SCOTT T. NAGO
CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER

May 13, 2016

To: Elections Commission

From: Scott T. Nago
            Chief Election Officer

Re: Status of Operations

Since our last meeting, the legislative session has concluded and we have launched our media campaign for the primary election. Additionally, we are continuing to develop our new voter registration system.

The Primary Election is Saturday, August 13 and the General Election is Tuesday, November 8. With less than one hundred days until the primary election, the office is working to recruit over 4,000 Election Day Officials, proofing the ballot design and layout, and inventorying and packing supplies.

Once candidate filing closes on June 7 at 4:30 pm, we will proof the content, print and pack the Primary Election ballot, and test and lockdown the vote counting system. Additionally, in the coming months we will set up the counting and control centers, deliver equipment and supplies to the polling places, and train our Election Day Officials.

Legislation

The Legislature passed three election related measures and are awaiting the Governor's signature.

1.   HB 27, SD 1, Relating to Elections

This measure allows voters to post an image of their own voted ballot to social media. Additionally, this measure clarifies that election offenses, such as vote buying or electioneering in the polling place are not affected by this bill.

2. HB 1055, HD 2, SD 1, Relating to Elections

This measure replaces the requirement for applicants to provide their nine-digit Social Security Number, and instead provide their driver's license number or state identification number when registering to vote. If an applicant has neither, the applicant will be required to provide the last four digits of their Social Security Number. This bill will take effect on January 1, 2018.

3. HB 1654, HD 1, Relating to Absentee Elections

Along with making some housekeeping changes to our laws regarding absentee ballots, this bill authorizes voters within five days of an election to request and return a ballot by electronic transmission, if the voter would otherwise not be able to return their ballot by the close of polls.

Additionally, the Senate adopted a resolution requesting the Office of Elections to provide a status update on the implementation of Hawaii's new voter registration system.

Statewide Voter Registration System

We are implementing a new voter registration system, TotalVote. The online voter registration tool was launched on August 3, 2015, in conjunction with the mandate of Act 225, SLH 2012. All voters utilizing the online voter registration system are registering for the first time or updating their current registration within TotalVote. Since the launch, there have been over 20,000 transactions, while paper applications continue to be entered into the City's mainframe voter registration system. The utilization of both systems this election cycle requires that the systems share voter registration data.

We generally refer to the sharing of data between the two systems as "running in parallel." However, it is important to note that the sharing of the data between these two systems does not technically constitute running in parallel. Specifically, when running two systems in parallel, both systems should have the same information in real-time, the same capture mechanisms and capabilities, and in the event of one system failure, the other system should take over with minimal or little down-time to users.

In our case, we are running two systems that both capture voter registration information and reconcile that information once a week through a batch process. Additionally, the methods of collecting data are different in both systems – the City mainframe Statewide Voter Registration System (City SVRS) captures paper applications, while the TotalVote Online Voter Registration System (OLVR) captures online applications. If the OLVR were to go down, then no one will be able to register online, violating the true definition of running in parallel as we will not be able to provide the same functionality. However, if the

City SVRS were to go down, then we could still capture the voter information on paper forms and manually enter them into TotalVote.

In 2015, the counties and the state agreed to operate TotalVote with the City's mainframe system in this manner for this election cycle to allow us to directly engage in activities and tasks in the new system under real election conditions. This agreement was based on the premise that the City's mainframe system could easily share data with another system. The alternative was to test TotalVote sufficiently in advance of the 2016 Elections to get us comfortable and confident operating the new system.

A significant amount of resources has been expended by all entities to attempt to allow the two databases to communicate in near real-time. However, while TotalVote transmits information regarding OLVR applications to the City via a webservice, which is nearly real-time, the City Department of Information Technology (City DIT) was unable to develop a similar webservice to transmit its data to TotalVote in nearly real-time. Instead, they were only able offer batch updating.

As such, TotalVote transmits online voter registration applications to the City SVRS, while City SVRS transmits paper application information to the TotalVote once a week. As we get closer to the election, we have had discussions with the City Clerk's Office to increase the frequency of the batch updating, and it appears it operationally can be upgraded to twice a week.

This lag between the systems makes it more difficult to use them in the manner originally intended, but ultimately still possible. Specifically, in order to truly know the universe of registered voters at any given time, election officials must utilize both systems, as opposed to simply relying on the contents of one system (i.e., the City SVRS will contain recent paper registrations that have not been sent to the new system given the timing of the batch updates, and the new system may have online voter registrations that the City SVRS has not yet been able to process.)

Given our collective goal to successfully conduct the 2016 Elections, the counties and state, along with City DIT and the TotalVote vendor, BPro, have been focused on ensuring the systems remain in sync to the extent possible.

In the meantime, the framework of TotalVote, including data entry procedures, and overall functionality are in place for users to test. The vendor has provided a sandbox site, separate and apart from the live voter registration database, to test functionality such as entering voter registration records, receiving mail ballots, and creating poll books. Additionally, the counties have indicated that they are utilizing various components of TotalVote as they feel appropriate.

TotalVote will be utilized in its entirety for the 2018 election cycle. To accomplish this, we plan to thoroughly test and finalize the functionality of TotalVote in 2017. Currently, the framework of TotalVote is complete but we are able to customize the components to improve on our current procedures. The testing will involve affidavit entry, purging voters, generating data for yellow cards and white cards, printing poll books, and updating voting credit for voters. We propose that the initial testing begin no later than March 31, 2017, and the system be finalized by September 30, 2017.

Media Campaign

Our media campaign launched in February by advertising online voter registration. We have developed a series of television and radio commercials covering a variety of topics for the Primary Election.

Campaign	Media	Schedule
Online Voter Registration	Radio: 30 seconds	February 22 – March 6
	Television: 30 seconds	
Precinct Official Recruitment	Radio: 30 seconds	June 13 – July 3
	Television: 15 seconds	
Voter Registration Deadlines and Online Voter Registration	Radio: 30 seconds	July 8 – 14
	Television: 15 seconds	
Single Party Primary	Television: 30 seconds	July 25 – August 13
Late Registration and Early Walk-In Voting	Radio: 30 seconds	July 28 – August 11

Our preparations for the 2016 Elections are moving according to our planned timeline and procedures. With the cooperation of the Clerk's Offices, we feel confident that we will meet our mission of providing secure, accessible, and convenient elections to all citizens statewide.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (808) 453-VOTE (8683) or 1-800-442-VOTE (8683).