is available in the DMV's database, the system will provide the user with that signature to electronically sign the required documents. Should the system be unable to identify an existing residential address or political party affiliation in an existing voter registration record, the user must provide this information for the system to complete the FPCA and determine the correct absentee ballot to provide to the user. Other than requiring the user to provide the additional address and political party affiliation information, the system functions the same as it would for a user that the system was able to identify in an existing voter registration record.

2) Selected User Comments from the 2016 General Election – 521 total users provided feedback

- *"I am currently in the middle of a year long deployment for the Nevada Army National Guard. I was deployed for the last presidential election as well and was not able to participate in the election. This system is the only reason I have been able to participate in the democracy I have left my family to support. This system let me vote for the first time."*
- *"As an active duty Marine, I was going to take a day of leave in order to vote. This just made my life easier, so thank you."*
- *"This was SUPER easy to use. Thank you, America! I miss you!"*
- *"This was amazing and easy. Thank you Nevada for supporting me while I am overseas."*
- *"This was a very easy and comprehensive process. I have never voted before but am now proud to say that I have. Thank you for making this experience a positive one. I will be voting again in the future."*

3) Screenshot of EASE Overview on the Nevada Secretary of State Website (www.nvsos.gov)

Elections » Voters » Uniformed/Overseas Citizens »

EASE - Overview

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Nevada's Effective Absentee System For Elections

*[EASE Demonstration](#) - web pages an eligible user will see.

Nevada's Effective Absentee System for Elections, or EASE, is an online application that seamlessly integrates voter registration and electronic ballot delivery and marking. EASE is available to members of the United States Armed Forces, their spouses and dependents, and Nevada voters who reside outside of the country. The system will be available for elections with a federal contest on the ballot 45 days before Election Day at NVEASE.gov.

Nevada's EASE is the first entirely online application, from registration to requesting a ballot to ballot delivery to a ballot marking system using a digital/electronic signature, for military and overseas voters. Assembly Bill 175, passed during the 2013 Legislature, authorizes Covered Voters to use digital or electronic signatures to sign applications to register to vote; applications for military-overseas ballots; and military-overseas ballots. Previously, military and other Nevadans covered by the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) were required to submit their ballots by mail or they needed a printer and a scanner to receive and return a ballot via email.

EASE retrieves the electronic image of the voter's signature already on file with their county clerk or registrar or from the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles so it can be used by the voter to register to vote, request an absent ballot or return an absent ballot, negating the requirement of printing and signing the ballot before returning it. After a military or overseas voter marks his or her own ballot with EASE, the system applies the voter's electronic signature to the ballot and generates a cover sheet with the necessary declarations, affirmations and information to allow the counties to process and count the military or overseas absent ballot. When finished, an EASE voter has the option of saving the ballot materials as a PDF file and emailing the document as an attachment to the respective county clerk or registrar's office, or printing it and returning by mail or fax. User must return their completed documents and ballot to their Nevada election office independent of EASE - EASE does not return any documents or information for a user.

Without any additional state funding, the Secretary of State's office developed the system with a grant from the Department of Defense's Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP), which was used to design and develop an application that allows military and overseas voters to access their blank absent ballot online beginning with the 2014 general election.

- [EASE Demonstration](#) - Those interested in seeing how EASE works can view the [EASE Demonstration](#). The demonstration is a PDF of the screens an eligible registered Nevada voter will see while using EASE.

Nevada's uniformed and overseas citizen can access the live EASE system at NVEASE.gov.

Questions? Media and Public questions should be directed to the [Secretary of State's office](#). Uniformed and Overseas Citizens with questions about registering, requesting, receiving and returning their ballot should contact their [local election office](#).

Direct link: <http://nvsos.gov/sos/elections/voters/uniformed-overseas-citizens/ease-overview>

4) Press Release Announcing Launch of EASE in 2014

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Nevada Secretary of State Launches Online Resource for Registration, Ballot Delivery for Overseas Military Voting

Secretary of State Ross Miller says system is first of its kind in the nation, and a significant advancement for U.S. Armed Forces and Nevadans overseas

Post Date: 09/18/2014



Secretary of State Ross Miller is joined by members of Nellis Air Force Base and the Nevada National Guard during a presentation of EASE, Nevada's Effective Absentee System for Elections.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(Carson City, NV; September 18, 2014) — Secretary of State Ross Miller today unveiled Nevada's [Effective Absentee System for Elections](#), or EASE, an online application that seamlessly integrates voter registration and electronic ballot delivery and marking. EASE is available to members of the United States Armed Forces, their spouses and dependents, and Nevada voters who reside outside of the country. Nevada is the first state in the nation to introduce an entirely online application, from registration to requesting a ballot to ballot delivery to a ballot marking system using a digital/electronic signature, for military and overseas voters. The system at www.nvease.gov is available to all military and overseas voters beginning Friday, Sept. 19, at 8 a.m., coinciding with Nevada's deadline to distribute absentee ballots to covered voters.

"Our military members currently serving overseas are on the front lines protecting democracy, and we owe them the most accessible, convenient and secure system possible to participate in the very elections they are fighting to defend," said Miller. "EASE is a huge step forward from where we were only a few months ago, when military and overseas citizens were forced to return a paper absentee ballot by mail, or print out, sign and scan an absentee ballot and return it by email. I thank Assemblyman Elliot Anderson for enthusiastically embracing the bill making EASE a reality in the last legislative session. As a former military member, Assemblyman Anderson is a strong advocate of our armed forces and was a great partner in initiating this online ballot delivery tool."

Assembly Bill 175, passed during the 2013 Legislature, authorizes covered voters to use digital or electronic signatures to sign applications to register to vote; applications for military-overseas ballots; and military-overseas ballots. Previously, military and other Nevadans covered by the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) were required to submit their ballots by mail or they needed a printer and a scanner to receive and return a ballot via email. AB 175 also requires a system of approved electronic transmission to include a method by which a covered voter may provide his or her digital or electronic signature on any document or other material that is necessary for the covered voter to register to vote, apply for a military-overseas ballot or cast a military-overseas ballot.

EASE retrieves the electronic image of the voter's signature already on file with their county clerk or registrar or from the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles so it can be used by the voter to register to vote, request an absent ballot or return an absent ballot, negating the requirement of printing and signing the ballot before returning it. After a military or overseas voter marks his or her own ballot with EASE, the system applies the voter's electronic signature to the ballot and generates a cover sheet with the necessary declarations, affirmations and information to allow the counties to process and count the military or overseas absent ballot. When finished, an EASE voter has the option of saving the ballot materials as a PDF file and emailing it as an attachment to the respective county clerk or registrar's office, or printing it and returning by mail or fax. Military and overseas voters can access EASE at www.nvease.gov.

Without any additional state funding, the Secretary of State's office developed the system with a grant from the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP), which was used to design and develop an application that allows military and overseas voters to access their blank absent ballot online in time for the 2014 general election. The EASE 2 grant funds two research areas: the development and effect of online blank ballot delivery tools; and the establishment and effect of a single point of contact in a state election office for the transmission of election materials. Nevada was one of only five recipients to receive the grant in 2013. Members of Nevada's Army National Guard, 17th Sustainment Brigade, tested EASE prior to today's launch and provided their thoughts and feedback to the Secretary of State's team.

"I'm proud that we're being proactive in making Nevada a leader in enhancing access to military and overseas voters and their families. Nevada's rejected military and overseas ballots fell by more than 8.5 percent from the 2008 to 2012 elections," said Miller. "I expect to see another dramatic decrease in rejected ballots as a result of the EASE program."

Nevada also experienced the third-largest drop – almost 20 percentage points – in the rate of unreturned military and overseas ballots from 2008 to 2012, according to PEW Charitable Trusts' Election Performance Index (EPI) study released in FY 2013. The study also showed that Nevada was one of only seven states to raise its overall EPI average by more than 10 percentage points from 2008 to 2012, leaping from 22nd to 5th in the nation.

In July 2012, the Military Voter Protection (MVP) Project named Nevada one of 15 All-Star states for taking significant efforts to promote and protect the voting rights of America's military service members and their families. Miller traveled as a member of a delegation sponsored by the U.S. Department of Defense and FVAP to the Middle East in September 2012 to gain first-hand knowledge of military and overseas voting issues. He and four fellow Secretaries of State met with U.S. officials in Kuwait and Qatar to discuss voter outreach efforts for U.S. citizens living abroad and collaboration to resolve barriers to voting. The trip also included a tour and an extensive presentation of a U.S. Army Post Office to learn how military ballots are processed and transported. Following the trip, the delegation developed a report of findings and recommendations for improving the processes for military and overseas voters.

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Direct link to press release:


<http://www.nvsos.gov/sos/Home/Components/News/News/1727/23?recordid=1727&arch=1&npage=6>

5) Press Release Announcing Availability of EASE for the 2016 General Election

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Nevada Secretary of State Reminds Nevada's Military and Overseas Voters about EASE Program

Post Date: 10/04/2016 9:22 AM



NEVADA SECRETARY OF STATE

BARBARA K. CEGAVSKE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Gail Anderson
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(Carson City, NV; October 4, 2016) Nevada Secretary of State Barbara Cegavske would like to remind Nevada's military and overseas voters that Nevada's Effective Absentee System for Elections, or EASE, is available for the 2016 General Election.

EASE is an online ballot delivery system that seamlessly integrates all of the documents necessary for qualified users to register to vote, update existing voter registration information, request an absentee ballot and receive and mark a blank absentee ballot that they will then return to their local election official. Nevada residents covered by the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA), including members of the Uniformed Services, their spouses and/or dependents away from their voting jurisdiction, as well as U.S. citizens residing outside the United States may utilize EASE.

Secretary Cegavske and her senior Elections team recently traveled to Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas to introduce Nevadans serving in our National Guard to the EASE program. "We were grateful for the chance to meet with Nevadans serving our State and country as they prepare for overseas deployment," said Secretary Cegavske. "It is important that all Nevada citizens residing outside of the U.S. have the opportunity to participate in the upcoming election and EASE will help them do that."

All absentee ballots must be received by the local election official by 7:00 pm on Election Day, November 8, 2016.

For more information about EASE, visit www.nvsos.gov.



All questions related to Nevada elections may be submitted to the Secretary of State's Election Division at nvelect@sos.nv.gov or by calling (775)684-5705.

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Direct link to press release:

<http://www.nvsos.gov/sos/Home/Components/News/News/2154/309?selcat=1&arch=1>

6) Press Release from the Nevada National Guard

Nevada Secretary of State visits deploying troops, promotes voting

By Tech. Sgt. Emerson Marcus

Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs Oct. 11, 2016

Whether overseas or deployed, Nevadans can vote in this year's general election.

That's a message Nevada Secretary of State Barbara Cegavske takes seriously. So seriously, in fact, she recently visited Fort Bliss, Texas to see about 120 soldiers of the 485th Military Police Company before they deployed to the Middle East.

"I told the troops that this was a bucket wish list I never thought in a million years would happen," Cegavske said of her chance to see the troops before their departure. "We wanted to make sure that everybody going to a different state or country knows their vote counts, and we wanted to explain it to the 485th and pass the word along. It was very important to see them face-to-face and let them know we care about them and appreciate their service to our state."

The program, [Effective Absentee System for Elections](#), or EASE, allows Nevada residents serving overseas or residing outside the county to complete their voter registration, receive a ballot and mark the ballot online. Under the program, it's not necessary to request an absentee ballot from a local election official or put anything in the mail. Everything is packaged by the system into one digital document that voters then email to their local election official.

Wayne Thorley, deputy secretary of state for elections, first heard about the 485th's deployment last August after a local TV station covered the unit's mobilization ceremony at the Army Aviation Support Facility in Stead.

He contacted the Nevada National Guard's public affairs office that day and set up a visit to the 485th's mobilization station during the last week of September to explain EASE to the troops. The 485th left the following week and arrived in the Middle East on Oct. 4.

"Secretary Cegavske's visit really displayed her dedication and the dedication of her staff to soldiers and the Nevada National Guard," said Capt. Mark Goulart, 485th commander. "Democracy is at the heart of why we do what we do and programs like this help our soldiers participate in that process, even when deployed."



Nevada Secretary of State Barbara Cegavske speaks with Soldiers of the 485th Military Police Company Sept. 26 on her office's electronic voting program for Nevada citizens living outside the country, including deployed servicemembers. Photo courtesy the Nevada Secretary of State's Office.



Nevada Secretary of State Barbara Cegavske speaks with Soldiers of the 485th Military Police Company Sept. 26 on her office's electronic voting program for Nevada citizens living outside the country, including deployed servicemembers. Photo courtesy the Nevada Secretary of State's Office.

Soldiers in the 485th will conduct customs and border clearance duties in multiple countries in the U.S. Central Command region while mostly based in Kuwait.

During her visit, Cegavske thanked the troops for their service and was a bit surprised by how many Nevada Guardsmen wanted to take their picture with her.

"I was shocked at how many people wanted to have their picture taken with me," she said. "I don't think of myself as a VIP. But to get the message to them and talk to them before they left was really important."

Direct link to press release:

<http://www.nv.ngb.army.mil/nvng/index.cfm/public-affairs/news-releases/nevada-secretary-of-state-visits-troops-before-deployment-promotes-voting/>

7) Photos from Secretary Cegavske's September 2016 Visit to Fort Bliss



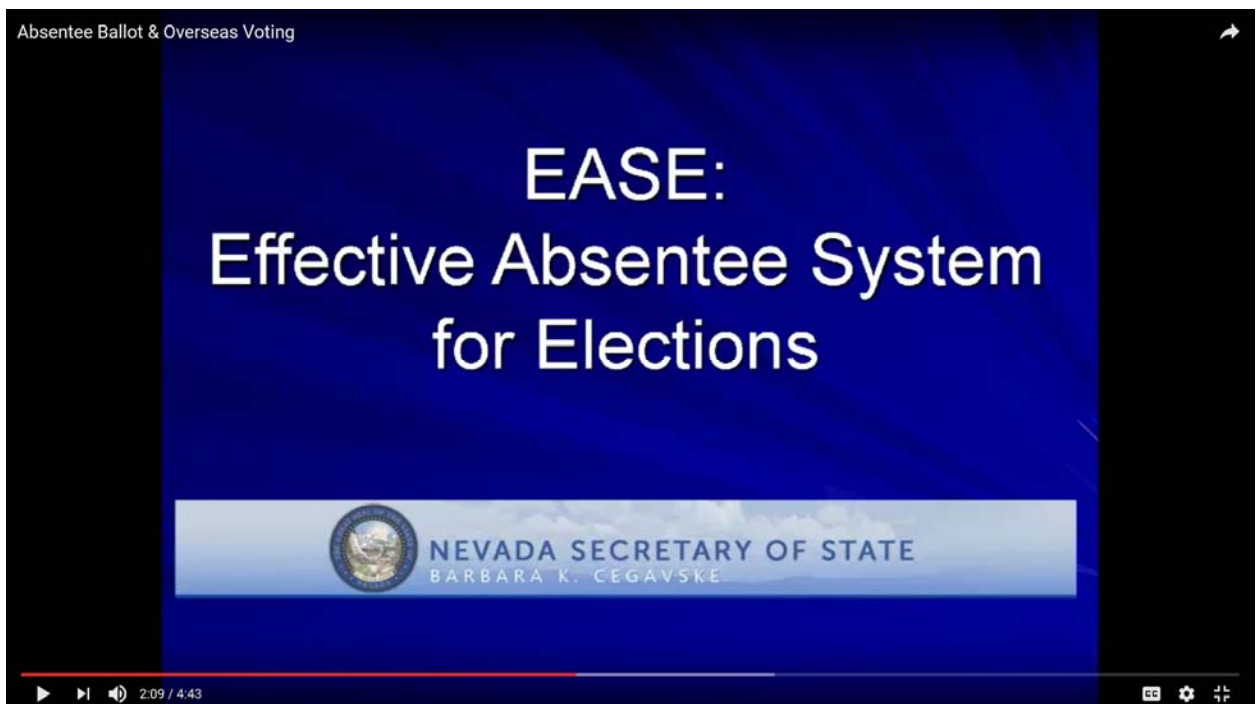


8) Online Video from the Nevada National Guard Demonstrating the EASE System



Direct link to video: <https://youtu.be/YAwbj6u9ok>

9) Online Video of How to Use the EASE System



Direct link to video: https://youtu.be/bgo_rxm_tfk?t=2m3s

10) Screenshots from EASE Program


System Overview/Landing Page (1 of 8)

Nevada Effective Absentee System for Elections

Overview

1. Affirmation
2. Identification
3. Information
4. Ballot
5. Return

Confirmation



WARNING: Falsifying your registration is a Category E felony (NRS 293.800).

Welcome to the Effective Absentee System for Elections (EASE) program for Nevada uniformed service members, their families, and citizens residing outside the U.S.

If you are an eligible military or overseas voter, EASE will guide you through the following steps to register (or confirm registration status) and provide you with your actual absentee ballot to mark and return:

1. Affirm and declare your eligibility as a military or overseas voter
2. Provide personal information to verify identity
3. Confirm personal information and signature
4. Mark, review, and confirm ballot selections
5. Select return method of your choice (email, fax, or mail), download, and return ballot

If the information retrieved by EASE requires corrections or updates, please make the necessary changes. Failure to provide accurate information may result in the system's inability to retrieve your existing registration record and will require you to contact your county election official directly.

Please note: EASE will not electronically submit your ballot to the county election official. Instructions for returning your ballot materials (including by email) will be provided once you complete your absent ballot.

[Continue](#) [End Session](#)

Nevada Effective Absentee System for Elections

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The following affirmations and declarations include eligibility statements required to use this system.

Affirmation (required for registration and/or updates)

- I am a member of the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine on active duty or an eligible spouse or dependent of such a member, or a U.S. citizen temporarily residing outside the U.S. or other U.S. citizen residing outside the U.S., and
- I am a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years of age (or will be by the day of the election), eligible to vote in the requested jurisdiction, and
- I have not been convicted of a felony or other disqualifying offense or been adjudicated mentally incompetent, or if so, my voting rights have been reinstated,
- I am not registering, requesting a ballot, or voting in any other jurisdiction in the U.S., and
- My signature and date below indicate when I completed this document, and
- The information on this form is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Declaration (required for ballot return [NAC 293D.020](#))

- I am a uniformed-service voter, a spouse or dependent of a uniformed-service voter, or an overseas voter pursuant to the provisions of chapter 293D of NRS.
- I am a citizen of the United States.
- I will be at least 18 years of age on election day.
- I have not been adjudicated mentally incompetent, or if so, my right to vote has been restored.
- I have not been convicted of treason or a felony, or if so, my right to vote has been restored.
- I am not registered to vote in any other jurisdiction in the United States.
- I have not applied, nor do I intend to apply, for a ballot from any other jurisdiction for the same election.
- The information on this form is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.
- I acknowledge that if I return my voted ballot by approved electronic transmission, I have waived my right to have my ballot kept secret. Nevertheless, I understand that, as with any absent voter, my signature will be permanently separated from my voted ballot to maintain its secrecy at the outset of the tabulation process and thereafter.
- I understand that a material misstatement of fact in completing the document may be grounds for a conviction of perjury under the laws of the United States or this State.

I affirm and declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Submit

End Session

Nevada Effective Absentee System for Elections

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Enter your information exactly as it appears on your Driver's License or ID Card. The information you provide will be matched against existing information to *confirm* your identity and determine if you are registered to vote or if you need to register to vote. Fields marked with an "*" are required and must be completed.

Voter Identification

*First Name:

Middle Name:

*Last Name:

Suffix:

*Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy):

*Nevada Driver's License or Identification number:

*Last Four Digits of Your Social Security Number:

*Email Address:

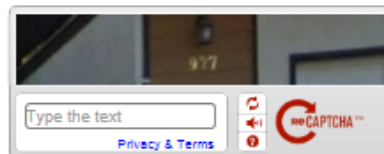
*Classification

I request an absentee ballot for all elections in which I am eligible to vote AND:

- I am a member of the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine on active duty
- I am the spouse or dependent of a member of the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine on active duty.
- I am an activated National Guard member on State orders.
- I am a U.S. citizen residing outside the U.S., and I intend to return.
- I am a U.S. citizen residing outside the U.S., and my return is not certain.
- I am a U.S. citizen and have never resided in the United States.
- None of the above.

*Security ?

Enter the characters you see in the image below (not case sensitive). If you are unable to identify the characters, use the refresh button to receive a new image.




Nevada Effective Absentee System for Elections

[Contact Information](#) [FAQs](#)

Review the following information. Select 'Confirm' to proceed and access your ballot or 'Edit' to change your information.

Please confirm the following information:

First Name: Test	NV Residential Address: ? <i>(No P.O.Box/Business Address)</i>
Middle Name:	101 N Carson St
Last Name: User	Carson City, NV 89701
Suffix:	
Sex:	Mailing Address: <i>(if different)</i>
DOB: 01/01/1900	
NV DL/ID Number: 0123456789	
Last Four Digits of SSN: 1234	
Phone:	
Fax:	
Email: Voter@Email.com	
Political Party: Nonpartisan	
Signature	About This Signature




Confirm **Edit** **Back** **End Session**

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Mark Your Ballot

Step 1: To select a candidate or ballot issue, click on the space that completes the arrow pointing to your desired selection.  To change a selection, you must click on the completed arrow to deselect your choice. 

Step 2: Click the blue button at the bottom of this page to review your ballot changes. Once no further changes have been made, your ballot will be prepared for submission. 

**2016 PRIMARY ELECTION
CARSON CITY, NEVADA
PRECINCT 403
BALLOT STYLE: NonPartisan
NOVEMBER 4, 2016**



Rep in Congress, District 2
Two (2) Year Term
VOTE FOR ONE

AMODEI, MARK E.	REPUBLICAN	←	→
HANSEN, JANINE	INDEPENDENT AMERICAN PARTY	←	→
SPEES, KRISTEN	DEMOCRATIC	←	→
<p>Governor Four (4) Year Term VOTE FOR ONE</p>			
GOODMAN, ROBERT "BOB"	DEMOCRATIC	←	→
SANDOVAL, BRIAN	REPUBLICAN	←	→
VANDERBEEK, DAVID LORY	INDEPENDENT AMERICAN PARTY	←	→
NONE OF THESE CANDIDATES		←	→


Contact Information FAQs

Nevada Effective Absentee System for Elections

Overview



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
Confirmation



WARNING: Falsifying your registration is a Category E felony (NRS 293.800).

Review Your Ballot Selections

Step 1: To select a candidate or ballot issue, click on the space that completes the arrow pointing to your desired selection.  To change a selection, you must click on the completed arrow to deselect your choice. 


Step 2: Click the blue button at the bottom of this page to review your ballot changes. Once no further changes have been made, your ballot will be prepared for submission. 

Ballot Selection Notices

Undervote: You have marked fewer than the allowed number of selections for which you are entitled to vote. Note: You are not required to mark a selection for each contest.

Blank Ballot: Warning, this is a blank ballot where no votes have been cast.

2016 PRIMARY ELECTION
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA
PRECINCT 824000
BALLOT STYLE: Democrat
NOVEMBER 4, 2016



Possible Undervote

Rep in Congress, District 2
 Two Year Term
VOTE FOR ONE

AMODEI, MARK E	REPUBLICAN	← →
HANSEN, JANINE	INDEPENDENT AMERICAN	← →
SPEES, KRISTEN	DEMOCRATIC	← →

Possible Undervote

Governor
 Four Year Term
VOTE FOR ONE

GOODMAN, ROBERT "BOB"	DEMOCRATIC	← →
SANDOVAL, BRIAN	REPUBLICAN	← →

Nevada Effective Absentee System for Elections

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Select Ballot Return Method

IMPORTANT PLEASE READ: This system will not automatically return your ballot. This system will generate a PDF of your absent ballot and the accompanying required ballot materials that you are then required to return to your county election office using one of the return methods below.

- When you select a return method, EASE will send you a confirmation email with contact information and instructions on how to correctly return your ballot.
- The PDF of your absent ballot and the accompanying required ballot materials will be pre-addressed and will contain your county election office's contact information.

I understand that I am responsible for returning my absent ballot to my county election office.

RETURN BY EMAIL

1. Download your ballot PDF by selecting the 'Return by Email' button above.
2. Email the PDF as an attachment to kpaul@sos.nv.gov

RETURN BY FAX

1. Download your ballot PDF by selecting the 'Return by Fax' button above.
2. Print out your absent ballot and the required accompanying ballot materials.
3. Fax all of the documents to your county election official at the following number: **(775) 887-2146**

RETURN BY MAIL

1. Download your ballot PDF by selecting the 'Return by Mail' button above.
2. Print out your absent ballot and the required accompanying ballot materials.
3. Mail all of the documents to your county election official:

Carson City Clerk
885 E Musser Street Suite 1025
Carson City, Nevada 89701

**I HAVE DOWNLOADED AND SAVED OR PRINTED MY BALLOT PDF
CONTINUE TO MY CONFIRMATION INFORMATION**

Nevada Effective Absentee System for Elections

[Contact Information](#) [FAQs](#)

Thank you for using Nevada's Effective Absentee System for Elections!

Your confirmation number is: **0111348C11317**

A confirmation email with your transaction and county contact information has been sent to: **Voter@Email.com**

Your Feedback is valuable to us, please use the area below to provide your comment.

Great system!

Ballot Tracking: Information for the status of your ballot is included in your confirmation email.


For more information please visit nvsos.gov or contact your [county clerk](#).

[Submit Comments, Finish Session, and Return to NVSOS.gov](#)

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PowerPoint Demonstration Pages: <http://nvsos.gov/sos/home/showdocument?id=3489>