

Testimony – Shelly Anderson, EAC Deputy Director of Research  
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Commissioners, I come before you today to present the 2008 Election Administration and Voting Survey report and the 2008 Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Voting Act report.

Both reports contain data from the 2008 Election Administration and Voting Survey administered by the EAC following the general election. Biennially, the EAC collects election administration-related data directly from the 55 states and territories. The survey – which includes topics such as voter registration, overseas voting, poll workers, early and absentee voting, provisional balloting, and type of voting machines used – captures data at the State and county (or county-equivalent) level.

The Election Administration and Voting Survey forms the basis for three reports: the first federally mandated report is on the impact of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), which was released last June; the second report is the Uniformed and Overseas Citizen Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA), which requires EAC under HAVA sect. 703 to report on the number of UOCAVA ballots transmitted and returned; and lastly, the comprehensive Election Administration and Voting Survey report, which summarizes findings across all areas of the survey.

The 2008 survey and corresponding reports represent the third iteration under EAC's direction (prior to the establishment of the EAC, the NVRA reports were produced by the FEC). The data collection and analysis for the 2008 reports were conducted by the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) under the direction of Dr. Toby Moore.

I would like to talk briefly about the success of the 2008 survey project and the achievement of significantly higher response rates than in previous years. While in 2006 the baseline number of jurisdictions surveyed was 3,123, in 2008 that number increased to 4,527 – an increase of approximately 45%.

The additional jurisdictions were the result of EAC's ability to collect data from townships in the Northeast. However, the increase in response rates – particularly for questions that may have been challenging in the past such as domestic absentee and UOCAVA balloting – can also be attributed, in part, to better question wording, data collection tools, and a more intensive technical assistance approach. For example, in 2006, 64% of the responding jurisdictions were able to provide data for the question regarding the number of ballots transmitted to overseas citizens; in 2008, 91% of responding jurisdictions were able to do. This is encouraging from a data collection standpoint and allows EAC to provide a clearer picture of UOCAVA balloting in last year's election.

The Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act and Election Administration and Voting Survey reports reveal a number of interesting findings related to overseas voting, poll workers, early and absentee voting, and provisional balloting, as I will describe during my presentation. A few of those key findings include:

## UOCAVA

- States transmitted nearly 1 million ballots to UOCAVA-covered voters for the 2008 election. Nearly half (48.6%) went to uniformed services members; another 37.9 percent went to civilian citizens living overseas.
- Of the UOCAVA ballots transmitted, at least 69 percent (682,341) were returned and submitted for counting.
- States reported counting 637,216 UOCAVA ballots, or 93.6% of the total submitted for counting.

## Election Administration and Voting Survey

- Based on responses from the states and territories, 133,944,538 Americans participated in the election.
- Sixty percent of American voters cast a regular ballot in person at a polling place on Election Day. Nearly 17 percent voted by domestic absentee ballot (16.6%) while thirteen percent voted by early voting before Election Day.
- States transmitted more than 26 million domestic absentee ballots; 91.1 percent were returned and submitted for counting.
- More than 2.1 million provisional ballots were reported cast nationwide.
- States employed 878,360 poll workers in the 2008 election, staffing some 132,237 polling places, or roughly seven poll workers per polling place.

In closing, on behalf of the EAC I would like to thank the States and local jurisdictions for their efforts in completing the 2008 survey. By most accounts, it appears that the States were better able to complete the survey, which means that we have better data and information with which to tell a national story of the 2008 election.