

MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

2016 Presidential Election

Communication Strategy and Outreach Plan



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2016 Presidential Election

Communication Strategy and Outreach Plan

Presentation Outline

- Part I
 - Vision/Mission/Values/Communication Statement
 - Legal Requirements
 - Our Approach and Role
 - Your Time, Your Voice, Your Vote!
 - Communication Goals for the 2016 Presidential Election
 - Message and Materials
- Part II
 - Direct Mail and Advertising
 - Media Relations
 - Internet and Social Media
 - Community Outreach
- Part III
 - Launch Event

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Vision

On behalf of the people of Montgomery County, Maryland, we proudly conduct elections with accuracy, integrity and dignity.

Mission

Our mission is to:

- ✓ Provide the opportunity and the means for participation in the election process;
- ✓ Be effective, efficient and responsive to customer needs through continuous improvement;
- ✓ Achieve open communication through teamwork and a spirit of goodwill;
- ✓ Support educational and training opportunities to produce quality work;
- ✓ Ensure legal requirements are met and applied consistently; and
- ✓ Work together to pursue and achieve excellence.

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Values

We demonstrate and support the following values:

- ✓ Integrity
- ✓ Responsibility
- ✓ Accuracy
- ✓ Respect for All
- ✓ Ethical Conduct
- ✓ Commitment to Customer Service
- ✓ Efficiency

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Communication Statement

The members and staff of the Montgomery County Board of Elections are dedicated to providing every voter with a quality voting experience.

When a voter walks in the door to an Early Voting Center or a polling place on Election Day, we make sure that they are greeted by a team of dedicated citizens who have been trained to provide outstanding customer service.

Throughout the year, we are passionate about educating voters about where, when and how they may register to vote and cast their ballot. Our core team of 28 full-time employees relies on dozens of temporary employees, hundreds of Future Vote students, thousands of Election Judges, county government employees, and on candidates, campaign workers, and opinion leaders throughout the county to assist us in spreading the word about voting laws and opportunities to more than 1 million residents of Montgomery County.

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COMAR §33.09.06.02

.02 Public Education Program.

A. Plan Development. The State Administrator shall develop a public education program to ensure that the community understands the new system.

B. Minimum Components; Scope.

(1) The program shall include:

- (a) Preelection mailing to all households, with both written and graphic instructions on how to use the system; and
- (b) Instructions in each polling place of how to use the system to vote.

(2) The program shall also be directed at:

- (a) Candidates;
- (b) Campaign groups;
- (c) Schools; and
- (d) News media.

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COMAR §33.09.06.02

C. Local Implementation and Funding. The local board shall implement and provide the required funding for the public education plan developed by the State Administrator. [emphasis added]

D. Reports.

(1) When requested by the State Administrator, the local board shall report in writing to the State Administrator on the conduct of the public education plan.

(2) The election director shall report to the local board the status of the implementation of the public education plan.

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State legal authority

Maryland Code §9-102 (i) (2) requires the State Board of Elections to:

“specify the procedures necessary to assure...a public information program by the local board, at the time of introduction of a new voting system, to be directed to all voters, candidates, campaign groups, schools, and news media in the county”

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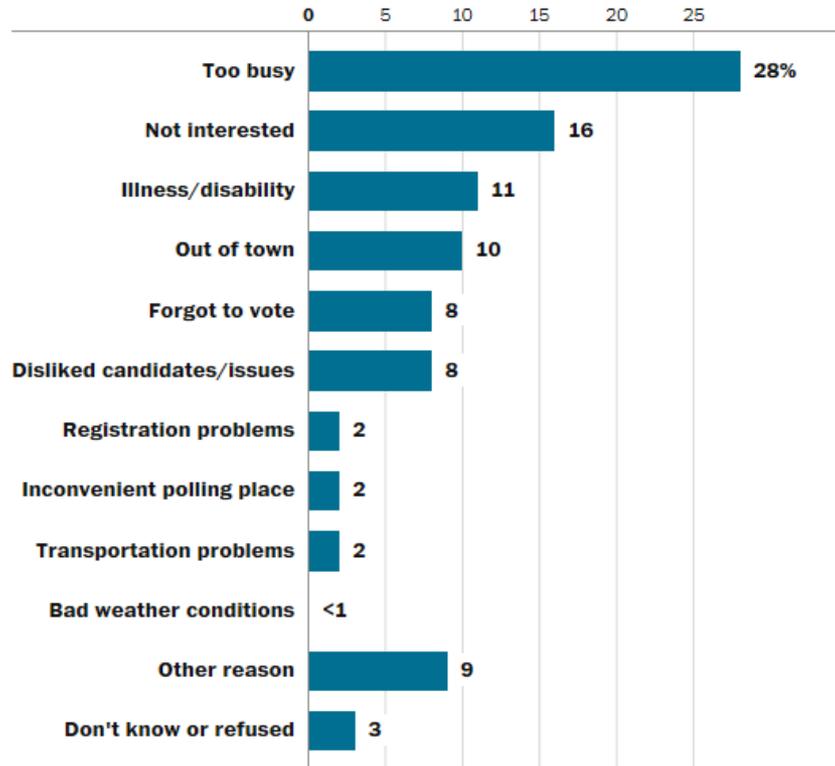
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Our Role in Addressing Voter Turnout

Americans top reasons for not voting in 2014

"Which of the following was the main reason you did not vote?" Results based on registered voters.



Source: Census Bureau

THE WASHINGTON POST

Why don't Americans vote? We're "too busy." The Fix, Scott Clement, July 17, 2015

Election administrators CAN:

- Make the bureaucracy work
- Educate voters about their options to register online, vote early, vote by mail, etc.

Election administrators CAN'T:

- Influence opinions about candidates
- Influence opinions about issues
- Spend lots of \$\$\$

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Your Time, Your Voice, Your Vote!

This is a continuing theme for the Montgomery County Board of Elections, emphasizing that we are dedicated to serving YOU.

YOU have one vote, which you may choose to cast:

- By mail;
- At one of our Early Voting Centers;
- In person at the Board of Elections; or
- At your polling place on Election Day.

YOU choose when you vote on YOUR TIME.

YOU choose to speak up and make YOUR VOICE heard.

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Message Goals

- Embrace our role in fostering voter participation
- Earn voter confidence in the process and the certified election results
- Adapt messages for a diverse community
- Inform voters about new choices
 - Ballots now “look different” at early voting and on Election Day
 - Minimize lines, confusion and delays
- Counter false beliefs
 - Maryland does NOT have Election-Day Registration
 - Bar code on printed ballot does NOT contain personal data
- Explain closed primary
 - Reduce provisional ballots from unaffiliated voters that we can't count
 - Voters cannot change party, despite same-day registration
- Meet—and manage—expectations for election night reporting

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Message Strategy

- Hone message working with SBE
 - State approval required
 - Communications Working Group
 - Unique Spanish language requirement in Montgomery County
- Focus groups to test messages
 - Election Judges
 - Other targeted audiences
- Develop materials using Election Judge branding template
 - Unique to Montgomery County
- Key materials:
 - 'Montgomery County Votes' brochure (in development)
 - Website, FAQs, handouts
 - Sample ballot with information on early voting, new voting equipment

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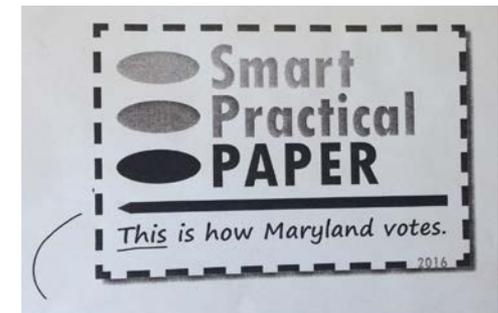
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Messages

- Voter Registration
 - Don't wait to register
 - Closed primary
- 21 Days of Voting/
4 Ways to Vote
- Different messages for:
 - Early voting
 - Nine sites (where and when)
 - ExpressVote
 - One-stop registration
 - Vote by mail
 - In person at the Board's office
 - Election Day
 - Paper ballot

Your Time, Your Choice, Your Vote
Su Tiempo, Su Voz, Su Voto



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Communication and Outreach Plan

Mode	Strategy	Tactics	Dependencies
Message	21 Days of Voting		SBE content/ approval
	VR, early voting, one-stop registration, etc.		
Direct-to-Public	Direct mail		
	Advertising		Funding
Media Relations	Media advisories		
	Free media		Staff
Internet	Email		time
	Web/Blog/Social Media		
Community Outreach	Partnerships		Materials
	Election Judges		Needed
	Future Vote		
	Events		

Details
in
presentation
slides

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Direct Mail

- Sample ballot mailing
 - ❑ Last drop a week before the voter registration deadline
- Brochure to all households
 - ❑ February 29 - March 4
 - ❑ Funds for an additional postcard mailing were requested but not approved
 - ❑ State will mail postcard to potentially eligible voters
- Existing mailings
 - ❑ Voter Notification Card
 - ❑ Polling place change notification



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Paid Advertising

The Board requested \$130,000 for paid advertising, but received \$20,000 as in years past. Current funds support advertising on:

- Comcast
- CBS Radio El-Zol
- Univision
- Washington Post
- Ride On Buses

This year, using funds previously spent on advertising in the Gazette, Board staff propose to purchase targeted advertising on Facebook and Google.



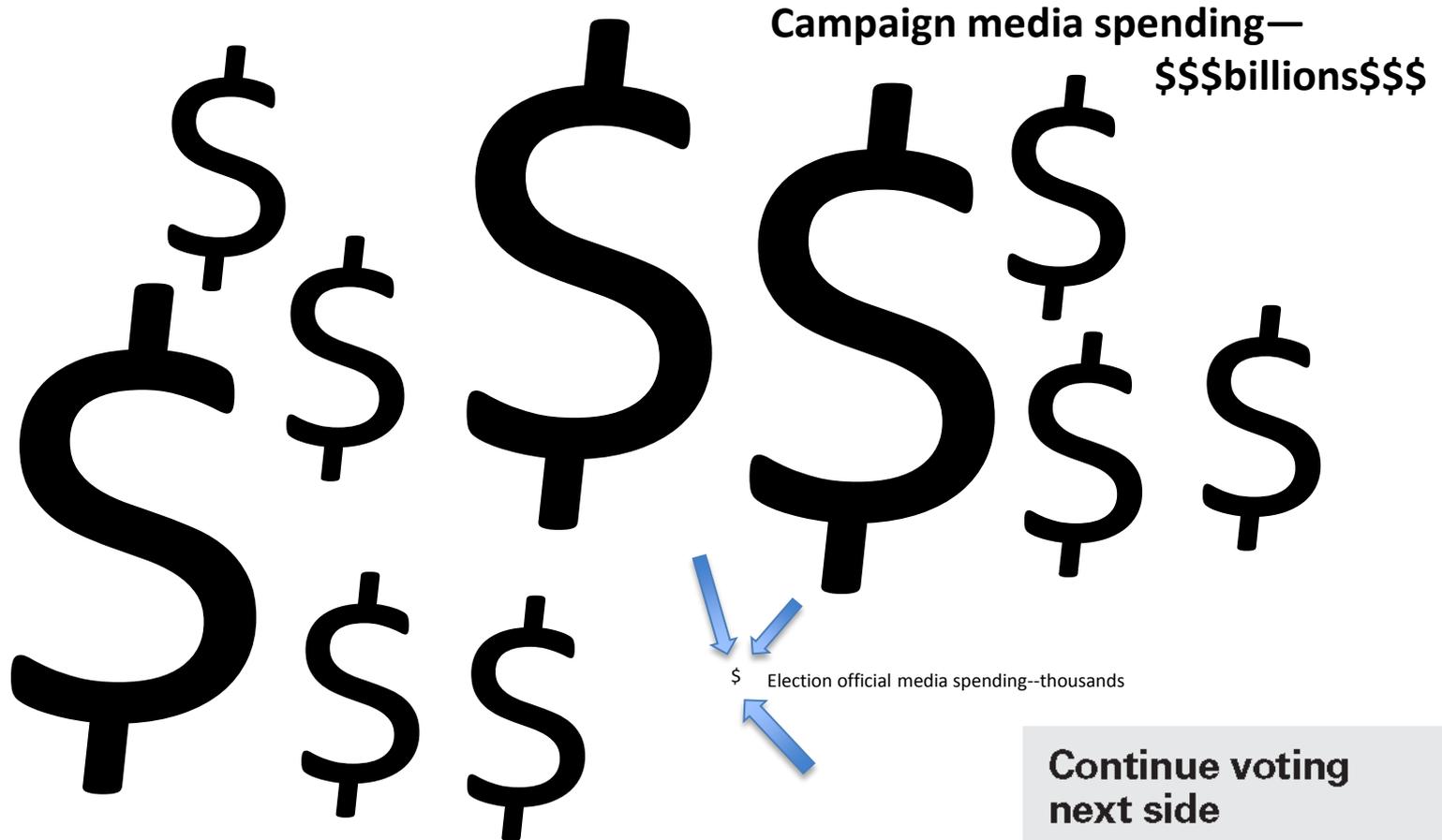
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Money Talks: Who Voters Hear



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What were we expecting?

On June 23, the Maryland Board of Public Works rejected a \$1.8 million contract with Alex+Tom, partnering with A. Bright Idea, Equals Three Communications and CBS, to provide:

- Market research, analysis and message development;
- Design, production and placement of advertising and PSAs;
- Use of CBS television and radio studios;
- Use of CBS talent and presence at events such as Ravens and Orioles games;
- Strategic media planning and buying;
- Public relations talent to address negative media and any potential crises;
- Communications focused on multicultural and underserved communities;
- In-house usability testing; and
- Award-winning digital talent.

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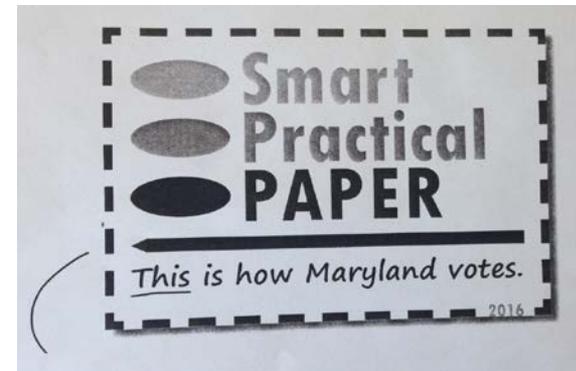
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What do we expect?

State Board personnel are developing:

- Public Education Program Plan
- Outreach Planning Guide
- Communications and Social Media Toolkit



#MDvotes2016

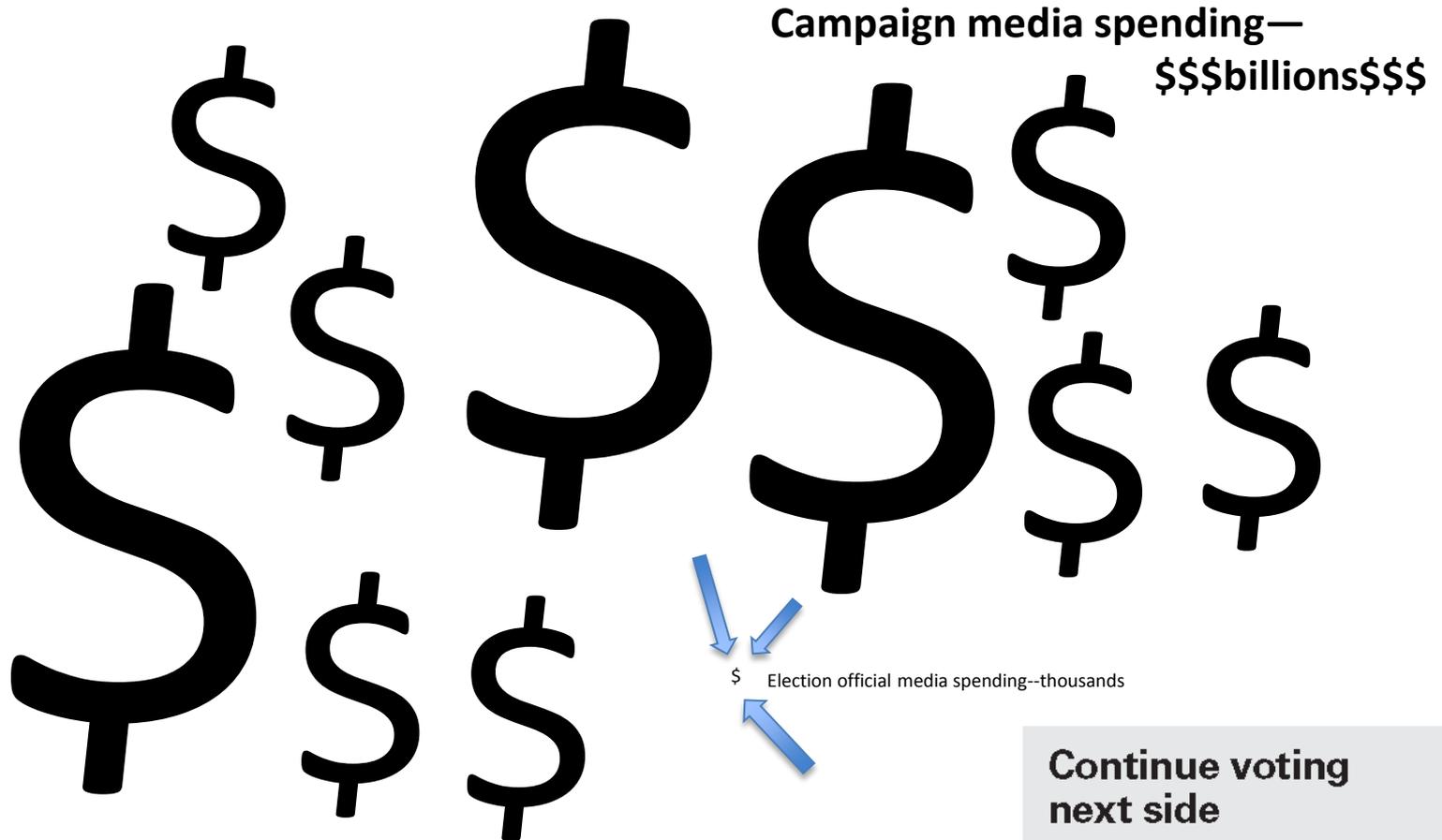
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Money Talks: Who Voters Hear



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Media Relations

- News advisories
 - Recurring content; dates align with election calendar
 - English and Spanish
 - Modify for strategic messages
 - Measure our reach with GovDelivery
- Earned media
 - Launch event w/Leggett, Baker
 - Proactive—pitch news stories, add-on content for political news
 - Leverage opportunities (i.e., Rockville)
 - Teamwork—multiple spokespeople
 - National media as well as local, Spanish language and ethnic media
 - Coordinate with MD, DC, VA
 - Free advertising (Recreation Guide, PSAs)

2014 GENERAL ELECTION MEDIA ADVISORIES:

Election Returns
In Person Absentee Ballots Still Available
Know Your Polling Place
Absentee and Provisional Ballots Counted Following Election
Six Ways to Ensure Your Voting Rights
Vote By Mail Deadline Approaching
Early Voting Begins October 23
Future Vote Recruitment Continues
Check the Mail for Your Personalized Sample Ballot
Bilingual Election Judges Needed
Election Judges Still Needed
Candidate and Media Briefing on October 23
Save Time - Vote Early
Voter Registration Deadline Approaches
National Voter Registration Day
Now Recruiting Election Judges
Public Testing of Voting Equipment
Familiarize Yourself With the Touchscreen Voting System
National Voter Registration Day is September 23
Alternate Accessible Polling Places Available
Bilingual Election Judges Needed
Board of Elections Seeks Student Volunteers
September 23 is National Voter Registration Day
Election Judges Needed
Future Vote Program Seeks High School Juniors and Seniors to Serve as Paid Election Judges
Bilingual Voters Needed to Serve at the Polls for the 2014 Gubernatorial General Election
Board of Elections Needs Student Volunteers
Montgomery County to Hold Voter Registration Drives at Public Libraries
Montgomery County Recruiting Voters to Work at the Polls on Election Day
Board of Elections Launches Recruitment for the "Future Vote" Program

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Internet and Social Media

- Social media
 - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
- Measure our reach
 - GovDelivery, HootSuite tools
- MontgomeryVotes Blog
 - Migrate Election Judge Newsletter to blog format
 - Expand content for a broader audience
- Website
 - FAQs, information
 - Outreach calendar
 - Early voting dashboard
 - Work with DTS, PIO on design

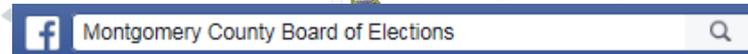


Loading up the trucks and saying
our legacy voting equipment today
#MoCo bit.ly/newMDvote



RETWEETS	FAVORITES
9	6
102	10
99	1
35	1
24	3
158	34
43	40
108	14
415	
312	
154	

6:08 PM - 22 Apr 2015



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Community Outreach

- \$35K in funding = 2080 hours (~500 events)
197 are already on the calendar
 - Festivals, fairs and expositions
 - Job fairs
 - Senior centers
 - Recreation centers
 - Libraries and schools
 - Civic associations and clubs
 - New citizen events
- Work with SBE Voter Outreach Coordinator
- Spread the word through partnerships, traditional and social media
- Measure our reach
 - Map of events and participation

COMING SOON!

Maryland's new voting system

Voter Outreach Request Form

Coming soon: Maryland's new voting system!

Are you a member of a club or organization that would like to learn more about the new voting system? Or do you have an upcoming event that would work for a demonstration of the new equipment? Please complete the following form and we will contact you to plan a visit or demonstration.

* Required

Contact name *

Contact phone number *

Contact email address *

Club or organization *

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Community Outreach

- Support from Montgomery County
 - Work with PIO, MCPL, REC, HHS, etc.
 - Advisory Boards and Commissions
 - Office of Community Partnerships
 - HR liaisons, MCGEO, etc.
- Election Judge Ambassadors
 - Ongoing recruitment activities
 - Email communication
 - Special events and training
- Future Vote Ambassadors
 - 55K+ volunteer hours since 2004
 - Distribute fliers, leaflets
 - Parent relationships—PTAs, etc.



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Outreach Launch

- National Voter Registration Day – September 23 (11am?)
- Proposed Event for both Montgomery and Prince George's Boards
 - ❑ Proposed calendar item for Leggett and Baker
 - ❑ Proposed location Riderwood Village (precinct for both counties)
 - ❑ Takoma Park, White Oak or Prince George's alternatives
- Opportunity
 - ❑ Number of people, demonstrate paper and accessibility features
 - ❑ Local story for television, radio, print, Spanish language media
 - ❑ Tie into National Voter Registration Day
- Threat
 - ❑ Pope Francis visit to Washington, D.C., September 22-23
 - ❑ Yom Kippur September 23
 - ❑ Shifting dates for voting equipment

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Outreach Launch

- Also on National Voter Registration Day – September 23
 - Leaflet with MoCo brochure at Metro, MARC stations
 - Work with advocacy groups on ad in Washington Post Express
 - Media interview availability
 - Coordinate regional efforts in MD, DC, VA
- Voter outreach events
 - Postcards to households near event
 - Email to Election Judges about each event
 - Visit locations once September-December, again after January
 - High school voter registration November-December
 - Opportunity on website to sign up to request Demonstration Team at an event
- Encourage partners to launch efforts on September 23

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END OF BALLOT

Be sure to review your ballot selections

Questions?