Notice of HAVA State Plan Public Comment Period

The Division of Elections has updated the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) Alaska State Plan. The public comment period for the updated plan is May 24, 2010 through June 22, 2010. Written comment will be accepted until 5 p.m. June 22, 2010.

The plan is available at the Division of Elections' regional offices and you can access the plan on line at http://www.elections.alaska.gov.

The Division of Elections expects to submit the final plan to the United States Election Assistance Commission in July for publication in the Federal Register.

For further information, please call the Director's office in Juneau at (907) 465-4611.

The State of Alaska, Division of Elections, complies with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you are a person with a disability who may need special assistance and/or accommodation, please contact the Division of Elections office to make necessary arrangements. In addition audio tapes are available at the state library and the Division of Elections regional offices.

State of Alaska

HAVA State Plan
2010 Updated

As required by Public Law 107-252,
Help America Vote Act 2002, Section 253 (b)

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4/10

"When initially implementing HAVA, Alaska had few changes to make to our election laws, our voter registration system and our voting equipment. Since few changes were necessary, Alaska was able to concentrate on improvements to our processes. We continue to work on improvements to our election process and to ensure they comply with both state and federal legal requirements. We are committed to maintaining the public's trust and confidence in our election processes."

Craig Campbell, Lieutenant Governor

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ALASKA STATE PLAN INTRODUCTION

The Lieutenant Governor of Alaska is responsible for the overall direction of the Division of Elections. The Lieutenant Governor appoints a director and under the Director of Elections, the division is responsible for planning, implementing and conducting all statewide and federal elections as well as all voter registration activities and maintenance of Alaska's voter registration database.

The division is divided into four geographically-based election regions managed by Election Supervisors. The Election Supervisors are responsible for voter registration and election management activities for all elections within their region, as designated by the director. In addition to the four regional offices located in Juneau, Anchorage, Fairbanks and Nome, the division has opened a satellite office of the Region II Elections Office in the fastest growing municipality in Alaska, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. The division also opened an Absentee and Petition Office in Anchorage to facilitate and improve absentee voting by mail and by fax. The Region II satellite office in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and the Absentee office were both opened in the spring of 2006 and continue to provide improved access to voter registration and voting. In addition, the Absentee office ensures the division's absentee voting programs comply with the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Voting Act (UOCAVA) and the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act (MOVE Act) and provides improved access to voting for military and overseas voters.

Alaska Statute Title 15 and Alaska Administrative Code Title 6 govern the federal and state election process. Alaska falls under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) of 1965 which requires U.S. Department of Justice preclearance for any substantive change in the election process that directly affects the voter. Alaska also falls under the minority language assistance requirements of §§4(f)(4) and 203 of the VRA.

The Division of Elections maintains a statewide electronic voter registration mainframe database, implemented in 1985, referred to as the Voter Registration and Election Management System (VREMS). Each election office has real-time access to VREMS for viewing and updating voter information. The division processes all voter registration applications in VREMS and assigns each applicant a unique voter registration number. Immediately upon entering information in the system, any state election office can view the information processed. Because the old mainframe system is

antiquated, the division began working on the development and implementation of a new pc-based statewide voter registration database in 2005. Unfortunately, the vendor developing the new system was not successful in performing their duties as stipulated in the contract requirements and the contract was terminated. Although the new system is not completed, the division will continue our work on the development of a new voter registration system that utilizes updated technology.

Alaska has over 488,000 registered voters. According to the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the estimated voting age population in 2005 was 454,226. Alaska attributes its inflated registration rolls to the fact that Alaska Statute Title 15 allows a person who is temporarily out of state to remain registered in Alaska if that person has the "intent" to return (military and military spouses are exempt from intent requirements). Because of Alaska's Permanent Fund Dividend program benefits and no state income tax, many Alaskans choose to maintain their Alaska residency even if they currently live outside the state.

Voter registration is available in each state election office and other numerous locations throughout the State of Alaska. The Director of Elections has appointed as voter registration agencies all Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) offices, Public Assistance offices, Armed Forces Recruitment offices, Municipal Clerks' offices, and various offices that provide services to persons with disabilities. In addition to the registration agencies, voter registration is available in most libraries throughout the state, tribal council offices, schools, the University of Alaska, and through individually appointed voter registrars. Voter registration applications are also available on the division's website www.elections.alaska.gov for easy access.

Individuals may register to vote in person, by mail, by fax machine or by scanning a completed voter registration application and sending via email. Voters must be registered to vote at least 30 days before an election. If a voter's registration application is incomplete, the division notifies the voter in writing and provides the voter an opportunity to complete a new voter registration application. The only exception to the registration deadline is during Presidential elections. A voter may register and have their vote count for President and Vice President on Election Day.

Alaska has 40 state house districts and 20 state senate districts. Within these districts, there are 438 precincts, each with a designated polling place. Following is a breakdown of voter turnout during the past several general elections:

1996 = 59.1%

1998 = 50.1%

2000 = 60.8%

2002 = 50.5%

2004 = 66.6%

2006 = 51.1%

2008 = 66.03%

Alaska has approximately 151 rural communities with precincts that are isolated from connecting road systems; the only way to access these communities is by airplane or boat. Of the 438 precincts in Alaska, 31 have 100 or fewer registered voters.

In 1998, the Division of Elections replaced all punch card voting systems used in statewide and federal elections with an optical scan voting system. Since that time, Alaska has and continues to expand the use of the optical scan voting throughout the state. Since the adoption of the initial State Plan, Alaska has increased the number of precincts using optical scan to count ballots. There are now 133 hand count precincts and 305 optical scan precincts, all of which use a uniform paper ballot regardless of how the ballots are tallied. All absentee, questioned, and special needs ballots voted in Alaska's primary and general elections are counted using the optical scan ballot tabulators.

In addition to hand count and optical scan units, Alaska makes available a touch screen voting unit in every precinct during an election in which a federal race appears on the ballot to comply with the requirements of HAVA. The touch screen voting units, which were first introduced during the 2006 primary election, allow voters with disabilities the ability to cast a private and independent ballot. In accordance with Alaska Statute, each touch screen voting unit is equipped with a voter-verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT). The VVPAT is considered the "official ballot" during recounts. With the implementation of touch screen voting, the division has and continues to develop a variety of forms, brochures and instructions in an effort to train election officials and educate the public about touch screen voting.

In 2003, the Division of Elections updated many sections of the election law to comply with HAVA, namely HB 266, signed into law by the Governor on June 16, 2003. This bill addressed improving the questioned ballots (Alaska's form of provisional voting), the definition of a questioned voter, voter

registration, training of election officials, preparation of election materials, forms, and supplies for polling places, voter identification, absentee voting, and counting ballots. In 2005, HB 94 passed additional amendments also affecting voting. These bills updated several forms to conform with HAVA standards, specifically:

a) a new voter acknowledgement card;
b) a revised by-mail ballot return envelope;
c) a revised by-mail ballot return envelope used by military and overseas voters;
d) a revised voted ballot envelope used by voters who must submit proof of identification when voting by mail;
e) a revised poster instructing voters how to complete the ballot and providing information regarding questioned voting used during primary and general elections;
f) a revised poster displaying specific election information, and how to report fraud;
g) a revised poster which details the types of identification which voters may present when voting in-person;
h) an informational flier regarding questioned voting used during primary and general elections; and
i) a new voter registration application, questioned and absentee-in person voted ballot envelope.

There are several alternative voting methods available to Alaska voters who are unable to vote at their assigned polling place. For many voters in remote areas of Alaska the only voting method available is by mail absentee ballot.

Absentee By Mail – Any qualified voter in Alaska may apply to receive an absentee ballot by mail. Alaska Statute 15.20.081 was amended in 2003 to improve accommodation for absentee uniformed services and overseas voters to allow a single absentee by mail ballot application to be valid through the next two general elections. In addition, this statute was further amended in both 2005 and 2006, to reduce the number of witness signatures required on an absentee by mail ballot from two witnesses to a single witness and to change the deadline for when an absentee by mail ballot application must be received by the division. The deadline changed from seven days prior to an election to ten days prior to an election.

Early and Absentee In Person Voting – Beginning 15 days prior to Election Day, any qualified voter may vote early in the office of the Election Supervisor overseeing the jurisdiction where the voter is

registered. In addition to early voting, any qualified voter may vote an absentee in person ballot through an absentee voting official. Alaska has numerous absentee voting locations available throughout the state, and all locations are published on the division's website at least 45 days prior to an election. The dates and hours of the absentee voting locations are advertised in local papers, and all absentee voting locations are listed in the Official Election Pamphlet (OEP) that is mailed to every household where there is a registered voter. An absentee voting location may have ballots available to voters for a single, multiple, or all 40 house districts.

Absentee By Fax Voting – Beginning 15 days prior to Election Day, any qualified voter may apply for a faxed ballot. Absentee by fax applications are available on the division's website, from any elections office, and in the division's election pamphlets that are mailed to all voters. When a voter chooses to vote via fax, the voter is faxed a ballot to the fax number specified, and the voter may return the voted ballot either by fax or by mail. Alaska Statute 15.20.066 was amended in 2005 to require only one witness signature to sign and attest to the date on which the voter signs the certificate.

Special Needs Voting – If a voter is unable to vote at his or her assigned polling place due to age, illness, or disability, the voter may assign a personal representative to pick up and deliver the ballot and other voting material to the voter. After the voter votes the ballot, the representative returns the voted ballot to the election official. Special Needs voting is available at the polls on Election Day or through any absentee voting official.

Questioned Voting – Questioned, or Provisional, voting is available for any voter who does not have identification and is not personally known by the election official, or whose name does not appear on the precinct register at the polling place where the voter is attempting to vote. Following an election, questioned ballots are delivered to the appropriate regional election office for verification in the statewide voter registration database of voter eligibility before being counted.

Each absentee, questioned, and special needs ballot cast is placed inside a secrecy sleeve and then sealed inside an envelope. The outside of the envelope contains voter information: name, address, identifier, and signature. A bipartisan review board located in each regional office reviews the voter's ballot envelope, the data is entered into the voter registration database, and the envelope is assigned a sequence number. At the time the ballot envelope is reviewed, the registration database searches for

other voting activity by that voter for the same election and reports if the voter has voted more than once.

In addition to conducting all statewide and federal elections, the Division of Elections is also responsible for conducting elections in areas of the state that are not incorporated into municipal governments. These elections include rural school board, coastal resource area, liquor option, incorporation, dissolution and consolidation elections. In 2004, the division conducted a by mail election for Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute as well. Although the division is not responsible for conducting local municipal elections such as those for borough assembly or city council, it provides voter registration lists, precinct registers and voter history for municipal elections. The division also assists municipalities by providing for the use of the division's polling place equipment and in some areas, ballot counting equipment.

Since the 2005 and 2008 State Plans, the state has become compliant with HAVA requirements and has made improvements to our election processes such as:

- An accessible touch screen voting unit, equipped with a voter verifiable paper trail, is available in every precinct during elections in which a federal race appears on the ballot.
- The requirements for a new statewide voter registration database have been developed to replace the antiquated, existing voter registration database, and the division continues to work on implementation of a new database.
- With new office locations in Anchorage and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, the division is even more accessible to voters and has improved access to voting for military and overseas voters.
- The division has expanded its HAVA section to include a HAVA Election Systems Manager position responsible for the overall supervision and administration of the division's HAVA program, and an Election Systems and Database Manager responsible for implementation of improvements to the voter registration system.
- Language assistance improvements to limited English proficient Alaska Native voters through improved audio announcements, video announcements, outreach and ongoing assessment. In addition, language assistance improvements for the Yup'ik language include the formation of a Yup'ik translation panel, creation of a glossary of election terms in Yup'ik, both written and audio version, Yup'ik sample ballots, an audio translation of the voter registration, absentee voting and special needs voting processes, audio translations of ballot measure information and candidate

statements and adding a Yup'ik audio translation of the ballot on the touch screen voting units used in the Bethel Census Area.

- Other projects, such as the development of the division's media plan and improvements to the division's web site, will increase voter participation and outreach.

The Alaska State Plan is organized as specified in HAVA, Section 254, providing a description of current election procedures used in Alaska and outlining how Alaska will meet the requirements mandated by HAVA.

Section 1. Title III Requirements and Other Activities

How the State of Alaska will use the requirements payment to meet the requirements of Title III, and, if applicable under section 251 (a)(2), to carry out other activities to improve the administration of elections.

1.A Section 301(a), Voting Systems Standards Requirements

The State of Alaska transitioned from a punch card voting system to an optical scan voting system in 1998. Prior to 2006, the state used a hybrid of two types of voting systems in its established polling locations: 149 precincts used a hand count paper ballot system, and 290 precincts used an optical scan (Accu-Vote OS 2000) paper ballot system. The State of Alaska now has 133 hand count precincts and 305 optical scan precincts and has implemented the use of one touch screen voting unit in each polling place and each early voting location. Although the touch screen voting unit is intended for use by persons with disabilities, any voter may use the equipment. The State will continue to expand the use of the optical scan system in hand count precincts to improve the overall administration of elections. Absentee and questioned ballot counting is also conducted using the optical scan voting system.

In 2002, the state enacted legislation requiring that the new voting systems purchased allow voters with disabilities or visual impairments to use the systems privately and independently. With the passage of HAVA, the state was required to purchase DRE units for each established polling location. The division requested and received a capital appropriation for FY04 to purchase 55 Accu-Vote touch screen voting units. The division used HAVA funds to purchase an additional 45 units, bringing the statewide total to 100 touch screen units. In July, 2006, the division purchased an additional 405 units, bringing the statewide total to 505 touch screen voting units. Every unit is equipped with a VVPAT, which allows the voter to confirm their selections before casting their ballot. The touch screen voting units were first implemented statewide during the 2006 primary election, and are now available for use in all elections where there is a federal race on the ballot. Approximately 1 percent of the state's ballots are cast using the touch screen voting equipment.

The touch screen voting units provide a variety of accessible features for blind and visually impaired voters, including: alternative language capability, headsets offering audio ballots, as well as keypad and stylus options for voters with dexterity difficulties. The division is in the process of adding an

audio translation in the Yup'ik Alaska Native language to the touch screen voting units used in the Bethel Census Area.

The state purchased transport cases for the touch screen voting units in May 2006 and used them during the 2006 election year. The transport cases were intended to provide a stable platform and secure container in which to ship the touch screen voting units through the United States Postal Service to Alaska's remote and often frigid polling locations. The transport cases were sent on small aircraft and upon arriving in many communities were transported to the polling place by ATV. Many cases returned damaged due to the transportation methods available in rural Alaska. The division has retrofitted several of the damaged cases to remove exterior parts and will continue to retrofit cases to better handle the shipping stress to and from remote polling locations.

Transporting the touch screen units and training election officials to use the new technology in rural Alaska is a significant expense to the division for each election the voting units are used. The division provides extensive training programs for election staff prior to each election cycle and will continue to improve upon our training programs, including training more election workers on the use of this equipment. The manufacturer of the touch screen units, as part of the contract, will continue training division staff in the proper use of the new equipment.

During the initial deployment of the touch screen voting units, the division hosted public demonstrations in Juneau, Anchorage and Fairbanks to familiarize the public with the units, and educate voters on the accessible features of the touch screen units. The division advertised the demonstrations using local newspapers, media releases, public service announcements, the division's website and through personal invitation. Representatives from local disability agencies were contacted and invited to attend the demonstration. During the event, people were invited to try the machines and cast a sample ballot. Brochures, instructions and forms were available for the public to learn more about the touch screen units. Feedback received during the demonstrations helped prepare better instructions on how to train election workers on the touch screen unit. Separate demonstrations were also held for state legislators and media members to report accurately to Alaska's constituency on the use of the new voting equipment. Alaska continues to work with the public and disability organizations to provide demonstrations of the units prior to state and federal elections.

Due to the increased public scrutiny of electronic voting systems, Alaska has continuously had to defend the testing, security and auditing processes used in Alaska to ensure safe and accurate elections. With recent studies that have identified vulnerabilities in the voting system used in Alaska and elsewhere, the division has worked with the University of Alaska to review the testing and security procedures used in Alaska and make recommendations for improvements. The division has begun, and will continue to implement the findings and recommendations provided by the University of Alaska to ensure our ballot tabulation system is secure and that security risks are mitigated.

The implementation of touch screen voting in each precinct in the state has had a significant impact on the cost to conduct state and federal elections. The State of Alaska will continue to utilize HAVA funds to help pay the additional costs associated with touch screen voting.

Maintenance

To accommodate and house the touch screen voting units, the state acquired additional storage space. Heated and accessible storage space was needed for the elections offices as well as some of the communities that have multiple units stored at their locations. In some cases, the division relocated regional offices to ensure access to the new voting equipment.

The division has developed procedures for the shipping and storage of the touch screen voting units to the polling locations. Election workers in these rural locations are responsible for setting up and operating the units; training and familiarity is very important. The touch screen voting units are shipped by small bush plane and then may be transported to the polling place by four-wheeler, snow machine, dog sled or by foot on dirt paths to the polling locations.

In 2006, the division created procedures to contract with rural election workers to store the touch screen voting units in the community between the primary and general elections in order to avoid significant damage and costs associated with the transport of the voting units. The contract stipulated that the election worker would provide heated storage and perform a functionality review to verify the equipment was operable. In return, the State of Alaska agreed to pay the election worker a storage fee of $75 after the election, provided that the election worker complies with the terms of the agreement. The Division of Elections found that storing the equipment in the communities between the primary

and general election was not a good solution and now has the equipment returned to division offices after each election so that the equipment can be properly tested.

Based on the 2006 and 2008 election cycle, the division found that the cost to ship the touch screen voting units one way to rural locations was approximately $55 per unit and now with current shipping rates, the cost will be approximately $66 per unit. The division ships, and receives these units back, from approximately 226 precincts. With the increased shipping costs, the division spends over $27,000 per election on shipping costs for the touch screen voting equipment.

Due to transportation issues, limited space and lack of resources available in the division's Nome office, the division developed a program to utilize the Matanuska-Susitna Borough satellite office for storage, maintenance and shipping of the touch screen units used in the 97 polling places assigned to the Nome region.

The division has implemented an inventory and equipment maintenance program to ensure that all voting equipment is maintained and repaired in a timely manner. In addition, the division will need to develop a program and procedures for upgrades to the voting system based on Election Assistance Commission (EAC) certification. In preparation for each election cycle, staff in the regional offices and the satellite and absentee offices is tasked with conducting routine maintenance inspections, functionality testing and identifying potential problems with the units before breakdowns occur. The inventory system will increase user accountability and allow for better equipment tracking.

1.B Section 302, Provisional Voting and Voting Information Requirements

The state currently has a provisional voting process established, known as "Questioned Voting."

State law requires that any voter who votes at a polling location where his or her name does not appear on the precinct register, or if the voter does not have identification and is not personally known by the election official, to vote a questioned ballot.

The division established a toll-free access system to provide voter information. This system allows the voter to determine if his or her questioned ballot was counted and, if not counted, why the vote or a portion of the vote did not count.

The division has the following toll-free access systems:

a. The division currently uses an interactive toll-free telephone system that allows voters to determine their assigned polling place based on their current voter registration record. Additionally, voters can determine their party affiliation for determining ballot type eligibility during the primary election. At this time, the division has not expanded the current polling place locator system to provide more voter information. The division will continue to look at improving the information this system provides to voters when developing a new voter registration system.

b. The division established a toll-free telephone number for voters to call to determine whether their questioned ballot was counted. When a voter casts a questioned ballot, the election official provides them with written instructions on how to access the system to determine whether their ballot was counted, partially counted, or rejected.

c. In 2008, the division established toll-free telephone numbers for each division office to provide better access to voters. In addition, a toll-free telephone number was established to provide language assistance to limited English proficient Yup'ik voters.

In addition, the division has established, and will continue to improve upon, a system for voters to check the status of their absentee ballot application, including information as to when their ballot was mailed or faxed and when their voted ballot was received, by using an absentee ballot locator portal on the division's website. The division will implement modifications to the website portal so that it meets the free access requirements outlined in the MOVE Act.

In accordance with Alaska Statute, the division sends a letter to each absentee and questioned voter whose vote was not counted or was only partially counted. The division will continue this practice in addition to the systems outlined above.

Voting Information

The Division of Election, under current State law, is required to mail an *OEP* to each registered voter's household prior to the general election. In addition, the division distributes to each registered voter's household a *Primary Election Ballot Measures Pamphlet (BMP)* if a ballot measure appears on the primary ballot.

State law requires full public notice of an election (AS 15.15.070). This public notice is achieved through newspaper advertisements and posting notices in communities that do not have newspapers of general circulation. Advertisements include information regarding the date and time of the election, the offices up for election or retention, absentee voting, any questions or propositions that appear on the ballot and information on polling place changes. Other methods of informing voters include radio advertisements in English and languages covered under the Voting Rights Act, audio translation of voter registration, absentee voting and special needs voting processes, media releases and conferences, public service announcements, direct mailings, and information posted on the Division of Elections website. In addition, there are sample ballots, posters, informational flyers and instructions posted in polling locations as well as at all elections offices.

The division modified registration, questioned and absentee voting forms as well as other election materials to meet HAVA requirements. In 2003, the division submitted the forms to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Civil Rights Division and received preclearance. Modification to the division's voter registration and absentee ballot applications were also necessary due to the requirements of the Military Spouses Residency Relief Act and the MOVE Act. The division will continue to make modifications to election materials based on "best practices" produced by the EAC and changes in state or federal statutes.

1.C Section 303, Computerized Statewide Voter Registration List Requirements and Requirements for Voters Who Register By Mail

Alaska has had a statewide voter registration and election management system (VREMS) in use since 1985; however, it is not a fully interactive system. VREMS is an antiquated system, maintained in the Natural programming language and is on a mainframe. As technology has advanced, it has become difficult for the division to find programmers knowledgeable in Natural programming.

In 2005, the division prepared and released a request for proposal for vendors to develop and implement a new statewide voter registration system. Since that time, the division has worked with a vendor on the development of a new registration system that will meet updated technology requirements and allow for better management of the state's voter registration and election processes. Due to the unique system features required in Alaska, the project to replace the voter registration system was not successful. Although the system was not implemented, the division remains committed to upgrading the voter registration system and will continue to assign resources to the planning and development of a new voter registration and election management system that meets state and federal requirements.

Until a new system is implemented, the division will review and determine if modifications to the existing system are necessary to comply with new federal requirements, such as the MOVE Act.

The State of Alaska is in full compliance with the requirement to verify voter registration information as required in Section 303(a) (5). A Memorandum of Agreement dated August 2003 between the Division of Elections and the DMV allows the Division of Elections to match identifying information provided by a first-time, by mail registrant on his or her registration application to information maintained in the DMV database. The Alaska DMV has completed the process of verifying the last four digits of the social security number information with the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA). The verification program is currently used by the division staff processing voter registration applications received by mail or by fax to verify the identity of voters.

For those first time registrants, who registered by mail or fax and whose identity could not be verified, the division implemented the use of an acknowledgement card to send to these voters, instead of a

voter identification card. The acknowledgement card notifies voters that their registration application was processed and that when voting they will be required to provide identification.

1.D Other Activities to Improve Election Administration

Office Expansion

Using HAVA funds appropriated in 2002, the Division of Elections created three new elections offices across the State. Opened in the spring of 2006, the offices provide additional ways for voters to access the division, and allow for more staff to improve on the administration of elections. The three new offices are the Absentee and Petition office in Anchorage and two satellite offices, one in Kenai and one in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

In 2007, it was determined that the Kenai satellite office had not been utilized by the public as had been initially projected, and was closed in October 2007. The Matanuska-Susitna satellite office and the Absentee and Petition office utilize HAVA funds for their operation expenses. The staff and resources in the offices are utilized entirely for the administration and preparation of state and federal elections and for improving the election process. These offices have worked on many projects to improve the election process such as improved access for military and overseas voters and implementation of new requirements, voter education through an improved website, development of additional on-line tools for voter registration and absentee voting, testing and repairing voting equipment and assisting with polling place accessibility surveys. Between June 2007 and January 2008, the division performed monthly tracking and submitted to the EAC quarterly reports justifying the use of HAVA monies to fund the offices.

The establishment and ongoing operation of the Absentee and Petition office has enabled the division to continue to provide improved services to our military, overseas and absentee voters on a regular basis. The Matanuska-Susitna satellite office has enabled the division to improve the administration of elections by improved access to voter registration and election information to voters residing in a fast-growing area of the state. These offices will continue to work on specific projects to improve the administration of elections as well as provide better access of information to voters.

The Absentee and Petition office will continue to make contact with all military and overseas voters prior to federal elections. This office will also implement changes mandated by the MOVE Act. Although Alaska currently provides for electronic voting through fax, the application period is limited to 15 days prior to an election. With the passage of MOVE, Alaska has updated the absentee ballot application so that military and overseas citizens are not limited to the 15-day application period for a fax ballot. Alaska will need to make other statutory and procedural changes for compliance with the MOVE Act. In addition, the Absentee and Petition office will look to improve its processes for sending out absentee by mail ballots, including the use of automation equipment and possibly on-line tools for tracking ballots.

Accessibility

The division continues to improve accessibility in polling places across the state through the use of accessibility surveys that help determine what temporary solutions, if any, are needed to ensure the accessibility of all polling places. In August 2007, the division created a HAVA Program Assistant position, using Health and Human Services accessibility grant funds, to assist in making accessibility improvements including: creating and maintaining the statewide accessibility information surveys and database, creating disability awareness training materials, conducting polling place accessibility surveys, updating the division's website, and the identification of various types of accessibility equipment to address temporary solutions.

Prior to the 2008 election cycle, the HAVA Program Assistant worked with other election officials to survey newly established polling places as well as older locations to find areas where accessibility equipment can enhance the polling location. With the help of the State ADA Coordinator, the division identified equipment needs for each location, and made arrangements for the purchase and installation of accessibility equipment. The division will continue to utilize staff resources to address accessibility and make improvements to polling places, including educating voters and disability organizations about accessibility for voting.

Section 2. Alaska's Distribution of Requirements Payment

How the State will distribute and monitor the distribution of the requirements payment to units of local government or other entities in the State for carrying out the activities described in paragraph (1), including a description of --

(A) The criteria to be used to determine the eligibility of such units or entities for receiving the payment; and

(B) The methods to be used by the State to monitor the performance of the units or entities to whom the payment is distributed, consistent with the performance goals and measures adopted under paragraph (8).

(A) The State of Alaska, Division of Elections conducts all federal elections. Therefore, there will be no distribution of requirement payments to local governments or entities.

The division serves Alaskans through four regional offices located in Juneau, Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Nome in addition to the Matanuska-Susitna satellite office in Wasilla and the Absentee & Petition office in Anchorage. The Division of Elections manages funds necessary for improving the elections' system, voter registration, voter access and education, outreach, and to ensure the regional needs are met and that the state remains in compliance with the Act.

The criteria will be measured in terms of achieving compliance while maximizing improvements to all aspects of the election process, as well as the responsible use of available funds. The division will use standard financial reporting and accounting practices to track expenditure of authorized funds.

(B) The division monitors the funds in accordance with the statewide performance measures adopted under section 254 (a) (8). The division centrally manages the distribution of all funds appropriated to the Election Fund, including but not limited to the requirements payments. Alaska incorporates priorities and timelines into the budgeting process to ensure it implements mandates and improvements in a wise and timely manner.

The Division of Legislative Audit annually audits the State of Alaska. The Statewide Single Audit is conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America; Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and compliance with the Federal Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and the related Circular A-133 issued by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The State of Alaska Division of Elections monitors the duties and hours of staff and HAVA funded offices by requiring a bi-monthly justification to be completed and used to exhibit accountability. Additionally, the Division of Elections conducts regular meetings to ensure the focus and scope of responsibilities is in alignment with improving federal elections within the State of Alaska.

Section 3. Voter Education, Election Official Education and Training, and Poll Worker Training

How the State of Alaska will provide for programs for voter education, election official education and training, and poll worker training which will assist the State in meeting the requirements of Title III.

Voter Education and Outreach

Voter education and outreach efforts in Alaska vary depending on the type of election and level of changes affecting voters. The Director's office coordinates all outreach efforts for statewide and federal elections. These outreach efforts include numerous public notices, newspaper and radio advertising, public service announcements, direct mail, other publications (such as brochures and pamphlets), speeches and presentations, and continuous direct contact with the statewide media. As an ongoing effort to provide voter education and outreach to Alaska's Native language groups, the division will continue to ensure the language assistance plan provides effective assistance through tribal outreach, recruitment and training of bilingual workers, audio translation of information, outreach, publicity and ongoing assessment.

When a ballot measure appears during a primary election, the division distributes a *BMP* to every registered voter household in Alaska. The *BMP* contains detailed information regarding the ballot measure(s) and general information regarding the election. Before every general election, each registered voter household in Alaska is mailed an *OEP*. The Division of Elections produces a specific guide for each of the four election regions. The *OEP* contains information about candidates appearing on the ballot (including photographs), information about the retention of judges (including photographs), information about ballot measures (including statements of support and opposition), sample ballots, polling place information, absentee and alternate voting information, voter assistance information, and election district maps. The election pamphlets are translated onto an audio tape which is made available at the State Library and the regional offices so the election information contained in the books is in an accessible format for disabled voters. The division also prepares and distributes a Filipino (Tagalog) version of every pamphlet to voter's registered in precincts on Kodiak Island Borough, in compliance with§§ 4(f)(4) and 203 of the VRA. In addition, the division is

working on a process to provide an audio translation of candidate statements and ballot measure information in Yup'ik.

In addition to printed materials, the division's website provides a vast array of information on voter registration, election issues, election results, historical information and electronic versions of all election pamphlets. In 2005, the division launched a new, streamlined website to increase public access and usability. New additions to the website include information on the touch screen voting unit, expanded explanations of voting methods, and increased information on ballot measures and the initiative process. In response to The Pew Center on the States study on state elections web sites, the division is updating and expanding our website. Website improvements are being made to add more on-line tools such as an interactive on-line voter registration and absentee ballot application, on-line voter registration lookup as well as additional polling place accessibility and language assistance information. The division will continue to monitor the usability and effectiveness of the information posted to the web and make improvements as necessary.

The division provides an interactive toll-free telephone system for voters to obtain their polling place location, and determine their party affiliation. An additional, separate toll-free system allows voters to determine whether their questioned ballot was counted and toll-free telephone numbers were established in each division office, including a toll-free number for Yup'ik language assistance.

As new voting systems and election laws are implemented, Alaska continues its voter outreach efforts. With the implementation of the new touch screen voting units in 2006, demonstrations were held in locations around the state to educate voters on the accessible features and security measures of the units. The division targeted the demonstrations specifically at assisting the disability community. Local disability agencies were contacted and invited to attend the demonstrations. Furthermore, the division prepared supplemental brochures for election officials which review proper etiquette for voters with special needs. The division will continue to prepare and conduct outreach demonstrations during future elections.

Before implementing a new, complex primary election system in 2002, Alaska instituted a well-funded, comprehensive outreach plan aimed at educating voters specifically about primary ballot choices. Division staff continues to provide voters with information on what ballots are available during each primary election, and who is eligible to vote each ballot.

The division strives to enhance its educational efforts through positive relationships with the media. The division developed a Media Plan, which details the division's outreach programs. The division continues to participate in radio and television interviews and responds to questions from the print media regularly, beginning several months before a statewide election.

The division recognizes the need to enhance its outreach and communications program to continue educating the voting public. The division currently offers a variety of methods to communicate with and educate the public, including:

- Launching a redesigned website for increased accessibility and usability.
- Providing toll-free access systems for voters to obtain voter registration and election information as well as determine whether their ballot was counted and to obtain Yup'ik language assistance.
- Publishing the division's election security and testing procedures.
- Coordinating public outreach/training with organizations assisting the disability community on use of the new touch screen voting units.
- Developing the Youth Vote Ambassador Program, where students have the opportunity to serve as election poll workers on Election Day.
- Creating two new division offices in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and Anchorage to better serve voters.
- Improving Election Day signage, including signs that help voters identify the accessible features available at the polling place.
- Increasing public outreach through advertisements, public service announcements and media releases and taking steps to provide copies of all outreach in required minority languages.
- Adding audio translation of information in minority languages to the division's website.

In addition to the efforts described above, the division continues to strive to:

- Implement an interactive statewide voter registration database.

- Coordinate voter education and awareness efforts with Alaska Native organizations and community groups, including groups providing services to individuals with disabilities.
- Target voter education efforts to address the needs of the disability community and individuals with alternative language needs.
- Provide awareness training for all Division employees and election officials to recognize the special needs of voters with disabilities.

Election Official Training

Election officials are essential to achieve an efficient, secure, and reliable election process. In Alaska, the four regional election supervisors are responsible for providing a comprehensive training program to election officials in their respective regions prior to statewide and federal elections. Training needs are determined by the election supervisors and are community-based and targeted towards the following election officials:

- Precinct election boards
- Absentee voting officials
- Accu-Vote coordinators
- Accu-Vote field workers
- Absentee ballot review boards
- Questioned ballot review boards
- Regional Accu-Vote boards
- State Review Board

With the implementation of touch screen voting, Alaska recognized the need to re-shape its precinct election boards to improve the election process. Prior to 2006, Alaska used a precinct election board consisting of an election chairperson and election judges. The chairperson is responsible for supervising the overall election activities in the polling place. In 2006, an additional worker was added to each precinct election board as the “co-chairperson”. The co-chairperson was the election worker responsible for the touch screen voting unit in that polling place.

Improving and implementing statewide training resources and procedures is an ongoing process improved upon each election year. Working as a team, the HAVA section and the four election supervisors develop uniform training materials that are coordinated with election official handbooks and distributed with Election Day ballots and supplies. All training materials and handbooks are created for the type of ballot counting utilized at each precinct: hand count or optical scan. In addition, every precinct receives training on and instructional materials for the touch screen voting unit. Among the materials developed for use with the touch screen units are: the *Touch Screen Voting Unit Handbook*, the *Touch Screen Voting Unit Brochure*, *Touch Screen Voting Procedures Poster* and the *Touch Screen Opening and Closing Instructions*. In 2008, the division enhanced training materials with the creation of specific guidelines for providing language and other assistance to voters and continues to make improvements to training materials covering these subjects.

The regional offices conduct hands-on training sessions in two modules: election procedures, including language and voter assistance, and equipment procedures. The equipment procedures module provided an opportunity for election workers to experience the operation of the touch screen voting equipment and practice setting it up, voting, printing election results and taking the unit down. This module added an additional 2 to 3 hours to each training session.

Alaska faces many unique challenges when providing election official training, especially for precinct election boards in the field on Election Day. Due to the state's vast size and the large number of precincts not connected by a road system, our training programs are categorized into two groups: urban and rural.

Prior to 2004, in order to train precinct polling place officials in rural Alaska, Election Supervisors and their assistants spent several months prior to an election traveling in small bush planes, ferries and boats to Alaskan communities to conduct training. Due to limited flights scheduled to these remote communities, chartered flights were often required and the election training official could train only one community per day. With 438 precincts throughout the state, the challenge to provide training is formidable. Because traveling for training was so time intensive, election workers were trained so far in advance of the election that training materials were not always finalized. In addition, election workers may not have been appointed or agreed to serve in all precincts, and those who did receive training may not retain the procedures at the time of the election.

The division now conducts “hub training” for the training of its election workers in rural areas of Alaska. The purpose of this training method is for the division to more effectively train election workers closer to Election Day. When utilizing “hub training”, the division sends the election workers from each selected rural precinct to one larger, more “central” community where all the workers are trained simultaneously. For those workers unable to attend the training, the chairperson is asked to provide the workers with training. “Hub training” has enabled the division to train rural election workers closer to Election Day, and has provided an improvement to the conduct of elections in rural areas of Alaska.

Urban-based training is generally conducted closer to the Election Day. However, travel is required to some urban communities and these officials may be trained 30 to 45 days before the election. Election boards in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau and Nome are trained one to two weeks prior to the election. In urban areas, training sessions for precinct election boards are usually conducted with multiple election boards present. In some areas, training is presented using a PowerPoint presentation.

With the many challenges the division faces to properly train election workers, handbooks for the various types of officials are critical to their ability to conduct their duties correctly. The division continues to develop the handbooks in such a way that if an election official has not received in person training, the official will still be able to clearly understand and implement proper procedures on Election Day by receiving telephone instructions and looking at the handbooks. The division will also develop a training video that will be available to those workers unable to attend training.

In an effort to ensure all election officials have the training and resources available to conduct successful elections, the division started to implement a systematic approach to training that includes:

- Development of a new regional and community-needs comprehensive statewide training plan. This includes improved training methods and the hiring of regional training coordinators, bringing the rural-based training closer to Election Day.
- Improvement of training and Election Day materials and handbooks that are more flexible, accommodating updates and changes. New materials include information on the touch screen voting units and awareness training materials for assisting voters with disabilities.

- Continued research for implementation of better training options, such as video creation.
- Recognizing the differences between urban and rural training and coordinating training needs, methods, and approaches with various Alaska Native organizations to obtain input and guidance on delivering training to individuals with diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Incorporating recommendations provided by the EAC for successful practices for poll worker recruitment and training.

Section 4. Voting System Guidelines and Processes

How the State of Alaska will adopt voting system guidelines and processes which are consistent with the requirements of Section 301.

In 2005, the Alaska Legislature enacted Alaska Statute 15.20.910, which provides for "Standards for voting machines and vote tally systems. Under this law, the division director may approve voting systems or vote tally systems depending on relevant factors, including whether the Federal Election Commission (FEC) has certified the system to be in compliance with the voting system standards approved by the FEC. According to state law, the voting system or vote tally system must be equipped with a VVPAT.

The division meets all of the voting system requirements required under HAVA as outlined in the attached matrix. The state's touch screen voting units are equipped with a VVPAT that can be used during any recount or election contest. The VVPAT also allows for compliance with Alaska Statute 15.15.430(a)(3) which now requires that, "unless a ballot for an election district contains nothing but uncontested offices, a hand count of ballots from one randomly selected precinct in each election district that accounts for at least five percent of the ballots cast in that district." According to Alaska Statute, if there is a difference of over one percent between the results of the hand count and the results certified by the election board, the entire house district must be recounted. The hand count procedure was first used in the 2006 primary election and has been used in each subsequent election. To date, the hand count results have not differed significantly from the results certified by the election board, and a district-wide recount has not been necessary for any race.

To maintain compliance with the Act and Alaska Statute, Alaska will continue providing one touch screen voting unit in every polling location during elections where a federal race appears on the ballot.

Requirements	Status of Alaska's Current Voting Systems (Meets, partially meets or does not meet)	Planned Action
Section 301. VOTING SYSTEM STANDARDS		
REQUIREMENTS - Each voting system used in an election for federal office shall meet the following requirements: (1) IN GENERAL (A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the voting system (including any lever voting system, optical-scanning voting system, or direct recording electronic system) shall--		
(i) permit the voter to verify (in a private and independent manner) the votes selected by the voter on the ballot before ballot is cast and counted;	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(ii) provide the voter with the opportunity (in a private and independent manner) to change the ballot or correct error before the ballot is cast and counted (including the opportunity to correct the error through the issuance of a replacement ballot if the voter was otherwise unable to change the ballot or correct any error); and	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.

Requirements	Status of Alaska's Current Voting Systems (Meets, partially meets or does not meet)	Planned Action
(iii) if the voter selects votes for more than one candidate for a single office - (I) notify the voter that the voter has selected more than one candidate for a single office on the ballot; (II) notify the voter before the ballot is cast and counted of the effect of casting multiple votes for the office; and (III) provide the voter with the opportunity to correct the ballot before the ballot is cast and counted.	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(B) A State or jurisdiction that uses a paper ballot voting system, a punch-card voting system, or a central count voting system (including mail-in absentee ballots and mail-in ballots) may meet the requirements of subparagraph (A)(iii) by--		

Requirements	Status of Alaska's Current Voting Systems (Meets, partially meets or does not meet)	Planned Action
(i) establishing a voter education program specific to that voting system that notifies each voter of the effect of casting multiple votes for an office; and	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(ii) providing the voter with instructions on how to correct the ballot before it is cast and counted (including instructions on how to correct the error through the issuance of a replacement ballot if the voter was otherwise unable to change the ballot or correct any error.	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(C) The voting system shall ensure that any notification required under this paragraph preserves the privacy of the voter and the confidentiality of the ballot.	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(2) AUDIT CAPACITY -		
(A) IN GENERAL - The voting system shall produce a record with an audit capacity for such system.	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(B) MANUAL AUDIT CAPACITY -		

Requirements	Status of Alaska's Current Voting Systems (Meets, partially meets or does not meet)	Planned Action
(i) The voting system shall produce a permanent paper record with a manual audit capacity for such system.	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(ii) The voting system shall provide the voter with an opportunity to change the ballot or correct any error before the permanent paper record is produced.	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(iii) The paper record produced under subparagraph (A) shall be available as an official record for any recount conducted with respect to any election in which the system is used.	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(3) ACCESSIBILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES – The voting system shall--		
(A) be accessible for individuals with disabilities, including non-visual accessibility for the blind and visually impaired, in a manner that provides the same opportunity for access and participation (including privacy and independence) as for other voters;	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(B) satisfy the requirement of subparagraph (A) through the use of at least one direct recording electronic voting system or other	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.

Requirements	Status of Alaska's Current Voting Systems (Meets, partially meets or does not meet)	Planned Action
voting system equipped for individuals with disabilities at each polling place; and		
(C) if purchased with funds made available under Title II on or after January 1, 2007, meet the voting system standards for disability access (as outlined in this paragraph).	Not applicable.	
(4) ALTERNATIVE LANGUAGE ACCESSIBILITY - The voting system shall provide alternative language accessibility pursuant to the requirements of Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 1973aa-1a).	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(5) ERROR RATES - The error rate of the voting system in counting ballots (determined by taking into account only those errors which are attributable to the voting system and not attributable to an act of the voter) shall comply with the error rate standards established under section 3.2.1 of the voting systems standards issued by the Federal Election Commission which are in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.

Requirements	Status of Alaska's Current Voting Systems (Meets, partially meets or does not meet)	Planned Action
(6) UNIFORM DEFINITION OF WHAT CONSTITUTES A VOTE - Each State shall adopt uniform and nondiscriminatory standards that define what constitutes a vote and what will be counted as a vote for each category of voting systems used in the State.	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.

Section 5. Alaska's HAVA Election Fund

How the State has established an election fund described in subsection (b) for purposes of administering the State's activities under this part, including information on fund management.

In accordance with state law and in coordination with the Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Finance and the Department of Revenue, Division of Treasury, the Division of Elections established an election fund within the state's treasury whose appropriations are accounted for separately within the state accounting system. The General Fund and Other Non-Segregated Investments (GeFONSI) fund contain both federal and general funds. Accounting structures are in place to ensure that federal fund receipts and expenditures are tracked separately from the general funds portion relating to the 5 percent state match required under HAVA. The Election Fund consists of the following amounts:

a. Amounts appropriated or otherwise made available by the state for carrying out the activities for which the requirements payment is made to the State under this part.
b. The requirements payment made to the state under this part.
c. Such other amounts as may be appropriated under law.
d. Interest earned on deposits of the fund.

The Governor's Finance Officer and the Division of Elections' Administrative Supervisor works with the Department of Administration, Division of Finance to ensure compliance with all mandated fiscal controls and policies.

Section 6. Alaska's Budget for Implementing HAVA

The State's proposed budget for activities under this part (HAVA Section 254 (a)(1)), based on the State's best estimates of the costs of such activities and the amount of funds to be made available, including specific information on-

(A) the costs of the activities required to be carried out to meet the requirements of Title III;

(B) the portion of the requirements payment which will be used to carry out activities to meet such requirements; and

(C) the portion of the requirements payment which will be used to carry out other activities.

Title I, Section 101 and Title II, Section 251 Funds

Table 6.1 represents the amount of funds appropriated to the State of Alaska under Title I, Section 101 and Title II, Section 251 in FY03, FY04. This table also represents additional funds available for appropriation to the State of Alaska for FY08, FY09 and FY10.

Table 6.1 HAVA Appropriations

Federal Fiscal Year	Total Federal Funds Available for Appropriation	Alaska's Payment	State Match
(§ 101) 2002 Title I Section 101	$650,000.0	$5,000.0	None
(§ 252, 257) 2003 Title II Section 251	$830,000.0	$4,150.0	$298.6 *
(§ 252, 257) 2004 Title II Section 251	$1,500,000.0 ($ rounded up)	$7,446.8	$469.2 *
(§ 252, 257) 2008 Title II Section 251	$115,000,000	$575.0	$30.2
(§ 252, 257) 2009 Title II Section 251	$100,000,000	$500.0	$26.3
(§ 252, 257) 2010 Title II Section 251	$70,000,000	$350.0	$18.4
Total Available Funds	$3,580,000.0	$18,021,803	$768.0

*represents overpayment of 5% state match

Accessibility Grants:

Title II also authorizes the Secretary of Health and Human Services to distribute payments to states to assure access for individuals with disabilities. Alaska has applied for and received $500,000 in accessibility grants for FY03, FY04, FY05 and FY06 and FY07. All accessibility grant funds will be expended in accordance with the requirements of Title II Section 261.

Reimbursement Payment:

The Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, Public Law 108-7, signed February 20, 2003, provided $15,000,000 in federal appropriated funds to the General Services Administration (GSA), for Election Reform Reimbursements. This one-time reimbursement was for states that purchased electronic voting equipment to replace punch card and lever voting machines prior to 2000 making them ineligible to receive funds under Title I Section 102 of HAVA. Alaska qualified for and received a one-time reimbursement of $1.1 million deposited back into the state's general fund for electronic voting machines purchased in 1998 to replace all punch card voting equipment.

Alaska's budget in Table 6.2 represents the HAVA funds authorized for appropriation by the Alaska Legislature and is based on the levels of funding as shown in Table 6.1. The budget represents the cost of implementing requirements of Title III and "other" activities as specified in Title I of HAVA, including improvements to election administration. Costs associated with the maintenance and operations of implementing these requirements are also reflected in the budget. It is important to note that the maintenance and operation costs associated with these requirements will have an impact on the state's budget in future years when federal funding is no longer available. Any funds remaining, after the implementation of requirements, will be used for the overall improvement of election administration in Alaska.

Table 6.2

Expenditures Description	Total Authorized Appropriations
AR 05-2202 **HAVA Title I, Section 101** AccuVote System Payment	$387,789
AR 08-2218 **HAVA Title I, Section 101** Meeting Requirements of Title III • Meeting Requirements • Accessible Voting Equipment • Voter Registration • Voter Education • Management State Plan • Language Accessibility • Free Access • Polling Place Accessibility Improvements • Office Expansion	$2,446,085
AR 08-2219 **HAVA Title I, Section 101** Improve Election Administration • Office Expansion	$2,166,126
AR 08-2217 **HAVA Title II, Section 251** Requirements Payment • Voter Registration • Voter Education • Accessibility for Voters • Language Accessibility • List Maintenance • DMV/SSN Requirements • Polling Place Improvements • Election Administration	$4,150,000
AR 09-2208 **HAVA Title II, Section 251** Voter Registration System Replacement	$5,450,000
AR 10-2224 **HAVA Title II, Section 251** Statewide Accessible Voting Equipment	$523,000
AR 13-2241 **HAVA Title II, Section 251** Elections Reform under HAVA	$1,473,503

State Match Funds	$298,600 $469,200
Accrued Interest	$2,348,217
Total Available Appropriations	$19,712,820

Additional Notes for Title III requirements:

(1) *Voting System* - Alaska purchased optical scan units in 1998 to replace its punch card voting system. Alaska has 438 voting precincts. 305 of the precincts are equipped with optical scan and 133 are hand-count precincts. HAVA funds will continue to be used to implement a HAVA-compliant DRE voting system and to purchase additional optical scan units for use when converting hand-count precincts to optical scan precincts. HAVA funds will be used for installation, training and maintenance costs.

The $1.1 million reimbursement Alaska received under the Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, PL108-7, was deposited into the state's general fund and is not included in the state's budget for implementing requirements of HAVA.

(2) *Provisional Voting* - Provisional voting, known as *Questioned* voting in Alaska, has been available to voters in Alaska since the early 1980s. There were minimal changes needed to meet the provisional voting requirements of HAVA.

(3) *Computerized Statewide Voter Registration System* - Alaska is working on replacing the antiquated VREMS with a new pc-based database system.

Alaska has certified to the United States Election Assistance Commission that it has met all requirements of HAVA Title III and intends to use HAVA Title II requirements payments to carry out other activities to improve the administration of elections for federal office.

Section 7. Maintenance of Effort

How the State, in using the requirements payment, will maintain the expenditures of the State for activities funded by the payment at a level that is not less than the level of such expenditures maintained by the State for the fiscal year ending prior to November 2000.

In accordance with HAVA section 254 (a)(7), Alaska will maintain the same level of expenditures on similar activities funded by the requirements payment that was spent in the fiscal year ending prior to November 2000. Alaska's expenditures for these activities totaled $537,500.

The Division of Elections administers all state and federal elections. These elections occur in even calendar years. The division receives an increment to the annual operating budget in an odd fiscal year beginning July 1 in order to conduct primary and general elections. This increment provides for the expenditures associated with election officials, polling place recruitment, temporary employees, ballot printing and distribution, election supplies, Election Day support, and other costs associated with conducting an election.

Other expenditures in an even-numbered calendar year are spent in preparation of election activities that occur after July 1. These activities include election official training, voter education, advertising, production of election pamphlets, information technology support, and the purchasing of equipment and supplies. The maintenance of effort for the State’s FY00 budget represents a portion of the total operating budget that is appropriated to carry out election administrative activities in an even fiscal year.

Section 8. HAVA Performance Goals and Measures

How the State will adopt performance goals and measures that will be used by the State to determine its success and the success of units of local government in the State in carrying out the plan, including timetables for meeting each of the elements of the plan, descriptions of the criteria the State will use to measure performance and the process used to develop such criteria, and a description of which official is to be held responsible for ensuring that each performance goal is met.

The Division of Elections will establish performance goals in conjunction with the Alaska State Legislature during the deliberation of the annual operating budget. The "Missions and Measures" process undertaken by the Legislature in concurrence with the consideration of the annual operating budget has been established as a respected means for developing performance measures that accurately quantify program success.

The Director of the Division of Elections, as the "Chief State Election Official" under section 253(e), is responsible for coordination of the state's responsibilities under this Act. Therefore, the director is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the division meets each performance goal. In addition, the Legislature will be monitoring the division's efforts through the annual preparation of the state's operating budget.

Plan Elements	Official	Time frame
Voting Systems §301	Director of Elections	Completed
Provisional Voting §302	Director of Elections	Completed
Voter Registration §303(a) §303(b)	Director of Elections	§303(a) Implemented §303(b) Implemented
Other Activities §101 (b)(1), §251 (b)(2)		
Technical Infrastructure	Admin. Asst.	Continuous

	Supervisor	
Free-Access System	Admin Asst. Supervisor HAVA Coordinator	Implemented
Education and Training §254(a)(3)	Regional Supervisors Election Special Assistant HAVA Section	Continuous
Budget and Fiscal Controls §254(a)(2) §254(a)(6) §254(a)(7) §254(a)(10)	 Admin. Asst. Supervisor Admin. Asst. Supervisor Director	Continuous State monitors HAVA account each month
Complaint Procedures §254(a)(9) §402	Director of Elections	Completed

Section 9. State-based Administrative Complaint Procedure

A description of the uniform, nondiscriminatory State-based administrative complaint procedure in effect under section 402.

The State of Alaska, Division of Elections has developed administrative regulations to establish the required complaint procedure. These regulations constitute a new article 6 AAC 25.400 – 490 that are now a part of the division's administrative regulations set out at Title 6, Chapter 25 of the Alaska Administrative Code.

These regulations satisfy the requirements of HAVA Section 402 by providing a uniform and nondiscriminatory complaint procedure. Under these procedures, any person who believes there has been a violation of HAVA Title III may file a complaint. The complaint must in writing, sworn, and notarized. At the complainant's request, there will be a hearing on the record. If the state finds a violation, it shall provide an appropriate remedy. If there is no violation, the State will dismiss the complaint and publish the results. The division will make a final determination on a complaint within 90 days. If the division cannot meet this deadline, the complaint will proceed under alternative dispute resolution procedures.

The division adopted these administrative regulations on August 29, 2003.

Additionally, the division developed an Administrative Complaint form that can be found at any Division of Elections office and on the division's web site.

Section 10. Effect of Title I Payments

If the State received any payment under Title I, a description of how such payment will affect the activities proposed to be carried out under the plan, including the amount of funds available for such activities.

Under Section 103, Guaranteed Minimum Payment, Alaska received the minimum payment of $5 million and established an Election Fund.

Current activities carried out under the plan have improved the administration of elections for federal office and the election process as a whole.

Upon receipt of Title I monies, the Division of Elections is using the funds for one or more of the following:

- **Developing the State plan for requirements payments to be submitted under Part 1 of Subtitle D of Title II.**

  The State Plan is created and updated by the Election Systems Manager and costs for plan maintenance are tracked by that position.

- **Educating voters concerning voting procedures, voting rights, and voting technology.**

  Implementation and development of the division's website, the maintenance of the free-access systems, and preparation of training materials used by voters have been completed to comply with the Act. In addition, the division provides touch screen voting unit demonstrations to the public and specifically targets members and groups of the disabled community.

- **Training election officials, poll workers, and election volunteers.**

The division has improved training systems with the goal of training more election workers closer to an election. The challenge continues to be training citizens with diverse physical, social and cultural differences across a vast geographical area in a short time period. In order to bring election worker training closer to Election Day, the division has created a new training assistant position for each region. In some regions of the state, the division trained election workers one month before the election.

- **Improving, acquiring, leasing, modifying and/or replacing voting systems and technology and methods for casting and counting votes.**

  The division is continuing the process of implementing a new statewide voter database to replace the antiquated VREMS system.

  In addition, the division has developed methods to improve the security of the touch screen voting units and has purchased transport cases to protect the units during shipment.

- **Improving the accessibility and quantity of polling places, including providing physical access for individuals with disabilities, providing non-visual access for individuals with visual impairments, and providing assistance to Native Americans, Alaska Indigenous Native citizens, and to individuals with limited proficiency in the English language.**

  The division has developed a polling place survey and worked in coordination with the State ADA coordinator on the assessment of polling places within Alaska. Prior to implementing a new polling place, the division conducts an accessibility survey to evaluate and determine if the facility is accessible or what temporary solutions are needed to make it accessible. Accessibility improvements to polling places will be made using the Health and Human Services accessibility grant funds.

  In addition, the division is working on improvements to the division's language accessibility plan for limited English proficient Alaska Native voters. The division's plan provides for tribal outreach, recruitment and training of bilingual workers, translated information,

outreach, publicity and ongoing assessment. The division has hired a full-time Yup'ik Language Assistance Program Coordinator to provide for improved language assistance to Yup'ik voters. In addition, the division formulated a Yup'ik translation panel to develop a Yup'ik glossary of election terms in an audio and written format. The glossary provides an effective tool for bilingual workers to use when providing language assistance. Audio translations of the voter registration, absentee voting and special needs voting processes were created and distributed to Yup'ik tribal offices and will be posted to the division's website. The division has also created specific training materials for bilingual workers that outline the procedures for providing effective language assistance during the electoral process. In 2010, an audio translation of the ballot in Yup'ik will be added to the division's touch screen voting equipment in the Bethel Census Area.

- **Establishing free-access telephone systems for voters to report possible voting fraud and voting rights violations, to obtain general election information, and to access detailed automated information on their own voter registration status, specific polling place locations, and other relevant information.**

  The division currently uses an interactive toll-free telephone system for voters to verify their polling location and party affiliation. Additionally, voters may contact another toll-free number to determine the count of their ballot or file an administrative complaint. In 2008, the division implemented toll-free telephone numbers for offices to provide improved access to information for voters.

  In addition to the toll-free telephone numbers established by the division, improvements were made to the division's website to allow voters to check their registration status, complete an interactive voter registration and absentee ballot application, and to allow absentee voters to check the status of their absentee ballot by using the division's absentee ballot locator. Using this web-based tool, voters can log on with an identifier such as a social security number and see if their application has been processed, a ballot has been sent, and if a voted ballot was received back.

Section 11. Alaska's HAVA State Plan Management

How the State will conduct ongoing management of the plan, except that the State may not make any material change in the administration of the plan unless the change—

(A) is developed and published in the Federal Register in accordance with section 255 in the same manner as the State plan;

(B) is subject to public notice and comment in accordance with section 256 in the same manner as the State plan; and

(C) takes effect only after the expiration of the 30-day period that begins on the date the change is published in the Federal Register in accordance with subparagraph (A).

The Director of Elections, as the "Chief State Election Official" under Section 253(e), is responsible for coordination of the state's responsibilities under this Act. The division director, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, oversees the day-to-day operations of the division. These responsibilities include tracking resource requirements, managing HAVA funds, and ensuring that additional implementation projects are in compliance and on schedule.

The division employs an Election Systems Manager to oversee the implementation of HAVA-related projects and activities. Under the purview of the director, the Election Systems Manager strives to continually improve polling place accessibility and language assistance programs, increase voter outreach efforts, and manage the implementation and use of all voting equipment and the voter registration database. In addition, the Election Systems Manager is responsible for updating the HAVA State Plan.

The updated HAVA State Plan is an essential component in the division's continuing efforts to improve accessibility and accountability in the election process. Alaska has already implemented many aspects of HAVA, and the division sees the ongoing management of the State Plan as a continuation of the state's commitment to election reform. Each element is being managed closely to achieve compliance, maximize improvements to all aspects of the election process, and continue responsible use of available funds.

The State understands and agrees to comply with HAVA requirements related to ongoing management of the State Plan. More specifically, the State agrees that it may not make any material change in the administration of the State Plan unless the change:

(A) is developed and published in the Federal Register in accordance with HAVA Section 255 in the same manner as the State Plan;

(B) is subject to public notice and comment in accordance with HAVA Section 256 in the same manner as the State Plan; and

(C) takes effect only after the expiration of the 30-day period that begins on the date the change is published in the Federal Register.

Section 12. Changes to State Plan from Previous Fiscal Year

In the case of a State with a State Plan in effect under this subtitle during the previous fiscal year, a description of how the plan reflects changes from the State Plan for the previous fiscal year and of how the State succeeded in carrying out the State Plan for such previous fiscal year.

The State of Alaska's 2010 HAVA Updated State Plan remains consistent, with steady progress towards the goals established in the initial 2003 and the updated 2005 and 2008 State Plans. The State of Alaska passed legislation to bring the state into compliance with HAVA requirements, developed new staff positions to manage HAVA, updated forms and training materials, and continues to design improved voter outreach programs.

Since the 2008 State Plan, the division continued to work on the development of a new voter registration system, made improvements to language assistance for Alaska Native voters, including the development and production of a Yup'ik glossary of election terms in written and audio format, has created a new and improved website based on recommendations included in The Pew Center on the States election website study, developed on-line tools for voters to check their registration status as well as to complete voter registration and absentee ballot applications, developed additional educational brochures for voters and election workers and modified the voter registration and absentee ballot applications for compliance with the Military Spouses Residency Relief Act and the MOVE Act.

Since the 2008 State Plan, the division implemented security measures for the touch screen voting equipment as outlined in the election security study conducted by the University of Alaska, Anchorage and has procured software to allow for the management of security keys on this equipment. In addition to the extra security measures adopted, the division has retrofitted the shipping containers for the units to reduce damage to the units during shipment. The division, utilizing the Health and Human Services grant funds, purchased privacy panels for the touch screen voting units to provide for improved privacy for voters utilizing the equipment. The division also worked with disability organizations and provided demonstrations across the state to educate voters about the touch screen voting unit.

Since the 2008 plan, the division has implemented more recommendations provided by the University of Alaska, Anchorage in the election security study, including password management, the use of tamper-evident seals on equipment, functionality and testing procedures, and physical security protocols.

Although the division's voter registration system replacement project was not successfully implemented, the division continues to work on the development of system requirements and will continue to commit resources to plan for and develop a new voter registration system.

The division has implemented the use of toll-free telephone numbers in divisional offices, including the establishment of a toll-free language assistance line for limited English proficient Yup'ik voters.

The division has begun reviewing the MOVE Act to determine what changes are needed to existing procedures to comply with the new requirements. The MOVE Act required a change to Alaska's absentee ballot application and we have made that change and submitted it to the U.S. Department of Justice for preclearance. Although Alaska already offers a method of electronic voting, Alaska statute limits the application period to 15 days prior to an election. In addition, changes will be needed to the free-access system as well as to the on-line absentee ballot application tool to comply with the new requirements. Alaska will be requesting a hardship exemption on the 45-day absentee ballot mailing requirement included in the MOVE Act. The state will also look at ways to improve the processing time for mailing ballots through the use of automation equipment.

Section 13. State Plan Development and Committee

A description of the committee that participated in the development of the State Plan in accordance with section 255 and the procedures followed by the committee under such section and section 256.

The draft of Alaska's initial State Plan was created by the Division of Elections, with the legal guidance of the State's Attorney General's office, and input from the State Plan Committee. The division continues to seek consultation from the State Attorney General's office in our implementation of HAVA and input from the State Plan Committee on updates to the plan.

The Division of Elections updated the 2010 Alaska State Plan and distributed it to members of the State Plan Committee. Comments from the committee will be taken into account before the plan is finalized. Once the plan is finalized, it will be posted on the division's website and published for public comment for 30 days. Following the public comment period, the Division of Elections will make any necessary changes and submit to the EAC for posting in the Federal Register.

The State Plan Committee members continue to reflect a cross section of election stakeholders throughout the state, in accordance with Section 255 of the Act. The following Alaskans were appointed to the State Plan Committee in 2007:

Gail Fenumiai, Director of the Division of Elections, Chair of the Committee

Shelly Growden, Election System Manager, Division of Elections

Alyce Houston, Region I Election Supervisor, Juneau

Carol Thompson, Absentee & Petition Manager, Anchorage

Michelle Speegle, Region III Election Supervisor, Fairbanks

Edna Baker, Region IV Election Supervisor, Nome

Jim Beck, Executive Director, Access Alaska

Lynne Koral, First Vice-President, Alaska Independent Blind

Jason Burke, State of Alaska ADA Coordinator

Sarah Felix, Assistant Attorney General, State of Alaska