Voter Registration for the 21st Century

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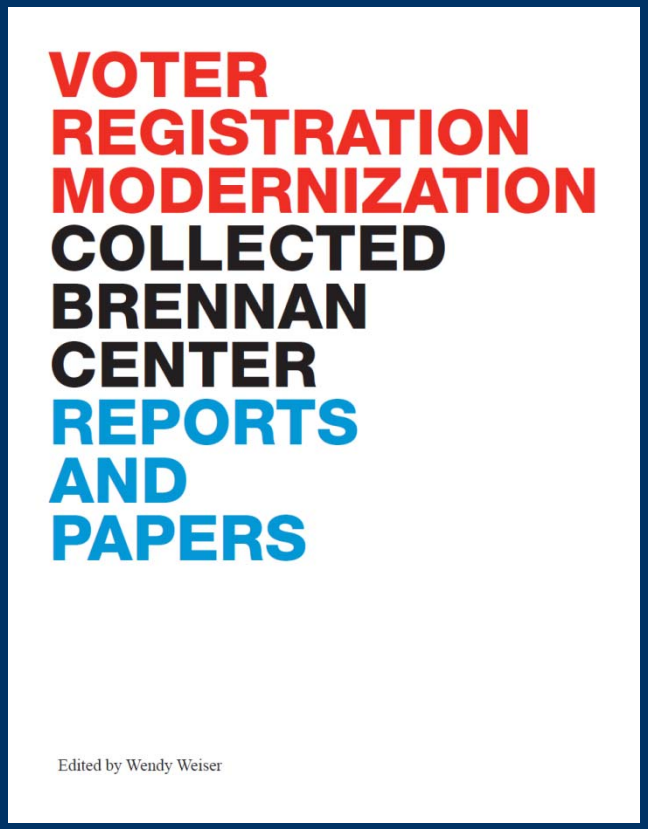
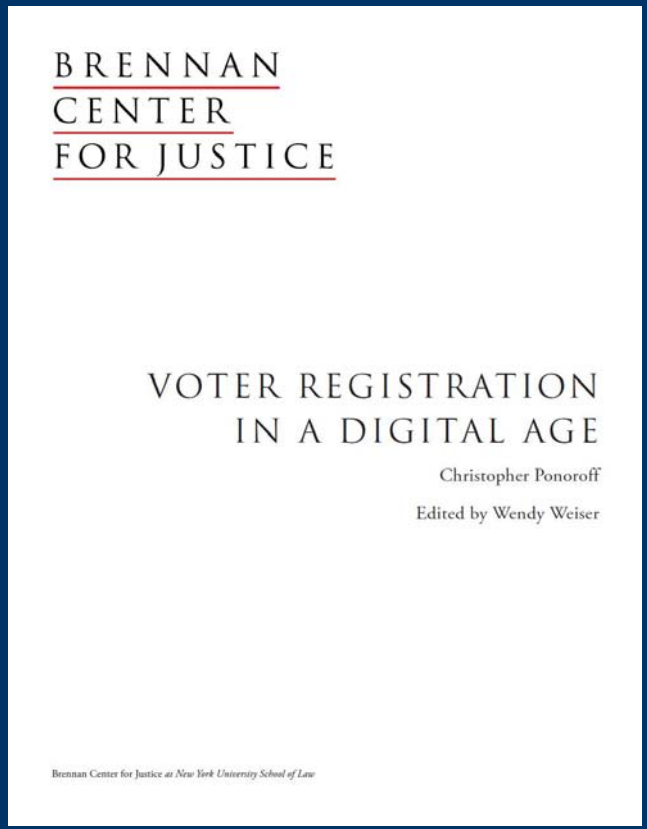
Modernizing voter registration





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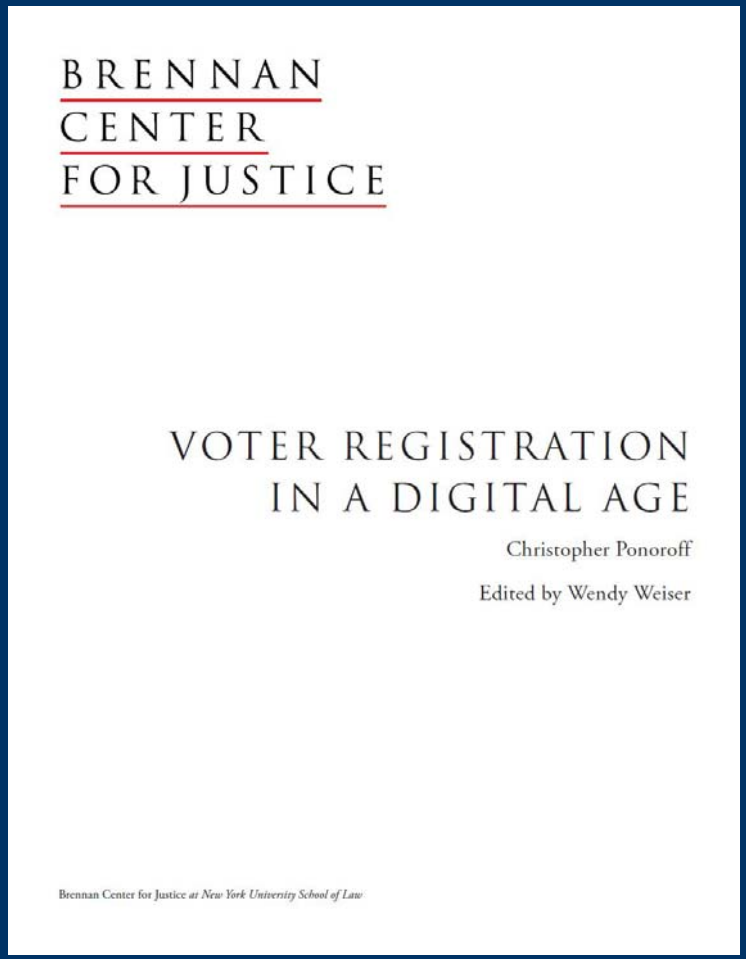
Report on recent reforms

- Studied automated agency registration and online registration
- Detailed interviews with 29 state and local officials in 15 states
- Detailed analysis of all available documentary evidence and registration data from past 10 years



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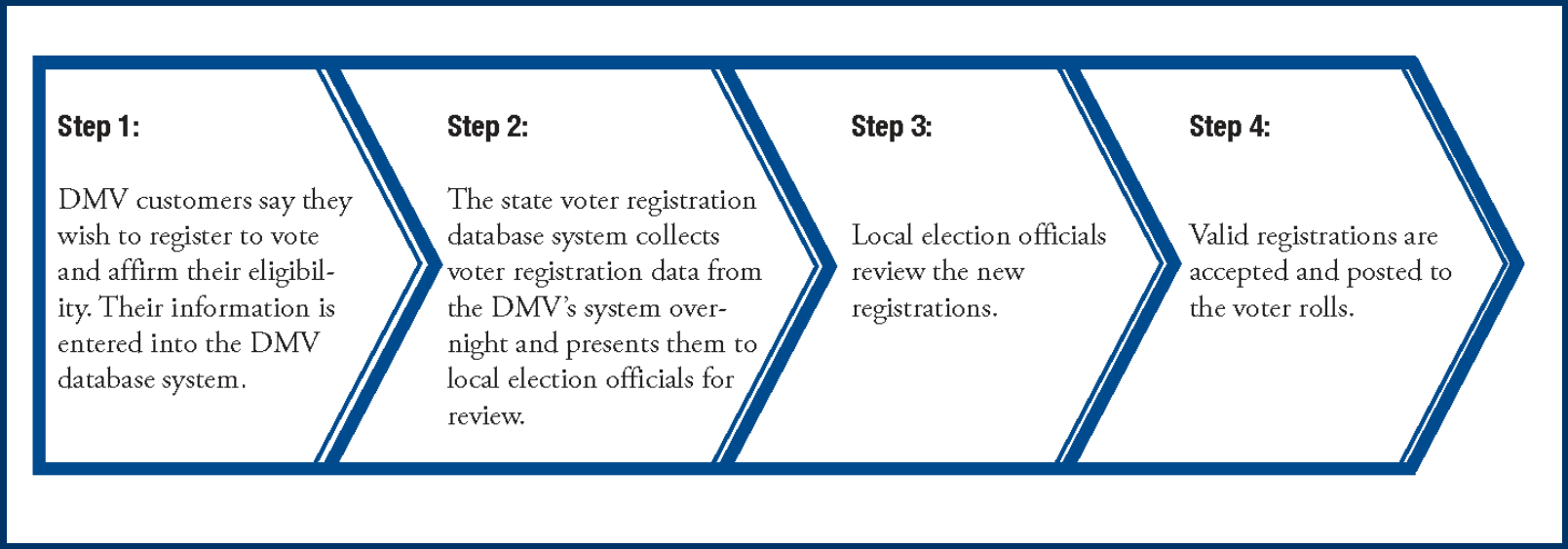
How automated voter registration works



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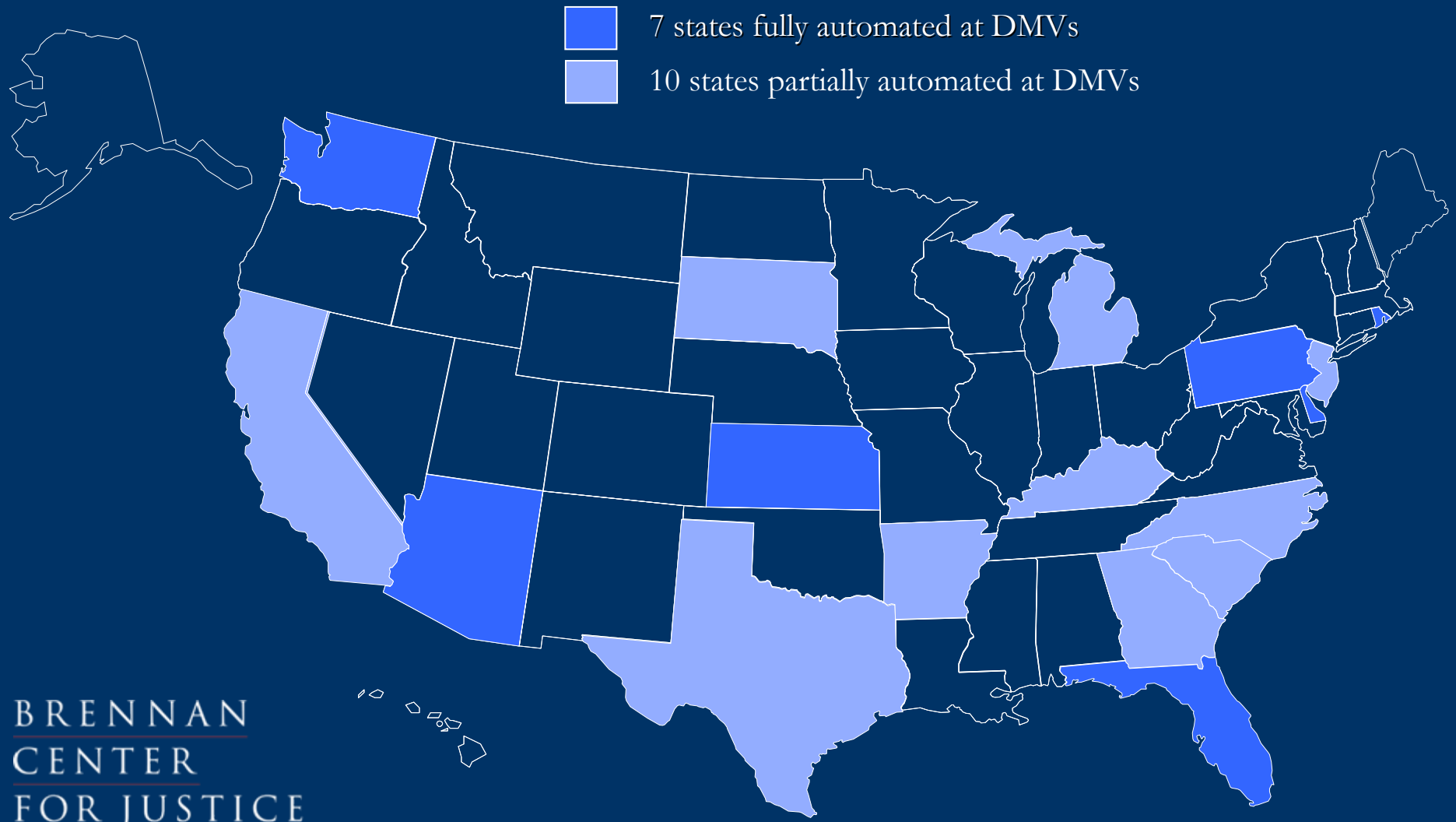
States with automated registration



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Distinguishing automated systems

- Data collection at DMV or voter registration agency

Distinguishing automated systems

Collecting Data

Has the DMV Eliminated Separate Forms for Voter Registration?

No	Applicants Fill Out a Single Form for the DMV and Voter Registration and Sign Separate Signature Cards for Voter Registration	New Jersey
	Interviewers Enter DMV and Voter Registration Data into Their Computers and Print Pre-Populated Voter Registration Forms for Applicants to Sign	Kentucky, Michigan, North Carolina, South Carolina
Yes	Applicants Fill Out a Single Form for the DMV and Voter Registration	Arizona, South Dakota
	Interviewers Enter DMV and Voter Registration Data into Their Computers; No Use of Paper	Delaware, Florida, Kansas, Rhode Island, Washington, Texas*
	Applicants Use a Self-Service Computer Program to Enter DMV and Voter Registration Data	Pennsylvania

Distinguishing automated systems

- Data transfer

Distinguishing automated systems

When the DMV Electronically Transfers Voter Registration Data to Election Officials,

	Does the DMV Include All Data Elements?		Does the DMV Do So in a Format That Uploads Immediately into Registration Databases?	
State	No	Yes	No	Yes
Arizona		√		√
Delaware		√		√
Florida		√		√
Kansas		√		√
Kentucky	X			√
Michigan		√		√
New Jersey	X			√
North Carolina		√		√
Pennsylvania		√		√
Rhode Island		√		√
South Carolina	X			√
South Dakota		√	X	
Texas*		√		√
Washington		√		√

* Texas is currently in the process of adopting an automated system. A minority of counties still use paper forms, but officials expect that these will have transitioned to a paperless system by the end of May 2010.

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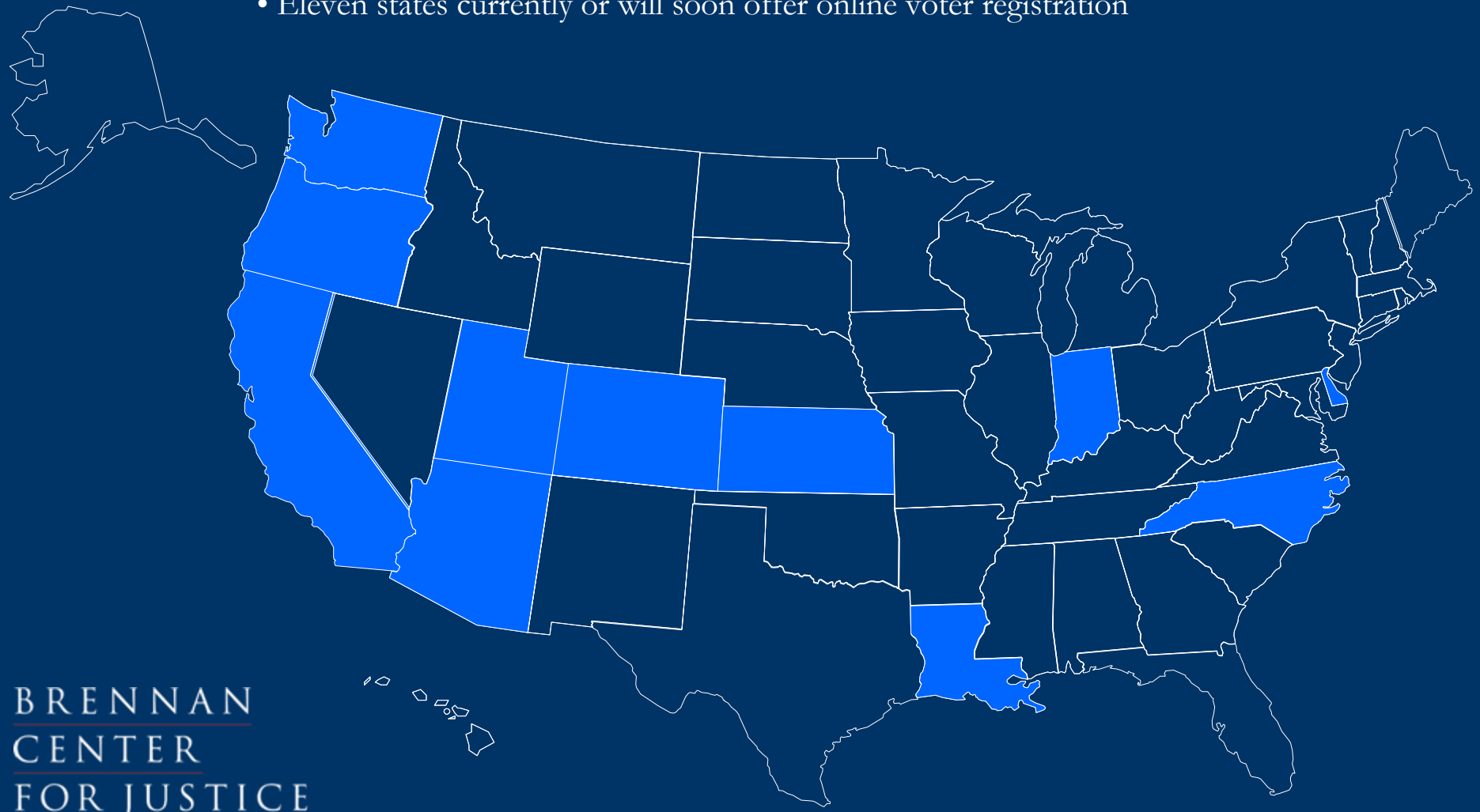
States with online registration

- Eleven states currently or will soon offer online voter registration



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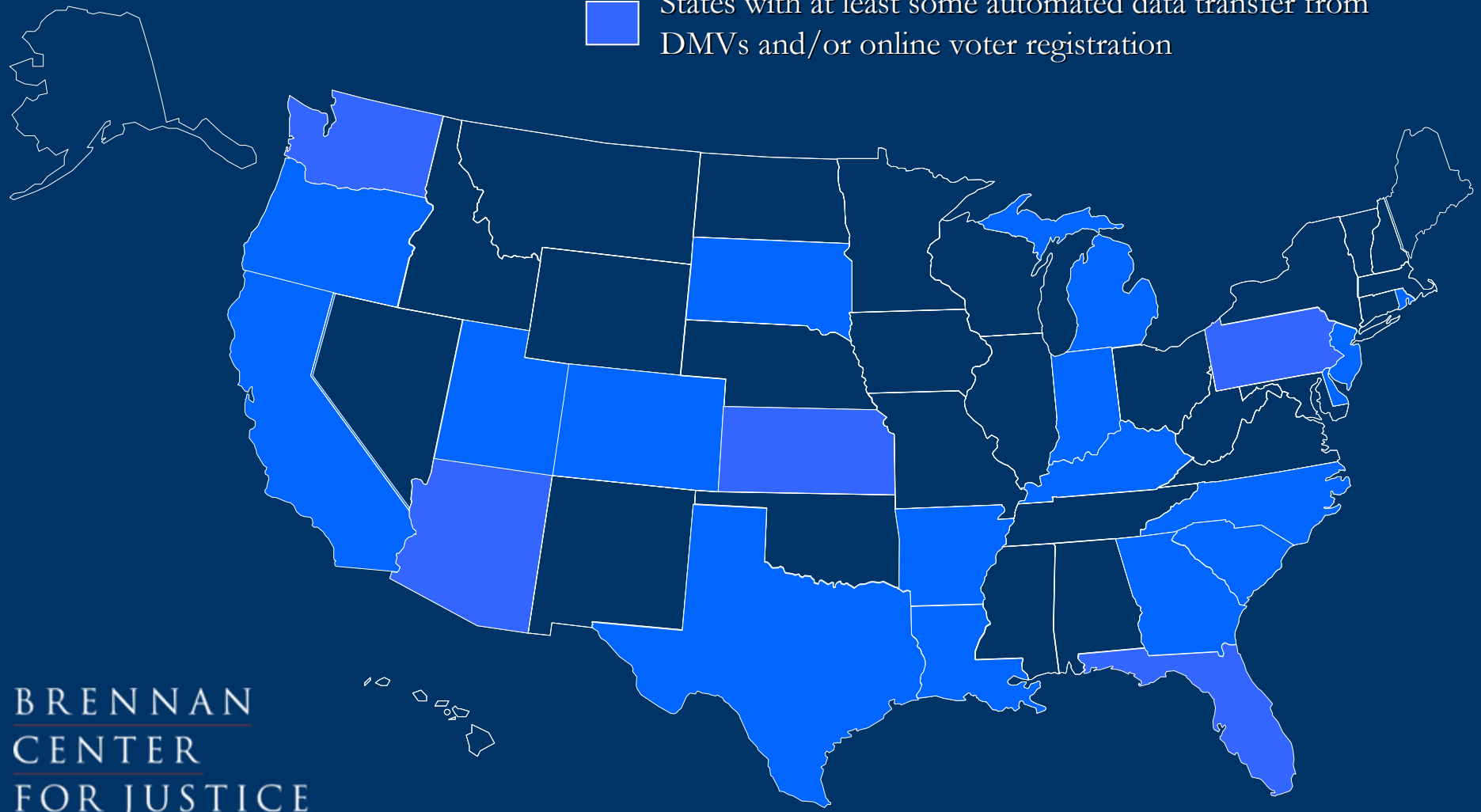
Automated and online registration



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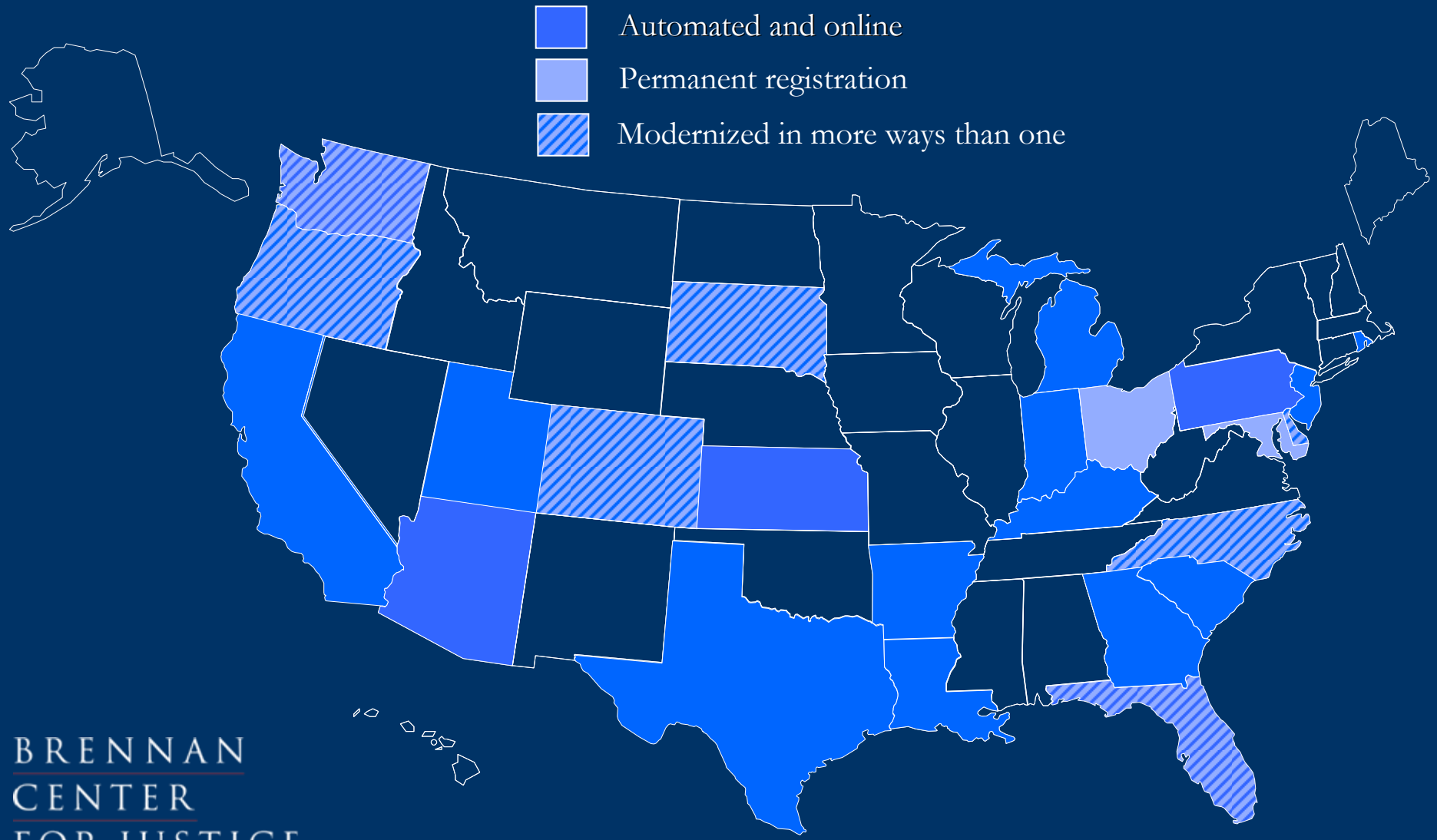
Automated, online, and permanent registration



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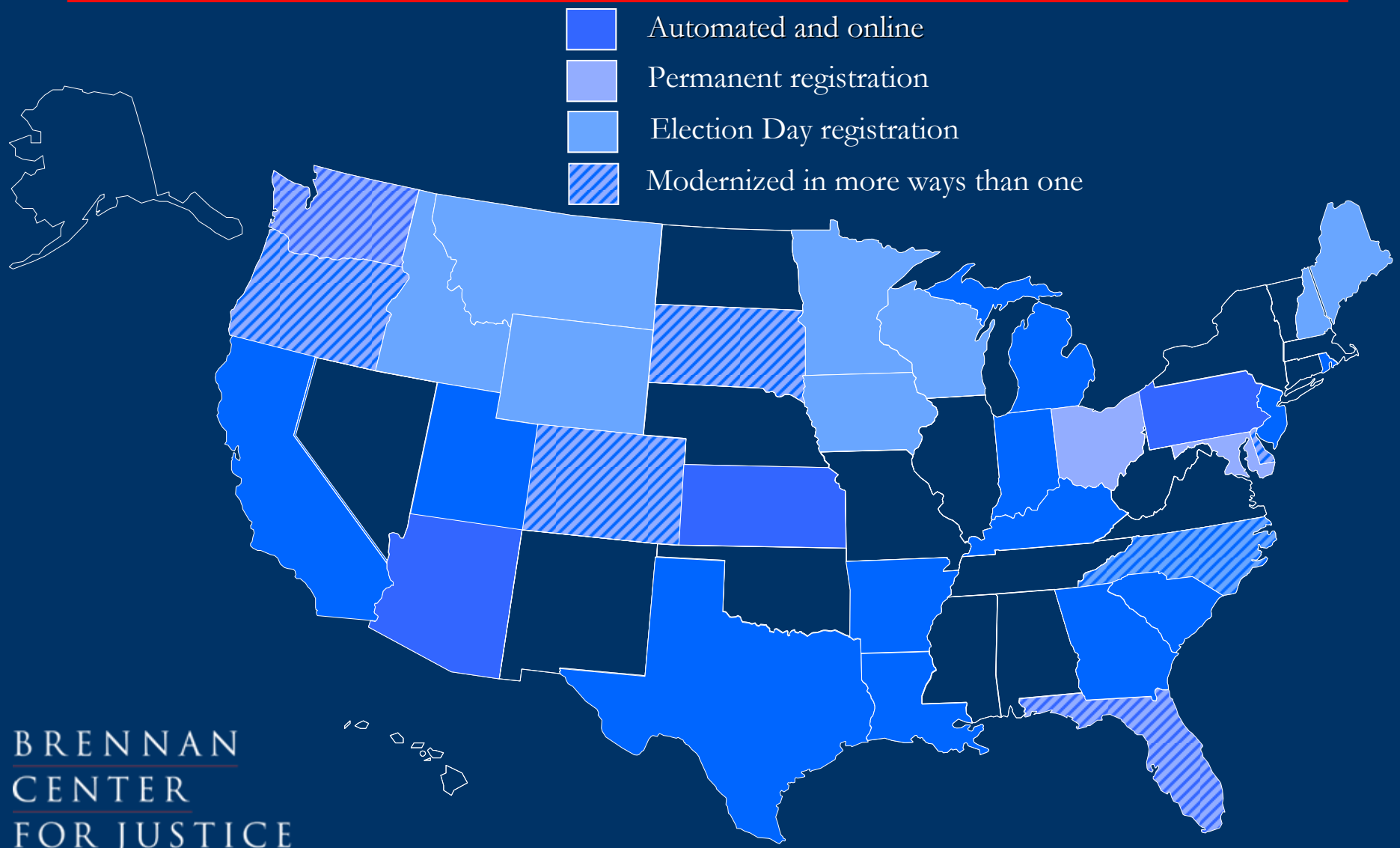
Automated, online, permanent, and Election Day registration



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Growing Adoption of Paperless Registration

1990s

- ***AR, CA, DE, KY, MI, PA, SC & WA*** *begin transmitting some data from DMV offices to election officials.*

2002

- ***AZ*** *launches online registration.*

2005

- ***PA & RI*** *introduce fully automated voter registration at the DMV.*
- ***AZ*** *implements partial automation at the DMV.*

2006

- ***NC & SD*** *adopt partial DMV automation.*
- ***FL*** *adopts full DMV automation.*
- ***DE*** *develops online registration.*

2007

- ***MI*** *DMV offices begin sharing digitized signatures with election officials.*

2008

- ***WA & KS*** *introduce full automation at the DMV.*
- ***WA*** *launches online registration.*

2009

- ***DE & AZ*** *develop full DMV automation.*
- ***KS*** *launches online registration.*

2010

- ***AR & TX*** *develop full DMV automation.*
- ***CO, IN, LA, OR & UT*** *introduce online registration.*
- ***CA, NC & NV*** *developing online registration.*
- *Paperless registration reforms considered in* ***OH, CO, WI,*** *and elsewhere.*

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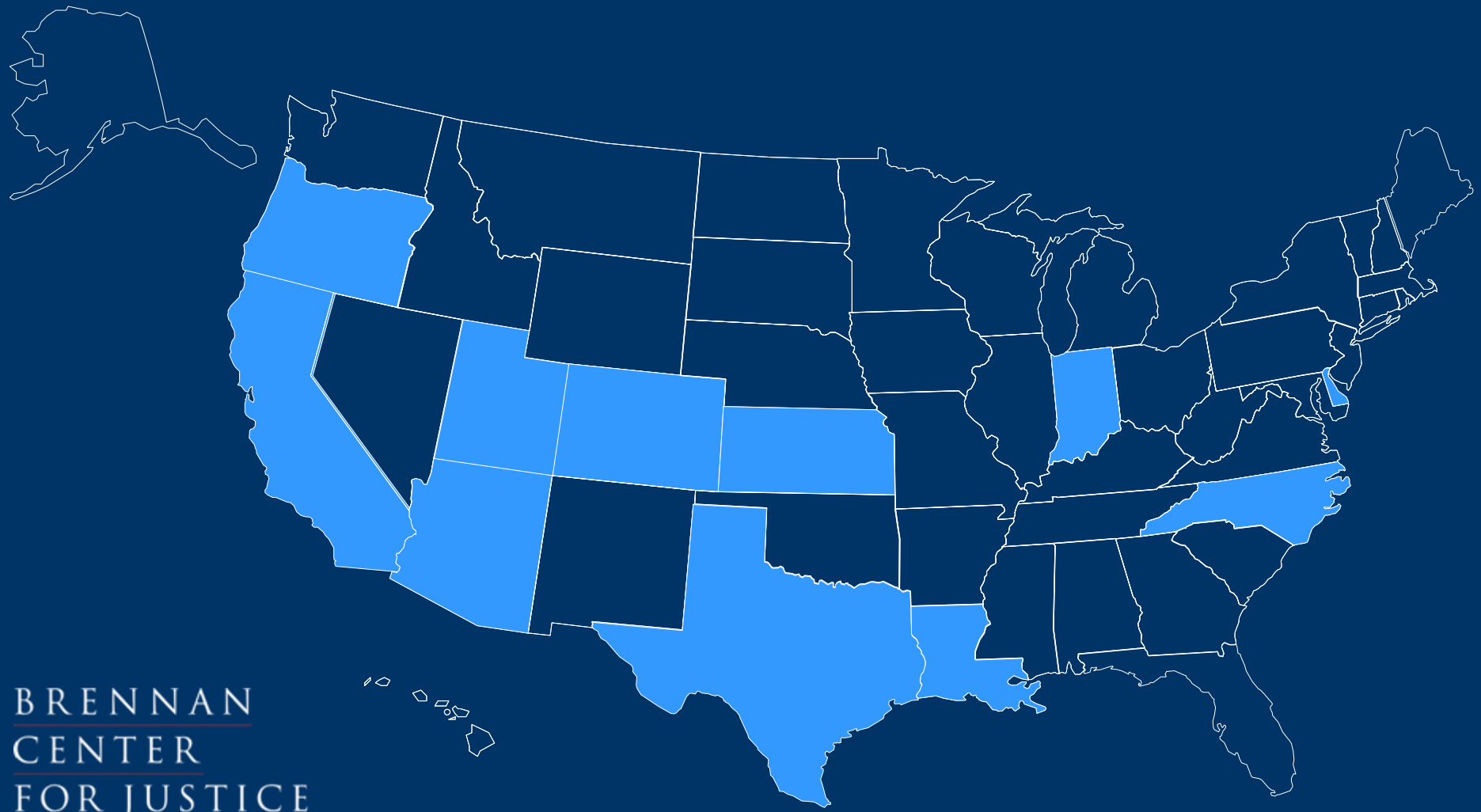
States adopting paperless registration in past 2 years



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Infrastructure in place in every state

- Statewide voter registration databases
- Most agency lists are now in computerized databases
- Selective Service registration

Benefits of voter registration modernization

Cost effective

Makes voter rolls more accurate

Increases registration rates

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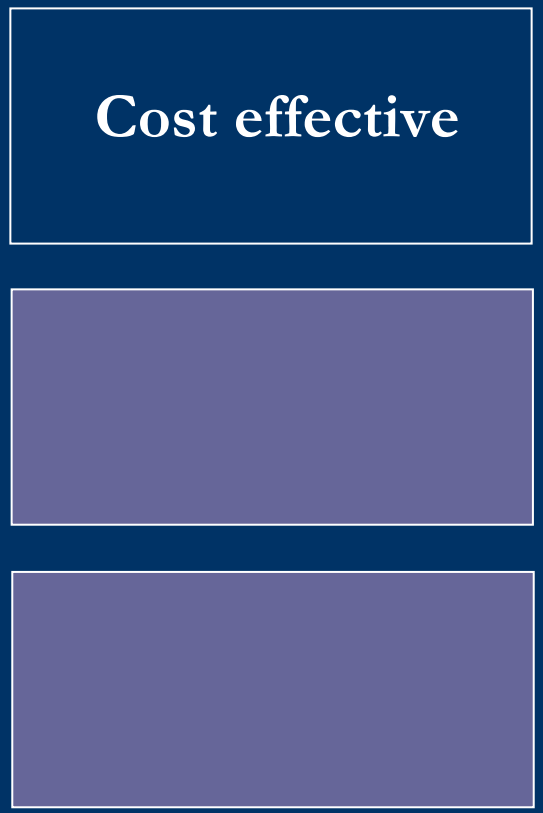
Modernizing is cost effective



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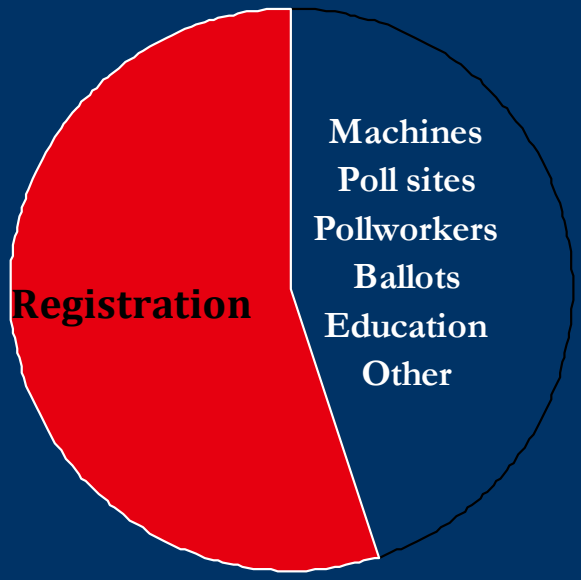
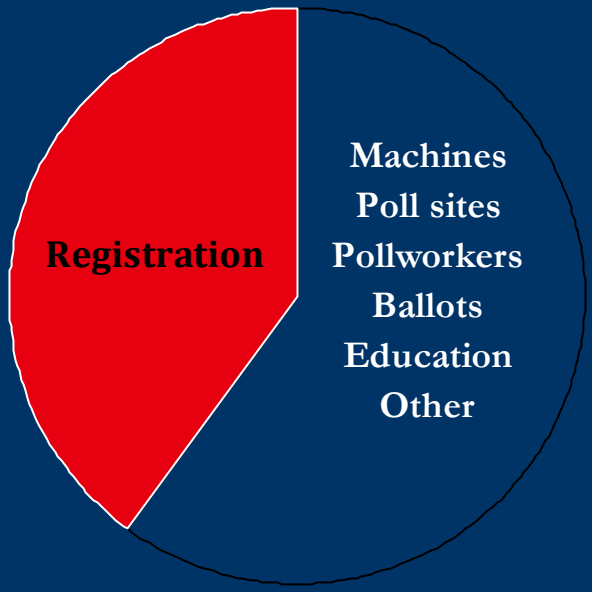
Current system: big drain on county budgets



Sources: Los Angeles County, CA



Sources: Franklin County, OH

Cost effective

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Last minute registration costs in Ohio in 2004

County	Additional Cost
Allen County (pop. 100,000)	$120,000
Franklin County (pop. 1.1 million)	$337,000
Cuyahoga County (pop. 1.3 million)	$1.5 million

Cost effective

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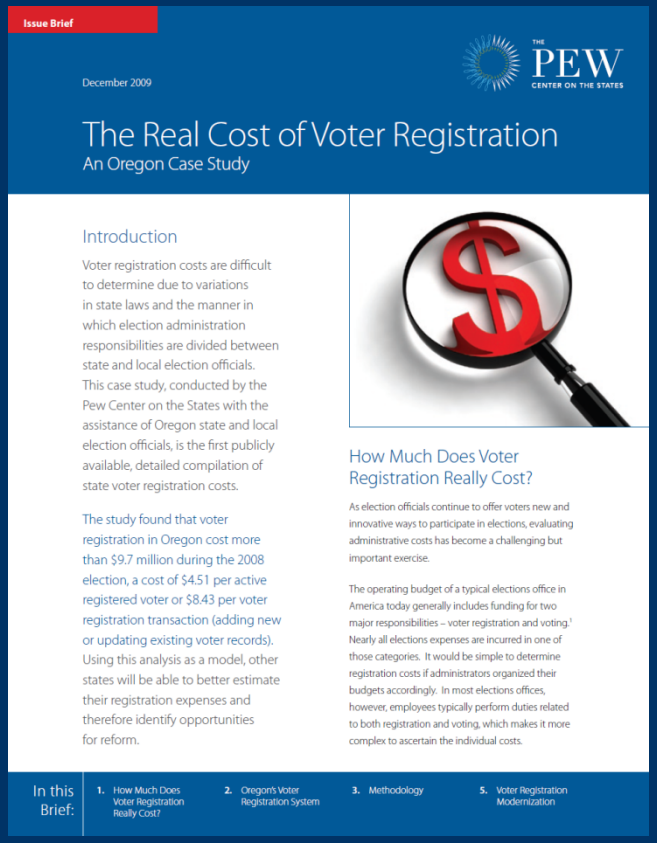
These costs quickly add up



Issue Brief

December 2009

THE PEW CENTER ON THE STATES

The Real Cost of Voter Registration

An Oregon Case Study

Introduction

Voter registration costs are difficult to determine due to variations in state laws and the manner in which election administration responsibilities are divided between state and local election officials. This case study, conducted by the Pew Center on the States with the assistance of Oregon state and local election officials, is the first publicly available, detailed compilation of state voter registration costs.

The study found that voter registration in Oregon cost more than $9.7 million during the 2008 election, a cost of $4.51 per active registered voter or $8.43 per voter registration transaction (adding new or updating existing voter records). Using this analysis as a model, other states will be able to better estimate their registration expenses and therefore identify opportunities for reform.

How Much Does Voter Registration Really Cost?

As election officials continue to offer voters new and innovative ways to participate in elections, evaluating administrative costs has become a challenging but important exercise.

The operating budget of a typical elections office in America today generally includes funding for two major responsibilities – voter registration and voting.[1] Nearly all elections expenses are incurred in one of those categories. It would be simple to determine registration costs if administrators organized their budgets accordingly. In most elections offices, however, employees typically perform duties related to both registration and voting, which makes it more complex to ascertain the individual costs.

In this Brief:

1. How Much Does Voter Registration Really Cost?
2. Oregon's Voter Registration System
3. Methodology
5. Voter Registration Modernization

- Oregon's registration system
  - Cost nearly **$9 million** in 2008
  - Average of **$8.43** per registration transaction
  - Average of **$4.11** per active registration record
- Extrapolation: **$700 million** nationally in 2008 for 174 million active records

Cost effective

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Modernization: Inexpensive to implement

Automated Registration

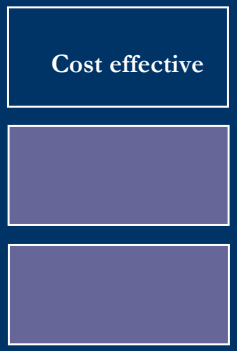
- South Dakota — **$60,000** for partial automation
- Rhode Island — **$70,000** at the DMV

Online Registration

- Oregon — **$200,000**

Both Automated & Online

- Kansas — **No separate appropriations**
- Arizona — **$130,000**
- Washington — **$279,000**



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Significant annual savings

Savings from Paperless Registration

Jurisdiction	Savings
Maricopa County, Arizona	Over $450,000 in 2008
Delaware	Over $200,000 in 2009, beyond prior savings from partial automation
Washington	$126,000 in 2008 in the Secretary of State's office; more in the counties

Cost effective

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Case study: Maricopa County, Arizona

Over **$450,000** in savings in 2008

Cost to manually process paper registration form:	**$ 0.83**
Cost to manually process an electronic registration:	**$ 0.33**
Cost to process electronic registration with partially automated review:	**$ 0.03**

- Time for manual data-entry saved by paperless registration: **20,000 hours** (10 FTEs)

Cost effective

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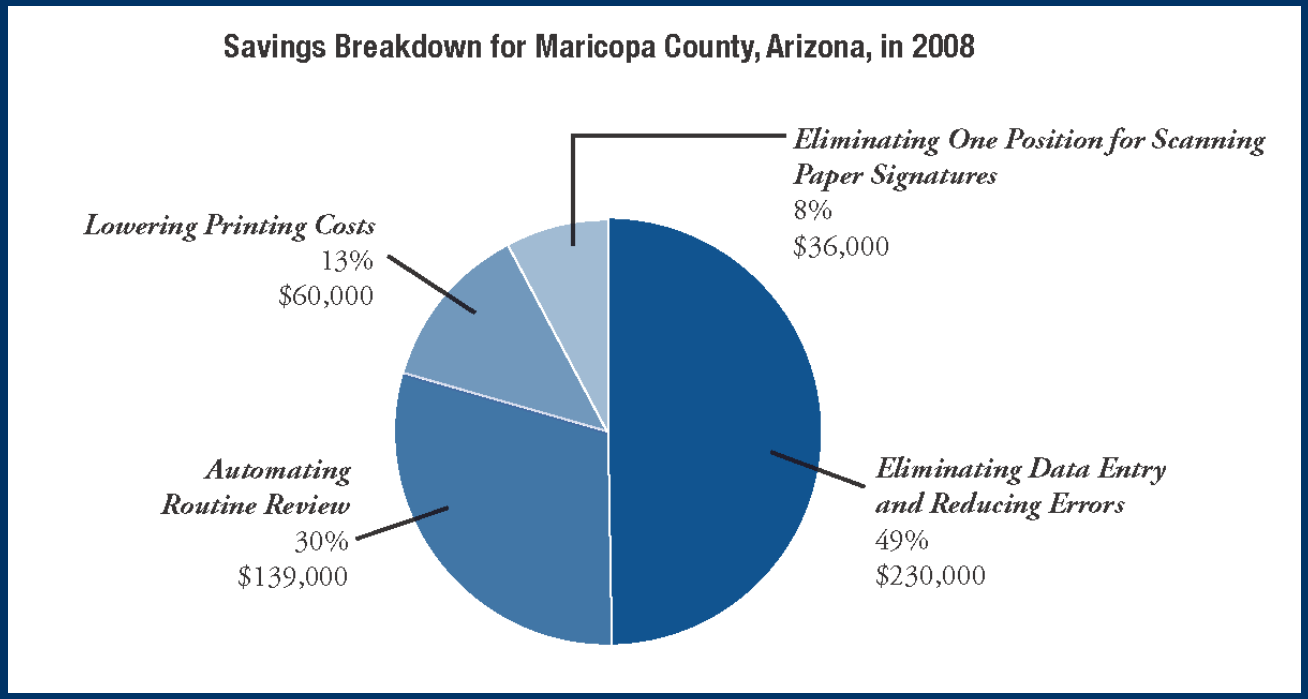
Breakdown of savings in Maricopa County



Cost effective

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Modernizing makes rolls more accurate

Makes rolls more accurate

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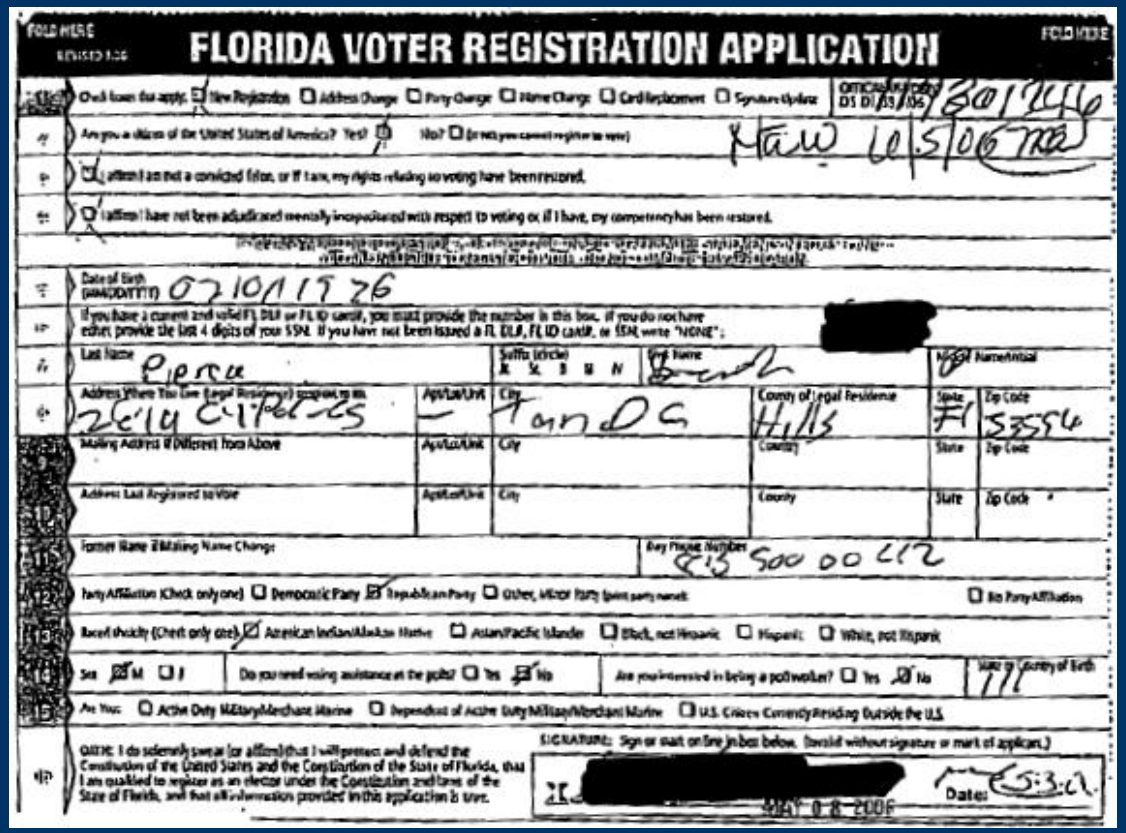
Challenge: Reliance on paper



FOLD HERE — REVISED 1/06 — **FLORIDA VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION** — FOLD HERE

Check boxes that apply: ☐ New Registration ☐ Address Change ☐ Party Change ☐ Name Change ☐ Card Replacement ☐ Signature Update — OFFICIAL USE ONLY DS DI 03/06 8/01/06

Are you a citizen of the United States of America? Yes ☑ No ☐ (If NO, you cannot register to vote) — Maw 10.5.06 MW

If convicted a felon, I am not a convicted felon, or if I am, my rights relating to voting have been restored.

I affirm that I have not been adjudicated mentally incapacitated with respect to voting or if I have, my competency has been restored.

Date of Birth (MM/DD/YY) 07/01/76

If you have a current and valid FL DL or FL ID card, you must provide the number in this box. If you do not have either, provide the last 4 digits of your SSN. If you have not been issued a FL DL, FL ID card, or SSN write "NONE": [redacted]

Last Name: Pierce — Suffix (circle): J R S II N — First Name: [redacted] — Middle Name/Initial

Address Where You Live (Legal Residence) assigned to you: 2614 Cypress — Apt/Lot/Unit — City: Tampa — County of Legal Residence: Hills — State: FL — Zip Code: 33556

Mailing Address if Different from Above — Apt/Lot/Unit — City — County — State — Zip Code

Address Last Registered to Vote — Apt/Lot/Unit — City — County — State — Zip Code

Former Name if Making Name Change — Day Phone Number: (813) 500 00 412

Party Affiliation (Check only one) ☐ Democratic Party ☑ Republican Party ☐ Other, write in Party (Limit party name): ☐ No Party Affiliation

Race/Ethnicity (Check only one) ☑ American Indian/Alaskan Native ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander ☐ Black, not Hispanic ☐ Hispanic ☐ White, not Hispanic

Sex ☑ M ☐ F — Do you need voting assistance at the polls? ☐ Yes ☑ No — Are you interested in being a poll worker? ☐ Yes ☑ No — Place of Birth (County of Birth) TN

Are You: ☐ Active Duty Military/Merchant Marine ☐ Dependent of Active Duty Military/Merchant Marine ☐ U.S. Citizen Currently Residing Outside the U.S.

OATH: I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will protect and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Florida, that I am qualified to register as an elector under the Constitution and laws of the State of Florida, and that all information provided in this application is true.

SIGNATURE: Sign or mark on the line below. (Invalid without signature or mark of applicant.) — [redacted] — Date: 5.3.06

MAY 08 2006

- Handwriting
- Data entry
- Typos
- Mail problems
- Duplicates

Makes rolls more accurate

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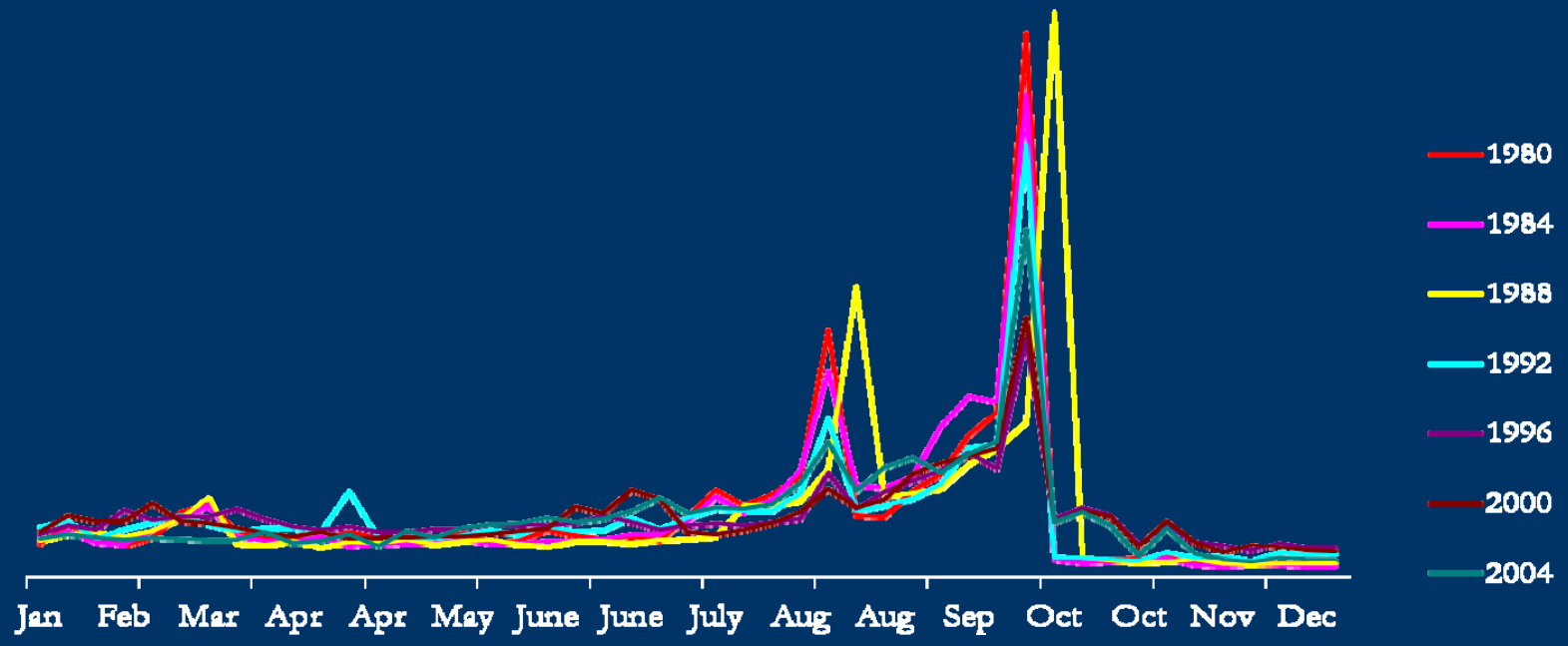
Challenge: Keeping rolls up to date

- 12% of voting-age citizens (almost 20 million) moved in 2008
- 23% of voting-age citizens below poverty line moved in 2008
- Numbers higher in jurisdictions with high rates of foreclosures
  - E.g., in Clark County, Nevada, 20% of voting-age population moved in 2009; 5,000 in one week of April alone

Challenge: last minute registrations



Source: Florida

Makes rolls more accurate

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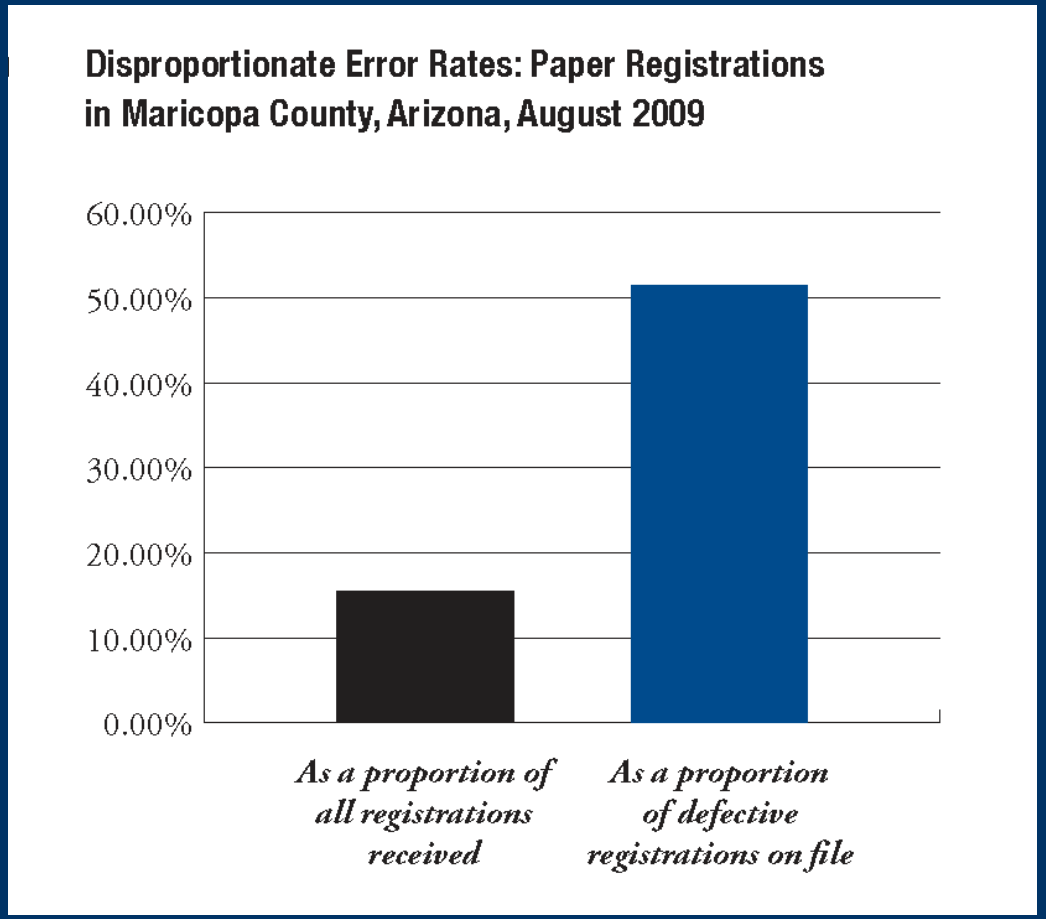
Reduced errors in Maricopa County



Makes rolls more accurate

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Reduced errors

Officials across the country confirm that automation increases accuracy

Arizona

Kansas

Michigan

North Carolina

Pennsylvania

Rhode Island

South Dakota

Washington

Modernizing increases registration rates

Challenge: Low voter registration rates

Increases registration rates

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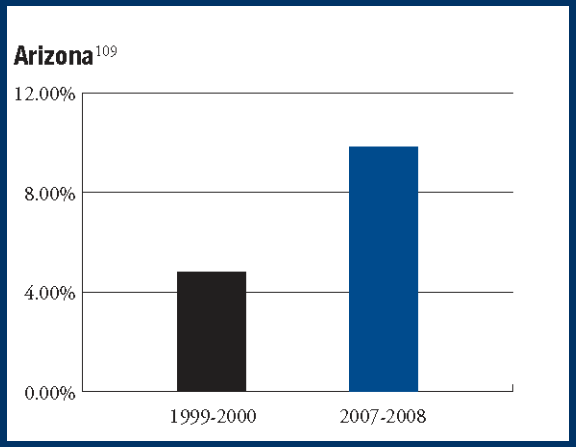
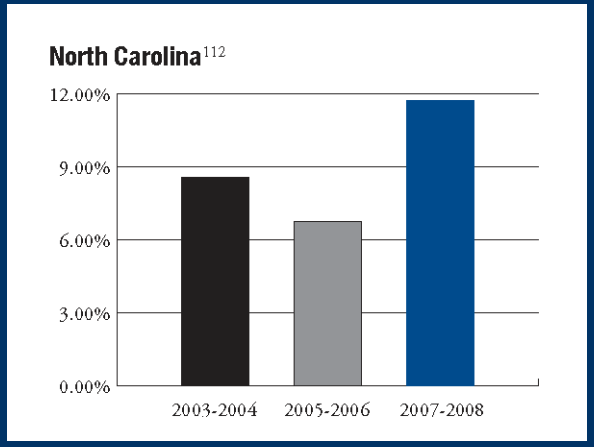
DMV registration rates before and after automation





Increases registration rates

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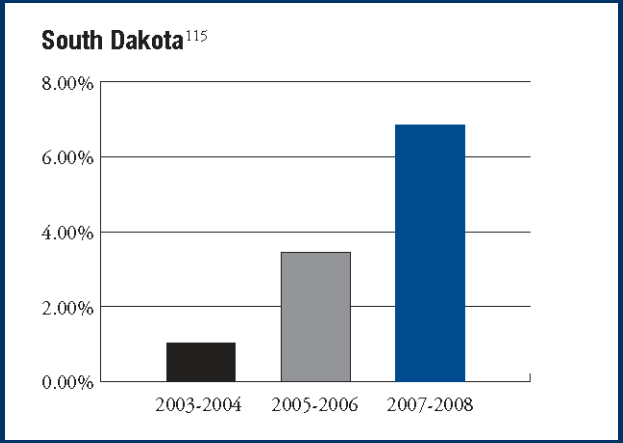
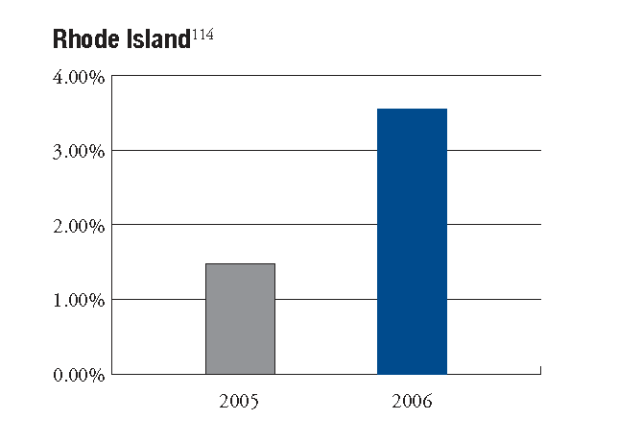
DMV registration rates before and after automation





Increases registration rates

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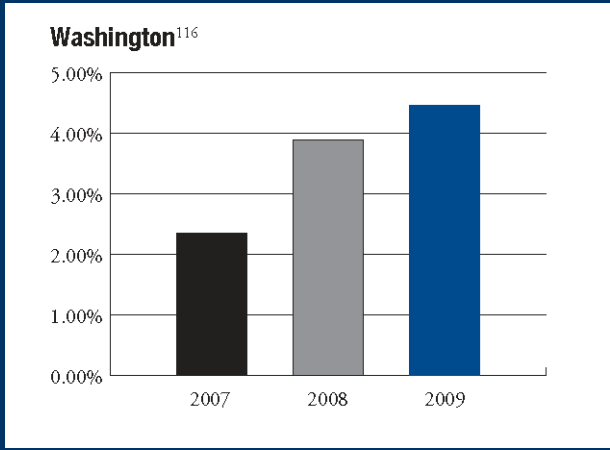
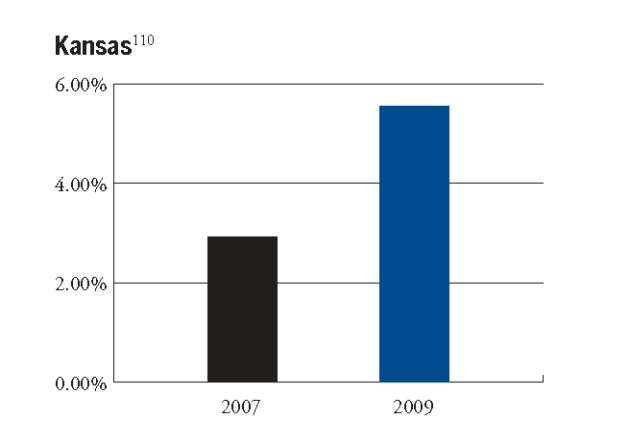
DMV registration rates before and after automation





Increases registration rates

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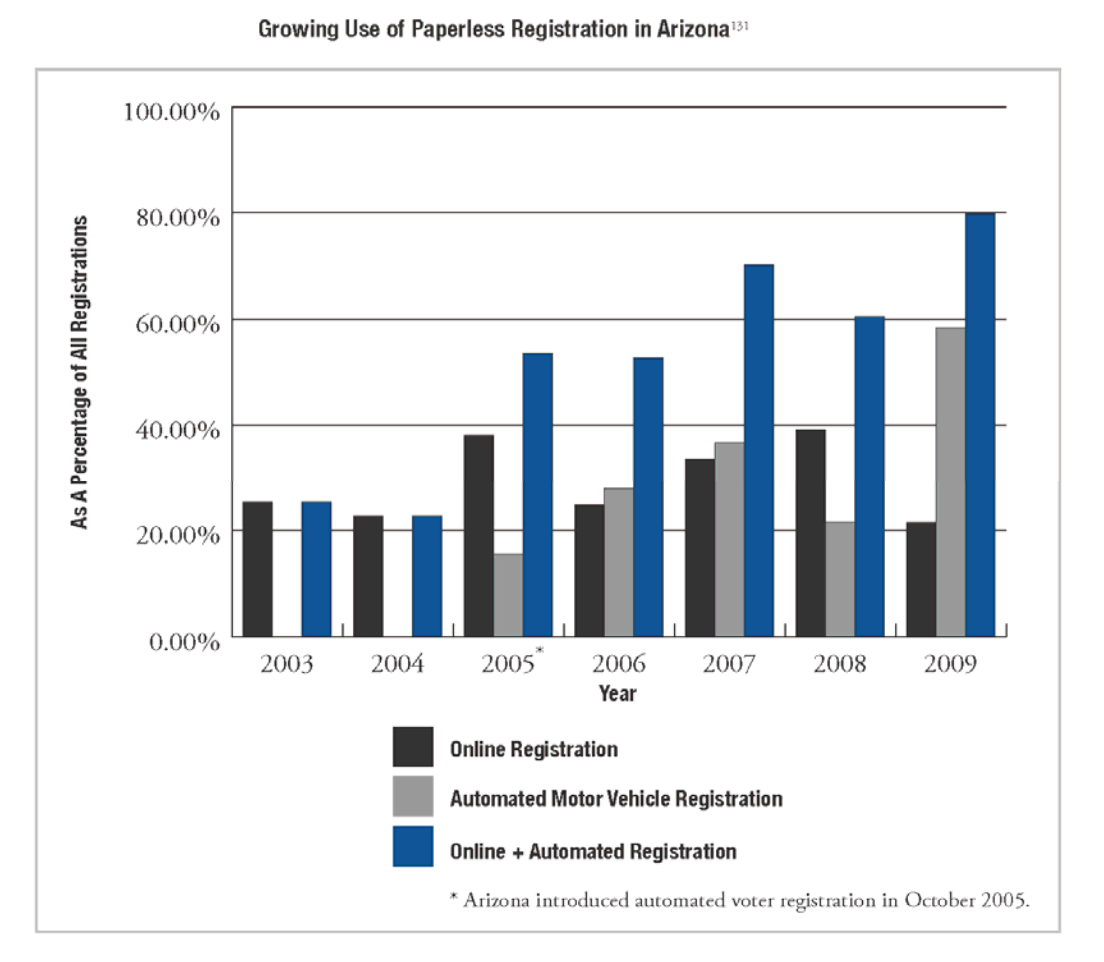
User support



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Support for modernizing the system

"There is a surprising amount of agreement on both sides of the aisle about how to modernize the registration system. . . Bringing our voter registration system into the 21st century must be the priority for improving the election process."

— **Bob Bauer and Trevor Potter** (*The Washington Post*, 06/25/2009)

"One key area where improvements are necessary, and possible, is the modernization of our voter registration system."

— **Robin Carnahan (MO) and Trey Grayson (KY)** (*Roll Call*, 03/10/2009)

"Voter registration modernization would "remove the single biggest barrier to voting in the United States, our antiquated registration system."

— **Attorney General Eric Holder** (Brennan Legacy Awards Dinner, 11/17/2009)

Prominent supporters bridge party lines

- Robert Bauer (D)
- Ken Blackwell (R)
- Michael Bloomberg (R)
- Robin Carnahan (D)
- Doug Chapin
- Pedro Cortes (D)
- Matt Damschroder (R)
- John Danforth (R)
- Thomas Daschle (D)
- Marc Elias (D)
- Harold Ford Jr. (D)
- Trey Grayson (R)
- Dean Logan (D)
- Thomas Mann
- Susan Molinari (R)
- Ralph Munro (R)
- Norman Ornstein
- Trevor Potter (R)
- John Tanner

Voter Registration for the 21st Century

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For more information, contact wendy.weiser@nyu.edu