What’s Cooking in the States in Terms of Elections Policy?

Moderator: Senator Cheryl Kagan, Maryland
Panelist: Thomas Hicks, U.S. Election Assistance Commission, Maryland
Panelist: Jennifer Jackson, Texas State Legislature
Panelist: Wayne Williams, Secretary of State, Colorado
Did you know?

- 34 states ask for some form of ID at the polls (32 are in force in 2017).
- The rest rely on signature matches for voter verification.
Did you know?

- 10 states have “strict” voter ID requirements; if the requested ID is not available, voters cast provisional ballots that won’t be counted unless the voter shows an ID in the days after the election.

- 7 of these “strict” states require a photo; 3 have other options.
Did you know?

State voter ID laws often exempt people:

- with a religious objection to being photographed,
- tribal members,
- people over a certain age, and
- indigent people
- those who have a “reasonable impediment.”
Did you know?

- States decide just how much of a voter’s record is available, to whom, for what purpose, and what the process and costs are for accessing it.
- Some states are more explicit than others in delineating data accessibility.
Did you know?

- 34 states plus the D.C. offer online registration.
- Another 4 states have passed legislation to create online voter registration systems, but have not yet implemented them.
Did you know?

- Automatic voter registration is hard to define.
  - Does it mean the voter has to opt out?
  - Or can it mean that the voter opts in?
- Oregon in 201x was the first to have “opt out” automatic registration (and some say is still the only true automatic registration state)
- Legislators can also consider whether their state’s procedures for complying with the National Voting Rights Act are adequate
Did you know?

- It’s impossible to legislate elections security.
- Legislators can require post-election audits and ballot reconciliation, and they can set standards for voting equipment.
Who’s in charge here?

- States set requirements for purchasing and certifying elections equipment.
- Federal voluntary guidelines exist, but it’s ultimately the state’s choice.
Who Pays for New Voting Equipment?

Short answer: it depends. States can help with:

- grants,
- bonds,
- splitting costs with local jurisdictions
- providing help with negotiating prices and filing requests for proposal (RFPs).