



Press Release from
Susan McCool, Supervisor of Elections
Putnam County, Florida
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PUTNAM COUNTY JOINS OTHER FLORIDA COUNTIES COALITION TO MAKE VOTING EASIER FOR MILITARY/OVERSEAS VOTERS USING ELECTRONIC SYSTEM

November 9, 2011- A \$1.6 million grant to enhance the absentee voting process for military and overseas citizens has been awarded to Okaloosa County. Leading a coalition of twelve other Florida counties, the Okaloosa County Supervisor of Elections will administer the Electronic Absentee Systems for Elections (EASE) grant awarded by the Federal Voting Assistance Program.

Using the system, voters can request, mark and track their absentee ballots electronically. The system will be designed to provide greater online access, automation of absentee requests and expedite ballot delivery making the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act voting process more seamless. Speeding up ballot delivery is expected to increase ballot request and return rates of military and overseas voters.

"We named the coalition *Our Mission: Your Vote* to emphasize to those hardest to reach voters that we take their right to vote as seriously as they take their mission to defend our freedoms. While they are serving in far-off places doing their mission, we are looking out for them and doing everything we can to keep them enfranchised. This system will give us another tool to make that happen while maintaining the integrity of the process"

Members of the *Our Mission: Your Vote* coalition include Baker, Bay, Bradford, Clay, Duval, Escambia, Leon, Nassau, Okaloosa, Pinellas, **Putnam**, Sarasota, and Wakulla Counties—serving nearly every major military installation in Florida. The coalition will begin transmitting ballots electronically to absent military voters and those living overseas during the 2012 election cycle. "Even though Putnam County has approximately four hundred overseas voters, which is a small amount compared to Duval and Okaloosa who have the large military bases, I wanted to make sure that no voter was disenfranchised because of a time element of requesting, returning, and tracking their absentee ballot. We are thankful that we are able to join this team of dedicated Supervisors in getting all votes requested – voted – and returned in order to be counted. This is just our way of saying "Thank You" to all those overseas voters, military & civilians, who are working hard to keep our freedoms for us here in the United States".

For more information, contact the Putnam County Supervisor of Elections by calling 386-329-0224 or visiting our web site at www.putnam-fl.com/soe.

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November 10, 2011

**DoD AWARDS MILITARY/OVERSEAS VOTING SYSTEMS GRANTS FOR
NEW YORK STATE AND A CONSORTIUM OF 14 FLORIDA COUNTIES**

Additional Recipients of Electronic Absentee Systems for Election (EASE) grants announced

November 9, 2011 — Arlington, Va. – The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) is pleased to announce the next two recipients of the Electronic Absentee Systems for Elections (EASE) grants program. The funding total of \$4,120,475.60 is being distributed to New York State and Okaloosa, FL to enable military and overseas voters to utilize electronic systems such as online registration, absentee ballot requests and blank ballot delivery; however, no funding was provided for the electronic transmission of a voted ballot except in instances of mock elections. A total of 130,633 military and overseas voters will be served. FVAP looks forward to announcing the next awardees in the coming weeks.

New York will receive \$2,480,597.60. This grant will enable military and overseas voters from the State of New York request, receive and track their ballots online.

Okaloosa County, FL will receive \$1,639,878. This grant includes Okaloosa County as well as thirteen other Florida counties: Baker, Bay, Bradford, Clay, Duval, Escambia, Leon, Nassau, Okaloosa, Pinellas, Putnam, Sarasota, and Wakulla. Military and overseas voters will also be able to register online and request absentee ballots online as well as retrieve, mark and track their ballots online.

In 2008 the number one failure for military and overseas voters was in ballot transmission ([FVAP's Eighteenth Report to the Congress](#)). Local election officials receiving voted ballots reported they did not count numerous uniformed services and overseas citizen ballots because they were received after the deadline. Greater online access and automation of voter registration and absentee ballot systems could make the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) voting process easier, more intuitive, and more seamless for voters while maintaining the integrity of the process.

Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) Director Bob Carey said, “FVAP is pleased that New York and Florida counties are helping to research improvement of UOCAVA ballot acceptance rates. These grants test technologies to learn what helps military and overseas voters most.”

Last May, DoD announced the availability of \$16,400,000 in federal funding to support research to advance the electronic options for military and overseas citizens when voting absentee. DoD has increased the funding level to \$20,600,000. U.S. State, territory, and local governments were eligible to apply for the grants.

For Immediate Release



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The evaluation of applications under the Broad Agency Announcement H98210-BAA-11-0001 for the FVAP Electronic EASE grants program have been completed and award recommendations have been transmitted to the Defense Human Resources Activity (DHRA) Grants Officer. Discussions with the recommended grant recipients are ongoing.

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If you'd like more information on the Federal Voting Assistance Program or need help with the absentee voting process please go to www.fvap.gov or contact the FVAP at 703-588-1584 (toll free 1-800-438-VOTE) or email the program at VOTE@FVAP.GOV And don't forget to "like" us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/DoDFVAP and follow [@FVAP](https://twitter.com/FVAP) on Twitter to receive timely election information..