

# **AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION**

Automatic registration is a new way to leverage citizens' interactions with government agencies to ensure that all eligible voters are registered to vote and registered accurately.

## **States Currently with AVR**

In 2015 and 2016, automatic voter registration (AVR) was approved in six states: Alaska, West Virginia, Oregon, California, Vermont, and Connecticut.

## **How AVR Works**

When eligible citizens give information to the government – such as applying for a driver's license, receiving Social Security or Medicare benefits, applying for public services, registering for classes at a public university, licensing a firearm, applying for unemployment benefits, or becoming a naturalized citizen – they will automatically be registered to vote, unless they choose to opt out. In addition, citizens already on these agencies' lists will be automatically registered.

Their information is electronically and securely sent to election officials to be added to the rolls. Election officials review the information for accuracy, and once registered, they send each eligible voter a confirmation that their registration has been accepted. If a voter is already registered, election officials update his or her voter registration record. For example, once citizens are signed up, they remain registered when they move within their state.

## **The Many Benefits of AVR**

- More eligible voters are added to the rolls with a convenient process
- Errors are reduced since voter information is sent to election officials electronically
- Money is saved by cutting down on paper forms (which require printing, collecting, completing, mailing, and manual data entry)

## **Additional Security with AVR**

AVR is better than paper-based systems in ensuring only eligible citizens are registered to vote. When agencies already collect citizenship information and the other information needed for voter registration, the data being used has already been vetted. In addition, election officials will continue to review applications for eligibility and errors. Electronic registration dramatically improves the accuracy and security of voter registration since election officials would no longer have to handle reams of paper forms, decipher handwriting, and spend thousands of hours each election cycle entering voter registration information into their database.

In addition, upgrading to electronic systems enables a state to better identify potential duplicate records and to use the most recent and up-to-date information for the voter list.