Good afternoon, Chair DeGregorio, and members of the commission. I am Paddy McGuire, Oregon Deputy Secretary of State. Thank you for inviting me here today to discuss our experience with using design to improve the voting experience for Oregon voters.

I was first awakened to the tremendous potential of effective design for elections when I attended a presentation by Marcia Lausen of Design for Democracy. She was invited to speak in the summer of 2002 at a joint conference of state and local elections officials from the states of Oregon and Washington. Marcia filled the room for 3 separate break-out sessions and we came away impressed with Design for Democracy's ideas on how polling places and the vote-by-mail experience can be improved for voters simply by better designs of ballots, voter information materials, polling place signage, polling place set-up materials for elections judges and training manuals. After the conference was over and the evaluation forms were in, Marcia's breakout sessions received the highest ratings of all the presentations at the conference. Marcia skillfully showed us that the words "election reform" don't necessarily require us to spend a fortune on the latest voting machines. "Election reform" can be accomplished in part by simply redesigning a ballot to make it more readable and reduce the potential of voters making errors.

Let me give an example. Remember the infamous butterfly ballot in Florida in 2000? Here's what it looked like. (Show on screen). The national reaction was to heap scorn upon this kind of ballot and switch to touch screens or optical scan voting. But the Design for Democracy people looked at the butterfly ballot and said, "We can design this better so people could use it and understand it." Here was their proposed redesign. (Show on the screen). Is that amazing or what? The message to me was very clear: Although voting technology issues are real and demand attention, bad design is as troublesome as bad technology. In Oregon, we committed ourselves to both good design and good technology with the understanding that the good design is a whole lot cheaper than good technology.

I want to publicly applaud the EAC for working with Design for Democracy and making better design a priority for elections officials around the country. Design improvements are the most cost effective way to improve a voter's experience, and they can have a big impact.

After Marcia's presentation we approached her about selecting Oregon's vote-by-mail system as a new project for Design for Democracy. She agreed. Our end of the deal was to provide $20,000 so that Marcia and her design students at the University of Illinois at Chicago could study all of our elections materials and produce proposed redesigns. Marcia's senior-level design class studied and researched all the components of Oregon's vote-by-mail process. They reviewed all of our materials. They traveled to Oregon and interviewed election officials, advocacy groups and individual voters. They sent "research kits" to selected Oregon voters so they could record their voting experiences in writing and send the results back to the class. After 3 months of intense study, 20 student designers presented us with proposed redesigns of our voter registration card, our "Voting in Oregon" guide for new voters, the packet each voter receives for a vote-by-mail election (which includes their ballot), the voter confirmation card, all

of our election manuals that the public uses for participation in the different components of our elections, various forms and our statewide voter's pamphlet.

Quite simply, we were astounded at the high quality of the students' work. Where else could we have taken advantage of the energies of 20 talented designers for so little money? We set immediately to work on a plan to implement as much of the students' work as we could. Some of the design changes were quick, and others (those that take statutory changes or resulted in large cost issues) were slower or are still on the agenda. But we've implemented most of the recommendations.

We did it in the following steps:

1.) We hired a full-time designer. Thank you HAVA!! The successful applicant, Gretchen Schulfer, was a student from Marcia Lausen's class who had worked on our project at school. We were off to a fast start.

2.) We immediately began redesigning our voter registration card. John Lindback, our Elections Director, was convinced we had the most confusing voter registration card in the nation. And it was ugly, too! We have a sample of the old card for you today so take a look. In fact, when John arrived in Oregon in 2001 to assume the job of Elections Director, he filled out the card and couldn't figure out how to fold it so he could send it to Marion County. Gretchen helped us design a new card that is easier to understand and incorporated the new HAVA requirements. You have that card in front of you, too. As you can see, it's simpler, more intuitive and you don't have to figure out how to fold it!

3.) Next was our Voting in Oregon guide, which was a conventional 3-fold brochure with writing so tiny, you had to squint to read it. Gretchen redesigned it in booklet form, which includes illustrations, so that voters know exactly what to expect when they receive their ballot in the mail.

4.) Then we worked on special inserts for the ballot packets in Oregon. As you know, jurisdictions that vote by mail are required by HAVA to provide information to voters on how to obtain a replacement ballot if they make a mistake on their originally issued ballot. Gretchen designed the following insert so that each voter is encouraged to review their ballot for possible mistakes, and informed on how to get a replacement ballot if they need it. It's tailored for each individual county and includes information on the back listing all of the county's ballot drop-sites.

5.) Next was a tough one: redesigning our ballots. How do you work with 36 different counties, some with skeptical clerks who think we're nosing into their business, on redesigning ballots? Gretchen worked with the printer. In Oregon, 32 of our 36 counties use the same printer. We started slowly with a pilot project. Five counties agreed to give it a try. The redesign worked well and was well received in the pilot counties. After a successful pilot, the remaining counties using the same printer agreed to the changes. On the screen you can see the difference between one of our old ballots and the newly designed ones. They're easier to read, using well-tested design principles for spacing, graphics, font sizes and an easy-to-decipher hierarchy of information on the page.

6.) The next project was one of the most challenging and interesting and amply illustrates the power and effectiveness of good design. We used HAVA funds to finance establishment of a 1-800 line for voters to receive basic information about voting in Oregon. We expanded on the HAVA requirement that such a line be established so people could get information on whether or not their provisional ballot was counted. The 1-800 line is initially answered by a call center at one of our prisons. The prison call center was already in use by the Secretary of State to answer questions from the public from about our Corporations Division, but we needed to train the inmates on how to answer elections questions. Gretchen worked with our HAVA training coordinator, Gene Newton, to design a tool for answering questions for use by the inmates. Here it is on the screen. (Explain how it works). We were so pleased with Gretchen and Gene's work that we've distributed this tool to our Elections staff and encouraged counties to use it, too. It will help encourage consistency in the answers we give the public to basic questions.

7.) But we weren't done. Gretchen then went on to redesign all of our Secretary of State elections manuals and forms so that they're easier to read and easier for the public to understand. I've brought examples for you.

Our design project has been one of the most positive and rewarding initiatives undertaken by our Elections Division. And the best part is that you can see the progress! That is often not the case in so many things that we work on.

Now that you've seen some of our work, I thought we'd give you three recommendations for consideration:

1.) We believe the EAC should encourage all jurisdictions in the country to take a hard look at their elections materials and evaluate where they need help. The EAC should encourage the involvement of professional designers or their associations, such as Design for Democracy and the American Institute for Graphic Arts (AIGA). These individuals stand ready and willing to help and would very much like to be involved in improving the voting experience in America.

2.) We believe the EAC should seriously consider setting "standards" for ballot design in America. They could be as simple as a list of "dos" and "don'ts" for jurisdictions to consider when they are designing and printing their ballots. The design community should be involved in the development of the standards for touch-screen machines, etc. There is much work that can be done in this area.

3.) We believe the EAC, once it has completed its current project with Design for Democracy, should carry forward with its work in this area. Do what we did. Just keep digging in and keep going. It's worth every dime you put into it.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to tell our story. I'd be happy to answer any questions.