

## Understanding Online Voter Registration

**28 states have implemented or will soon implement online registration — making registration easier for voters, saving taxpayer money, and improving voter roll accuracy:**

“You’d be hard pressed to even come up with a reason not to use [online registration]...States that are hesitant to do it are missing the boat. They are missing the customer service, the cost savings, the service level, and the use of their internal resources.”

– *Colorado Election Official*

“Local officials love [online registration] as far as processing it. There is little to no keying. Once they accept the form, the system populates it. That decreases errors.”

– *Maryland Election Official*

“It’s a convenience for people who want to register to vote. It gives them one more option. The younger generation just assumes that everything should be done online...It’s easier.”

– *Kansas Election Official*

Too many states’ voter registration processes do not reflect the way that citizens utilize technology for everyday transactions. Online voter registration is a modern, secure, and cost-effective method of registering voters, which has the added benefit of boosting voter registration opportunities. It allows eligible citizens to register to vote or update their registration status in a manner consistent with modern life, rather than waiting in line at a government office or relying on antiquated ink-and-paper forms delivered through the mail.

### ONLINE VOTER REGISTRATION WILL:

- **BRING VOTER REGISTRATION INTO THE 21ST CENTURY.** Online registration is a modern, convenient tool because it allows eligible citizens to register to vote the same way they shop, pay bills, and bank: online.
- **INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES TO REGISTER.** Making voter registration more convenient could help increase registration rates by bringing eligible but unregistered Americans into the political process. In states that have implemented online voter registration, the evidence is clear that voters take advantage of the option to register to vote online. For example, California received more than a million applications within the first month of implementing its system.
- **IMPROVE VOTER ROLL ACCURACY.** Online voter registration results in more accurate voter rolls because voters are responsible for entering their information directly and are less inclined to make mistakes in transcribing their information. Properly designed systems will ensure that all necessary fields are complete before the registration is submitted. This also reduces duplicative data entry and reliance on illegible forms.
- **SAVE MONEY.** Transcribing voter information from paper forms into a state database, especially during peak periods near Election Day, is labor- and cost-intensive for election officials. Online voter registration saves money by eliminating this data entry. States that have implemented online voter registration report cost savings ranging from 25 cents to 2 dollars for each online registration submitted.

The Brennan Center is a nonpartisan law and policy institute that seeks to improve our systems of democracy and justice, and is a nationally recognized leader in voting rights and elections reform. Online voter registration is one key component of the Brennan Center’s signature proposal to modernize the voter registration system.

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