

# **Report on Voter Education Programs During the 2006 Election Cycle**

Pursuant to Section 98.255, Florida Statutes

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In an ongoing effort to increase public awareness in the elections process, the Florida Legislature has appropriated funds each year since 2003 to assist supervisors of elections with conducting voter education programs. The funds are used to provide supervisors with additional resources in their efforts to encourage citizens to participate in elections and exercise their right to vote.

Initial funding for voter education occurred in FY 2001-02 following the 2000 Election. In addition to providing funds to expand voter education efforts, legislation was passed requiring the Department of State to adopt rules for minimum standards for voter education that all counties are required to meet. Supervisors of elections are required to submit a detailed description of their voter education programs to the Department of State following each General Election. After reviewing the reports the Department is required to compile the information and prepare a comprehensive report describing the effectiveness of voter education activities being conducted by the counties.

In the latest information submitted to the Department by the counties, it appears that supervisors of elections are continuing to place a strong emphasis on voter education programs to create an interest in the election process and to target as much of the population as possible in an effort to increase voter participation. Supervisors continue to report that voter education programs are a very effective tool in disseminating election information to the public and increasing voter awareness. All of the broad voter education categories listed in the report received an effectiveness rating of 4 or 5 (with 5 being the highest rating).

The Collins Center for Public Policy, Inc. conducted a survey on November 7 and 8, 2006 to determine voter satisfaction among Florida's voters regarding their voting experience. Question number six asked voters to rate the performance of their supervisor of elections on the following subjects: (1) Changes in voting technology; (2) Changes in polling locations; (3) Required identification at the polls; (4) Absentee or early voting procedures; (5) Voter rights and responsibilities; and (6) Overall job done this year. The respondents to the survey gave supervisors of elections high marks in providing voters with current information regarding the election process. Approximately eighty-eight percent (88%) indicated that supervisors did an "Excellent-Good" job in keeping them informed during the election period.

It appears that supervisors of elections continue to be successful in utilizing voter education programs to expand their efforts in providing election information to Florida's diverse population and encouraging citizens to participate in the elections process.

## **COMPILATION OF COUNTY DATA**

Pursuant to Section 98.255, Florida Statutes, supervisors of elections are required to submit a report to the Department of State by December 15 of each general election year regarding voter education programs that have been implemented in their county. See Exhibit A. Based on the information provided by the counties, the Department of State is required to compile the results of the findings and prepare a report regarding the effectiveness of various voter education activities being conducted throughout the state.

In order to prepare the report, the Division of Elections created an on-line survey that could be completed by the supervisors of elections through a link to the Division's web site. The information contained in this report is based on responses the Division of Elections received from all 67 supervisors of elections.

Supervisors were asked to indicate whether or not they conducted any or all of the voter education activities listed on the survey, to rank the effectiveness of their efforts for each of the activities, and to report the amount of funding spent on each. Effectiveness was rated on a scale between 1 and 5 with 1 being the least effective and 5 being the most effective. In addition, the survey included space for counties to include detailed information about each activity or to insert any other comments about their voter education programs that might be of interest to other counties.

Counties were asked to provide information regarding the amount of state funding, county matching funds and the amount of other local funds spent on each voter education activity between January 2005 and the November 2006 General Election. Since the requested expenditures cross fiscal years, the funds being reported will not total the exact amount of voter education funds that were appropriated during the current reporting period.

The survey grouped voter education efforts into several broad categories and then listed various specific types of voter education activities in each. Included on the survey were the following categories:

- Sample Ballots
- School Outreach Programs
- Web Sites
- Public Appearances/Media Events
- Banners, Billboards and Public Transportation Advertisements
- Newspapers and Mailers
- Miscellaneous Promotional Materials
- Voting Systems Demonstrations
- Outreach to Minority, Disabled and Senior Communities
- Voter Registration Drives
- Publications
- Staff Education
- Special Voting Programs

The Division of Elections has analyzed the responses received from the counties in an effort to determine the most effective types of voter education activities and to determine the costs involved in providing these services to Florida's citizens.

## **COUNTY VOTER EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

Voter education activities conducted by supervisors of elections cover a broad range of election-related programs that are used to heighten voter awareness of the election process and encourage increased voter participation in elections. Some counties have more resources available to conduct voter education activities than others. However, all counties conduct a basic core group of activities to assist voters in preparing for and participating in the election process. In order to provide continuity with the report prepared on voter education programs conducted during the 2004 election cycle, the current report utilizes the same major activities.

### **1. SAMPLE BALLOTS**

During the 2006 election cycle the use of sample ballots continued to be one of the most widely utilized and most effective tools for providing information to voters. Supervisors of elections in all of Florida's 67 counties reported that sample ballots were mailed to voters and/or published in local newspapers to provide information to voters regarding the election. Supervisors indicated that sample ballots are well-received by the voters and several counties reported that they frequently receive requests from citizens for sample ballots.

In addition to providing voters with an example of how the ballot will look, a number of counties include general information on the sample ballots such as the election date and time, early voting locations, hours of operation, driving directions, a map to polling places, and identification requirements at polling places. In these cases, the sample ballots serve as information pieces that voters can take with them to the polling places.

While all counties mailed and/or published sample ballots in newspapers, several counties employed a variety of additional methods to make sample ballots as widely available as possible. Some counties distributed sample ballots at county offices and community events. Other counties posted sample ballots on their web site and/or e-mailed them to voters upon request. Supervisors indicated that providing a sample ballot prior to the election gave voters an opportunity to research candidates and issues prior to going to the polls which expedites the voting process and helps reduce lines at polling places.

Counties reported spending approximately \$4 million to provide sample ballots for voters. Although the use of sample ballots is the most expensive voter education tool used by supervisors of elections, it is also considered the most effective method of providing voters with information regarding the election and appears to be widely used and appreciated by voters.

**The majority of counties assigned an effectiveness ranking of 5 to “Mailing Sample Ballots” and between 3 and 5 for the category of “Sample Ballots” as a whole.**

## **2. SCHOOL OUTREACH PROGRAMS**

Included in the rule regarding standards for voter education is the requirement that supervisors of elections conduct voter education and voter registration activities at least once each year in high schools and on college campuses in their respective counties. Most of the counties have been very active in their local school systems for a number of years and provide a variety of opportunities for students to learn about the election process, participate in mock elections and practice using voting system equipment. Counties use their visits to high schools and college campuses to offer students an opportunity to register to vote if they are 18 or to pre-register if they are 17.

Supervisors work with local school officials to participate in special school events such as High School Career Day or county-wide Career Fairs. Several counties indicated that the supervisor of elections and members of their staff serve as guest lecturers in History and Government classes to discuss the election process, local voting systems and the importance of voting.

Counties with community colleges, universities and/or vocational-technical schools take advantage of numerous opportunities to visit the campuses and set up voter registration tables as well as distribute publications that include information about the election process. Lee County worked on a special project with a college Political Science class to develop a program to promote absentee voting in a precinct with a traditionally low voter turnout.

Several counties including Orange and Santa Rosa send congratulatory letters to all graduating high school seniors and include a voter registration application in the package. Orange County also includes information regarding upcoming elections and encourages the students to participate in future elections. In the event that the students might be attending college or join the military, instructions for requesting an absentee ballot are included in the letter. Leon County attends all county high school graduation rehearsals in order to provide students with the opportunity to register to vote.

Sarasota County utilizes the First Vote Program in its schools as a tool for creating interest in the election process. This is a classroom-based voter registration and education program designed for high school students that includes the history of the right to vote in this country.

A number of counties include the Vote In Honor of a Vet program in their school education activities. The program includes a PowerPoint presentation that provides an overview of the importance of voting and the electoral process. The presentation is customized to include local veteran biographies in an effort to make the subject matter more meaningful. At the end of the program, students who are 17 or 18 are presented with an opportunity to register (or pre-register) to vote.

Supervisors reported spending approximately \$308,000 for school outreach programs.

**Supervisors consider high school voter education programs very effective in their efforts to promote participation in the election process and encourage students to register to vote. Over seventy-eight percent (78%) of the counties that conduct high school programs assigned an effectiveness rating of 4 or 5. Universities and community colleges also offer an excellent venue for attracting new voters and presenting voter education materials. Over half of the counties that include universities and colleges in their voter education efforts assigned an effectiveness rating of 4 or 5.**

### **3. WEB SITES**

During the 2006 election cycle, 65 counties indicated that they maintained web sites for the public to use in accessing information regarding the election process. As more and more of the population continue to use the internet as a tool for acquiring information, supervisors of elections have found that the web site is a very popular and relatively inexpensive mechanism for providing accessibility to election-related information for the public.

Counties use their web sites to provide a wealth of information for the public including instructions regarding how to register to vote, how to update voter registration information, registration deadlines for primary and general elections, election dates, polling place locations, precinct finders, absentee ballot requests, voting system demonstrations, how to mark a ballot, sample ballots, information on early voting, candidate information, voter's rights and responsibilities, information for military and overseas voters, and election results.

One of the most popular web site features is the precinct finder. Counties indicated this is a very useful tool and widely used by voters. During the election period, the Division of Elections operates a Voter Assistance Hotline as a resource for voters to request information, report problems and to provide any other election-related assistance possible. Many of the callers have questions regarding precinct and polling place locations. The accessibility of precinct finders on supervisors of elections' web sites allowed Division of Elections staff to provide quick and accurate assistance to these voters.

Counties indicated that placing sample ballots on their web site is another very popular and useful resource for voters. Alachua County reported that audio sample ballots are also available online. Sumter County indicated that their web site is ADA compliant and one of the best tools offered to their voters.

Several counties reported that their web sites have been re-designed or updated since the 2004 election cycle in an effort to make them more user-friendly to the public. Hillsborough County reported that all of their web pages are available to the public in Spanish. Several other counties also provide this service for their citizens although they didn't mention it on the current survey. Most of the counties indicated that web sites are

a very effective tool for disseminating information to voters. Additionally, feedback from the public has been very positive and favorable.

Counties reported spending approximately \$432,000 for web site development.

**Most of the counties assigned an effectiveness rating of 4 and 5 to the tools available on their web sites.**

#### **4. VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVES**

During the 2006 election cycle, almost all of the counties conducted voter registration drives at various locations throughout the county in order to reach as many potential voters as possible. These drives also provided voters with an opportunity to make any needed changes to their names or addresses, complete requests to change parties or request duplicate voter information cards.

A majority of the counties conducted drives at local schools while over half also reported setting up voter registration booths at community fairs and local businesses. Other popular locations included malls, senior citizen centers, churches, libraries and Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) ceremonies.

Counties indicated that conducting voter registration drives at high schools, community colleges and universities provides one of the best opportunities for reaching a large population of potential voters since they target students. Individuals who are 17 may pre-register to vote as long as they meet all of the other qualifications.

A number of counties worked with local organizations in the county that were conducting voter registration drives. In addition to supplying necessary materials such as voter registration applications and other voter education materials, the counties also provide instructions to the organizations regarding the proper way to complete the forms.

Supervisors of elections reported that voter registration drives tend to be very cost effective since most locations provide space for these services without charging a fee. In addition, most of the counties use volunteers to work at these events which helps keep costs at a minimum. Counties reported expenditures of approximately \$204,000 to conduct voter registration drives.

**Counties ranked schools as the most effective location for conducting voter registration drives with over 55 percent of the counties assigning a rating of 5 to this category. Most counties rated community events and business locations between 3 and 5 on the scale.**

#### **5. VOTING SYSTEM DEMONSTRATIONS**

Voting system demonstrations were conducted by most of the counties (62) during the 2006 election cycle. Most of the demonstrations took place at schools, businesses and

community events. A number of counties provided voting system demonstrations at assisted living facilities and senior citizen centers.

While some of the counties provided demonstrations at malls, most of the supervisors indicated that other locations such as community events and schools were more popular sites to set up the equipment and proved to be more effective locations for conducting demonstrations. Pasco County prepared a short video (approximately 30 seconds long) narrated by the supervisor of elections that demonstrated how to use the voting equipment. The video was played throughout the day at each early voting location. The video equipment was set up at each site so that voters had to pass by it while waiting in line to vote.

Pursuant to state and federal law, 2006 marked the first time that counties were required to provide accessible voting systems for individuals with disabilities. It was necessary for each polling place to have at least one accessible voting system for use in the first federal election conducted after January 1, 2006. There were 51 counties that purchased touchscreen voting systems in order to comply with the new law. The remaining 16 counties already had disability accessible voting equipment.

In order to ensure that voters who were interested in using the new equipment were adequately prepared, several counties indicated that a special effort was made to provide training to individuals in the disability community. Demonstrations were conducted through local disability organizations such as the Association of Retarded Citizens and the Ability 1<sup>st</sup> Disability organization.

Counties reported spending approximately \$234,000 to conduct voting systems demonstrations.

**Counties indicated that schools were the most effective locations for conducting voting system demonstrations with 81 percent assigning a rating of 5 or 4. Business and community events as well as assisted living facilities all received a majority of 5's and 4's on the rating scale.**

## **6. OUTREACH TO MINORITY, DISABLED AND SENIOR COMMUNITIES**

One of the sections in the survey asked counties to provide information regarding outreach programs that target minority, disability and senior communities. Well over half of the supervisors indicated that a considerable effort is made to reach these citizens who may find it more difficult to participate in the election process.

A number of counties are comprised of diverse populations with many non-English speaking individuals. In an effort to reach as many individuals as possible, election-related literature is provided in English and Spanish. In Miami-Dade County, election information is also available in Creole. Counties frequently set up voter registration tables and distribute voter education materials at a variety of ethnic festivals and fairs.

Gadsden County conducts voter registration drives in communities where there is little or no transportation.

Most counties provide a number of services to individuals who reside in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. These include voter registration opportunities, supervised voting for residents, voting system demonstrations and absentee voting opportunities. St. Johns County prepared packets containing absentee ballot requests, voter guides and voter registration applications that were delivered to all nursing homes and assisted living facilities in the county.

Senior centers and senior citizens groups offer additional opportunities to encourage citizens to participate in the election process and provide voting information and assistance. Counties take part in speaking engagements, conducting voter registration drives, distributing voter education materials, offering information regarding election laws, and demonstrating the use of voting systems equipment.

Counties reported spending approximately \$448,000 on outreach programs provided to minority, disabled and senior communities.

**Counties that offer outreach services for targeted populations generally rate the effectiveness of these programs as a 4 or 5. Overall, these services are rated among the most effective of the various voter education programs.**

## **7. PUBLIC APPEARANCES AND MEDIA EVENTS**

Throughout the election cycle, county supervisors of elections and their staff attend numerous public events and speak at many organizations to provide election information to citizens in their communities. Some of the most frequently mentioned arenas include clubs, civic organizations, churches, political rallies, senior centers, schools and community festivals.

During the 2006 election period, a number of counties indicated that the supervisors of elections made personal appearances on local television and radio programs for question and answer sessions. For instance, Osceola County indicated that their staff was interviewed on a local Spanish-speaking television station in an effort to reach their Hispanic community.

Okaloosa County has established a Speaker's Bureau as a result of the number of requests for follow-up presentations. The follow-up sessions provide an opportunity to offer more in-depth information about the elections process and a "behind-the-scenes" look at the steps taken to conduct elections. Staff members have developed presentations on a variety of election topics including information on electronic voting systems, the Help America Vote Act, preventing election fraud and election reform measures.

Counties are making widespread use of advertising on television and radio stations as a means of providing information to the public regarding elections. In addition to

commercial television and radio stations, counties ran advertisements on public television and radio stations. Several counties utilized minority television and radio stations in order to target non-English speaking voters. Local television and radio stations also ran numerous public service announcements covering various election topics including voter registration deadlines, election dates, early voting, and encouraging voters to participate in elections.

Five counties in the Duval County area have joined together to form the First Coast Supervisor of Elections Group (Nassau, Duval, Clay, St. Johns and Putnam counties). The group coordinates all of its advertising efforts through one media consultant to design television commercials, radio announcements and newspaper advertisements. This has been a very successful means of providing widespread coverage of election-related information to voters throughout a large area including counties that might not otherwise have easy access to television and radio announcements. Since the costs are divided among all of the participating counties, it allows some of the smaller counties the opportunity of providing television and radio coverage that they might not be able to afford on their own.

Counties reported spending approximately \$1.1 million on television and radio advertising; other media events; and public appearances.

**Public appearances and television advertisements were considered very effective as tools for disseminating information and promoting voter awareness. Of the counties that reported the use of public appearances, 91 percent assigned an effectiveness rating of 5 or 4. Television and radio announcements were also considered very effective with a majority of the counties assigning ratings of 5 and 4 for each of these activities.**

## **8. PUBLICATIONS**

A variety of publications were used to provide voting information to the community by nearly all counties. The most frequent publications mentioned were voter guides and voter information cards. Other publications listed in the survey were postage paid survey cards and voting instructions inside utility bills.

Voter guides were distributed in multiple ways by virtually all of the counties. Some were mailed, and others were available at events, presentations, speaking engagements, voter registration drives, supervisors of elections' offices as well as other county officials' locations. Okaloosa County indicated that they have a downloadable voter guide in a PDF format while Pasco County provided a voter guide in each voter registration application available in various sites around the county. Santa Rosa County prepared smaller guides in a tri-fold format with the same information, and they were well received by voters in their county.

Voter information cards with detailed election information were mailed to new voters and voters with changes including polling place changes. St. Lucie County mailed a voter

information card mailer to all voters which included information such as absentee ballot requests, election dates and deadlines, poll opening and closing times, and precinct numbers.

Several counties reported utilizing postage paid survey cards. Those that used this method found it effective with the majority giving it a ranking between 3 and 5. Pasco County stated that by using the survey cards they were able to obtain voters' opinions about polling place services and the county's voting system. Orange County provided comment cards at all early voting sites and polling places.

A number of counties provided voting information in utility bills. Those who utilized this method indicated it was very effective. Manatee County indicated that election information was included with utility bills at no cost to the elections' office.

Other publications prepared by the counties included brochures about absentee ballot requests, early voting, voting technology, how to mark your ballot and government officials' listings.

Counties reported spending over \$2 million on publications.

**Activities in this category were given an effectiveness ranking between 3 and 5 by almost every county.**

## **9. SPECIAL VOTING PROGRAMS**

Nearly half of all counties in Florida utilize special voting programs to create interest in the election process. The most popular activity is the Vote in Honor of a Vet program. Various other programs used include Kids Voting, Mock Elections and Move the Vote.

The Vote in Honor of a Vet program has been extremely successful especially with voter registration results. This program has been used in high schools and colleges as well as in local community organizations. The goal is for both students and citizens to realize the sacrifices that veterans have made so that we may all have the freedom to live in a democratic society. Participants learn that it is their responsibility to safeguard our democratic lifestyle by participating in the elections process and that a single vote can make a difference. Okaloosa County's program included an interactive PowerPoint presentation, complete with video clips of active duty and veteran military personnel. Presentations were made in the spring to all local high school students and they registered 404 students or 41 percent. Citrus County participates in the Veterans Day activities, and Nassau County includes a Veterans of War Memorial Roll poster that honors veterans who gave the ultimate price for freedom. Counties found great success with this program especially with registering high school students.

The Kids Voting program and student elections are very popular with both teachers and students. Several counties reported that elections and voting are part of the school curriculum. Nassau County works with the Superintendent of Schools' staff members to

provide age appropriate voter education resources. Teachers use these materials in their lesson plans. Several counties reported conducting Mock Elections for schools that requested them. It was reported that this is an excellent opportunity for students to experience the election process first hand by voting on actual voting equipment. The students also register to vote, check in and cast their ballots. This is a great tool for teaching students the value of casting their vote and letting their voice be heard at the ballot box. Potentially the students carry information back to their parents and families.

Five counties, Putnam, Clay, St. Johns, Nassau and Duval, have joined together to develop a new program called the Move the Vote which originated in 2006. This program involves working with local realtors to bring registration and voting information to their clients. The program is still in the development stages.

Counties reported spending approximately \$70,000 for special voting programs.

**All counties ranked this category between 2 and 5 on the scale with the majority ranking it 5.**

## **10. STAFF EDUCATION**

To ensure that election staff is knowledgeable and current regarding all phases of the election process, frequent training sessions and workshops are essential. Over 75 percent of all counties indicated that some type of staff training is provided throughout the year.

A wide variety of training and workshops were provided ranging from individual programs conducted by the local elections' office to attendance at national conferences such as those offered by the Elections Center. Numerous counties reported that staff attended the Florida State Association of Supervisors of Elections (FSASE) conference. By attending, staff members are able to remain current on election processes and equipment changes.

Many counties indicated that staff attended vendor workshops on the new touchscreen voting machines. Staff from several counties attended workshops and training on the Florida Voter Registration System (FVRS). A few counties mentioned providing disability sensitivity training to employees to educate them about issues of etiquette and sensitivity regarding the needs of voters with disabilities.

Counties reported spending approximately \$250,000 for staff education activities.

**The majority of counties that participated in staff training activities ranked them at 5 on the effectiveness scale.**

## **11. NEWSPAPERS AND MAILERS**

A number of counties utilized newspapers and mailers to provide voting information to the community. The category of newspapers includes news articles and paid advertisements while the category of mailers covers items such as direct mailings to the

voters from the supervisor of elections as well as inserts in various types of correspondence, i.e. inserts included in utility bills and newspapers.

Newspaper ads featured such items as important dates and deadlines, voter registration information, sample ballots, precinct listings, polling place changes, absentee ballot information, closed primaries, signature updates and early voting sites.

Several counties placed ads in both the local mainstream newspapers and special interest papers, for example college newspapers and neighborhood weeklies. A number of counties indicated that they used “Newspapers in Education” to provide information to students. Several counties reported that the local newspapers in their counties ran election information as a public service at no charge.

Several counties published articles and advertisements regarding voting opportunities for handicapped, disabled and elderly voters. These included topics such as polling place accessibility for the handicapped, new touchscreen voting equipment, options for disabled voters, and information on voting assistance for the elderly and disabled.

In counties where there are many citizens who do not use English as their primary language, advertisements were also printed Spanish. Orange County informed voters about the availability of bilingual assistance at the polling places through newspaper ads. Osceola County advertised election information and produced a newsletter to be used as inserts in two languages.

As with the newspaper ads, mailers featured general voting information such as notices to absentee voters, absentee ballot request letters to overseas, military, and routine absentee ballot voters, new voter identification cards and precinct/polling place change notices. Many counties mailed out new voter information cards with election information to all registered voters.

Lee County placed an insert in the local newspaper’s Sunday edition with pertinent election information. The newspaper also provided a banner ad on its web site at no extra cost. The overruns of this ad were also placed in various locations in the county including libraries, the chamber of commerce office and the election offices.

Several counties reported sending out mailers with election information aimed toward new voters. Orange County sent out a mailer to new voters with topics of interest specifically geared to them, i.e. how to request an absentee ballot, how to find the correct polling place and how to use the voting equipment. Prior to the Primary Election, Leon County mailed a brochure about voting technology to people who had never voted at all. Later, between the Primary and General Election, they mailed the brochure to new registered voters.

Counties reported spending approximately \$1.1 million for newspaper advertising and mailers to voters.

**Nearly all counties used newspapers as a voter education tool and generally ranked this method between 3 and 5 on the scale. About half of the counties used mailers ranking them primarily 4 and 5.**

## **12. BANNERS, BILLBOARDS, AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ADVERTISEMENTS**

A majority of counties used banners, billboards, and public transportation advertisements to get election information out to the public. Nearly 60 percent of all counties used these methods to disseminate election information and found them very effective.

Banners were the most frequently mentioned method of advertising. Banners were displayed at various high traffic locations where they would attract a great deal of attention. Citrus County displayed banners with election dates and contact information at the high schools, community colleges and community events. Several counties reported that banners were displayed at public engagements that the supervisor of elections attended, at county fairs and parades. Banners publicized election information such as election dates, early voting, new locations of polling places, and reminders to register to vote. Leon County displayed a large visible banner on the county courthouse which promoted the three ways to vote while Hernando County placed a voter information sign at the chamber of commerce welcome center. The counties that utilized banners for advertising found this method very effective.

Several counties used billboards to provide election information to the public. Billboard messages included voter registration deadlines, election dates, early voting and contact information for the supervisor of elections' office. Suwannee County advertised pertinent voting information on their office electronic message board which is very visible to the public.

Numerous counties mentioned that they used posters and signs to disseminate election information. Signs were used for voter registration drives, early voting and precinct locations. Posters were used at many events and were on display at various locations promoting voter registration. Indian River used posters in English and Spanish to promote voter registration at various locations including driver's license sites. Walton County purchased magnetic signs for ads on public transportation vehicles which received lots of exposure. Nassau County had a magnetic sign made for the supervisor of elections' van for parades and voter outreach functions. Gulf County asked schools to put voting information on their marquees. Putnam County placed yard signs at private businesses, banks, and local government locations. Counties found these methods very effective ranking them all four or five.

The majority of counties reported utilizing polling place signs to provide voting information to voters. The counties that supplied polling place signs felt it was a very effective method of getting election information to the voters. The signs provided various voting information such as promoting early voting, precinct numbers, directional signs at precincts and notices informing voters of polling place changes. Seminole County reported that they placed "Campaign Free Zone" signs at the 100-foot mark at the

entrances to polling places. Voters appreciated a very clear marker of the campaign-free zone. Seminole County stated that these signs were one of their most successful changes this election cycle.

A number of counties utilized public transportation as a method of advertising. Jackson County placed window advertising on buses and vans to inform voters about deadlines to register, Election Day dates and contact information for the elections' office. They received positive comments on this campaign and ranked it a five as very effective. Indian River reported using a wrap for the election van encouraging people to vote and provided contact information and telephone numbers while Hernando County displayed election dates on the back window of their voting van. Leon County provided detailed election information on signage on buses. They also used cab toppers which drove around the county displaying election dates. Sumter County stated that voter guides, voter registration applications, and absentee ballot request forms were placed on the county buses at no charge. Volusia County, in partnership with their county's local bus transportation system, developed the "Ride for Free with Your Voter ID" program. This service is offered on all election days and during the early voting period. They get the information out to the public through newspaper ads and press releases. Counties that use public transportation to advertise election information feel that it is a very effective tool.

Counties reported spending approximately \$425,000 for banners, billboards and public transportation advertisements.

**Nearly 60 percent of the counties reported using one or more of the methods of advertisement described in this section. All counties ranked these methods of advertising as very effective ranking them between 3 and 5.**

### **13. MISCELLANEOUS PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS**

Promotional materials have been very popular with the public and are a great incentive to draw voters and potential voters to registration tables. Promotional items were distributed at a wide variety of locations including voter registration drives, churches, clubs, civic organizations, neighborhood groups, malls, fairs, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, chambers of commerce, veterans groups, county offices, and the supervisor of elections' office.

A wide range of information was provided on the promotional materials with election dates being the most frequently mentioned item closely followed by elections' office contact data. Various other information provided included book closings and qualifying dates, registration deadlines, early voting information, voting instructions, reminders to update voter records and information that touchscreen voting machines would be available at all precincts.

Some of the promotional materials used by counties to provide voter education were calendars, magnets with election dates, voting instructions, contact information, precinct

maps, voter guides and posters. Franklin County has a “Message on Hold” on their phones that provides election information to voters while they wait to speak to someone in the elections’ office. Posters and moving video information are used by Clay County to attract attention of the voting public.

Counties reported spending approximately \$372,000 for promotional materials.

**This category included a wide variety of products, but almost all were ranked between 3 and 5 for effectiveness by nearly all counties.**

## **STATE VOTER EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

During the 2006 election period the Division of Elections continued to provide information to Florida's citizens through several different resources and formats. The Division's web site is an excellent source of information regarding the election process and upcoming elections, campaign financing information for candidates and committees, and links to supervisors of elections' web sites. One very popular feature is a voter registration form that can be used to register to vote or change voter registration information for individuals who are already registered. The form can be completed on-line and downloaded prior to signing and mailing it to the appropriate supervisor of elections.

The Division prepares a number of pamphlets and brochures regarding the election process which are provided to supervisors of elections for distribution to their citizens. The publications are also distributed to individuals upon request. Most of the Division's publications are available on its web site.

The Division worked with the Get Out the Vote Foundation to develop a program to conduct a statewide voter education campaign to encourage people to register and vote. The Get Out the Vote Foundation is a non-profit arm of the Florida State Association of Supervisors of Elections. The program included information that could be used by all supervisors of elections in an effort to provide a consistent message to the public regarding the election process.

Department of State produced a series of public service announcements narrated by the Secretary of State to disseminate voter awareness and education information to Florida's citizens during the 2006 election period. The public service announcements were aired on television and radio stations throughout the state and were produced in English and Spanish in an effort to reach as many of Florida's voters as possible. The announcements covered such topics as voter registration deadlines, early voting, absentee voting and suggestions to follow to be sure voters were prepared prior to going to the polling place.

## **FUNDING AND EXPENDITURES**

Between FY 2003-04 and FY 2005-06 the Legislature appropriated \$8.9 million for voter education to help increase awareness of the elections process among Florida's citizens. The funds were appropriated to the Department of State for distribution to Florida's sixty-seven (67) county supervisors of elections. These funds were provided to assist counties in their efforts to disseminate information regarding the elections process through a variety of mediums in order to target as many diverse populations throughout the state as possible. In order to receive funds, supervisors of elections were required to submit a detailed voter education plan to the Department of State along with a certified statement from the Board of County Commissioners providing matching county funds in the amount of fifteen percent (15%) to be used exclusively for voter education. In addition to the state funds and matching county funds, a number of counties provided additional county funding for voter education programs.

The Division of Elections provided an on-line survey for supervisors of elections to use in reporting information regarding voter education activities. In reporting the funds spent to promote voter education, counties were asked to report separately on the amount of state funds, county matching funds and other county funds spent for each individual activity within a category. Some counties had difficulty in determining exact costs and provided estimates instead. While there were several inconsistencies in reporting the expenditures, the report is a good indicator of the minimum dollars devoted to voter education programs throughout the state.

Between January 2005 and the 2006 General Election, counties reported spending over \$11 million on voter education programs. Over half of these funds were used in four major categories of voter education programs: Sample Ballots; Publications; Newspaper Advertisements and Mailers; and Public Appearances and Media Events.

The most expensive effort involved sample ballots. Counties spent over \$4 million to mail sample ballots to each household or registered voter and/or publish sample ballots in newspapers. Sample ballots were considered an extremely effective tool by supervisors of elections and were very popular with voters.

Over \$2 million was spent on a variety of publications that were mailed to voters or placed in public locations. This activity included the voter guide, voter information cards, and prepaid survey cards. Publications were considered very effective in disseminating election information to voters.

Over \$1.1 million was spent on newspaper advertisements and mailers. This activity included such items as newspaper notices and publications regarding voter registration, early voting, how to obtain absentee ballots, polling place changes and general elections information. Again, these were considered very effective voter education tools.

More than \$1.1 million was spent on public appearances and media events including television commercials and radio advertisements. These activities were also considered very effective in providing elections information to the public.

Almost \$500,000 was spent on a variety of items and events geared to minority, disabled and senior community outreach. Over \$400,000 was spent to develop web sites or to enhance existing web sites, and over \$400,000 was spent on banners, billboards and public transportation ads. Smaller amounts totaling nearly \$1.5 million were spent in the remaining categories.

It is apparent that voter education is an increasingly important function at state and local levels and that funding for these programs is vital in order to continue voter education efforts.

## **SUMMARY**

Voter education programs conducted by the counties appear to be very effective in promoting an awareness of the elections process and encouraging voter participation among Florida's citizens. During the 2006 election cycle voters expressed satisfaction in the elections process as indicated in the election-day survey conducted by the Collins Center for Public Policy, Inc. This can be attributed to the voter education efforts conducted by supervisors of elections through funding provided at the state and county levels.

## **EXHIBIT A**

### **98.255, Florida Statutes, Voter education programs**

(1) By March 1, 2002, the Department of State shall adopt rules prescribing minimum standards for nonpartisan voter education. In developing the rules, the department shall review current voter education programs within each county of the state. The standards shall address, but are not limited to, the following subjects:

- (a) Voter registration;
- (b) Balloting procedures, absentee and polling place;
- (c) Voter rights and responsibilities;
- (d) Distribution of sample ballots; and
- (e) Public service announcements.

(2) Each county supervisor shall implement the minimum voter education standards, and shall conduct additional nonpartisan education efforts as necessary to ensure that voters have a working knowledge of the voting process.

(3)(a) By December 15 of each general election year, each supervisor of elections shall report to the Department of State a detailed description of the voter education programs implemented and any other information that may be useful in evaluating the effectiveness of voter education efforts.

(b) The Department of State, upon receipt of such information, shall prepare a public report on the effectiveness of voter education programs and shall submit the report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by January 31 of each year following a general election.

(c) The Department of State shall reexamine the rules adopted pursuant to subsection (1) and consider the findings in the report as a basis for adopting modified rules that incorporate successful voter education programs and techniques, as necessary.

**History.**--s. 9, ch. 80-292; s. 1, ch. 83-16; s. 530, ch. 95-147; s. 59, ch. 2001-40.

## **EXHIBIT B**

### **Rule 1S-2.033 Standards for Nonpartisan Voter Education**

(1) County supervisors of elections shall create a Voter Guide.

(a) The Voter Guide shall include the following information:

1. How to register to vote;
2. Where voter registration applications are available;
3. How to register by mail;
4. Dates for upcoming elections;
5. Registration deadlines for the next primary and general election;
6. How voters should update their voter registration information such as changes in name, address or party affiliation;
7. Information on how to obtain, vote and return an absentee ballot;
8. Voters' rights and responsibilities pursuant to Section 101.031, F.S.;
9. Polling information including what times the polls are open, what to bring to the polls, list of acceptable IDs, what to expect at the polls;
10. Instructions on the county's particular voting system;
11. Supervisor contact information; and
12. Any other information the supervisor deems important.

(b) The supervisor of elections shall provide the Voter Guide at as many places as possible within the county including:

1. Agencies designated as voter registration sites pursuant to the National Voter Registration Act;
2. The supervisor's office;
3. Public libraries;
4. Community centers;
5. Post offices;

6. Centers for Independent Living;

7. County governmental offices; and

8. At all registration drives conducted by the supervisor of elections.

(2) If a supervisor has a website, it must take into account all of the information that is required to be included in the Voter Guide. In addition, when a sample ballot is available, the website must provide either information on how to obtain a sample ballot or a direct hyperlink to a sample ballot.

(3) At least once a year in each public high school in the county, the supervisor shall conduct a high school voter registration/education program. The program must be developed in cooperation with the local school board and be designed for maximum effectiveness in reaching and educating high school students.

(4) At least once a year on each college campus in the county, the supervisor shall provide a college voter registration/education program. This program must be designed for maximum effectiveness in reaching and educating college students.

(5) County supervisors of elections shall post the listing of the voters' rights and responsibilities pursuant to Section 101.031, F.S., at the supervisor's office.

(6) County supervisors of elections shall provide, upon reasonable request and notice, voter registration workshops for individuals and organizations sponsoring voter registration drives.

(7) County supervisors of elections shall conduct demonstrations of the county's voting equipment in community centers, senior citizen residences, and to various community groups, including minority groups.

(8) County supervisors of elections shall participate in available radio, television and print programs and interviews, in both general and minority media outlets, to provide voting information.

(9) Supervisors of elections shall provide notice of changes of polling places and precincts to all affected registered voters. This notice shall include publication in a newspaper of general circulation as well as posting the changes in at least ten conspicuous places in the county. If the supervisor has a website, the supervisor shall post the changes on the website. The supervisors shall also widely distribute a notice that if a voter does not receive a revised voter identification card within 20 days of the election the voter should contact a specific number at the supervisor's office to obtain polling place information.

*Specific Authority 98.255 FS. Law Implemented 98.255 FS. History—New 5-30-02.*

**EXHIBIT C**

**DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
DIVISION OF ELECTIONS  
VOTER EDUCATION FUNDS  
FY 2004-05**

<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>2004 PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY REGISTERED VOTERS</b>	<b>VOTER EDUCATION FUNDING PER COUNTY</b>	<b>COUNTY MATCHING FUNDS 15%</b>
Alachua	118,917	\$ 36,948.67	\$ 5,542.30
Baker	11,978	\$ 3,721.68	\$ 558.25
Bay	89,992	\$ 27,961.39	\$ 4,194.21
Bradford	13,802	\$ 4,288.42	\$ 643.26
Brevard	312,506	\$ 97,098.67	\$ 14,564.80
Broward	965,660	\$ 300,040.00	\$ 45,006.00
Calhoun	7,987	\$ 2,481.64	\$ 372.25
Charlotte	107,416	\$ 33,375.20	\$ 5,006.28
Citrus	84,073	\$ 26,122.30	\$ 3,918.35
Clay	93,834	\$ 29,155.14	\$ 4,373.27
Collier	155,425	\$ 48,292.07	\$ 7,243.81
Columbia	31,035	\$ 9,642.88	\$ 1,446.43
DeSoto	14,240	\$ 4,424.51	\$ 663.68
Dixie	8,972	\$ 2,787.69	\$ 418.15
Duval	439,949	\$ 136,696.45	\$ 20,504.47
Escambia	169,163	\$ 52,560.60	\$ 7,884.09
Flagler	40,960	\$ 12,726.67	\$ 1,909.00
Franklin	7,350	\$ 2,283.72	\$ 342.56
Gadsden	25,508	\$ 7,925.58	\$ 1,188.84
Gilchrist	8,155	\$ 2,533.84	\$ 380.08
Glades	6,090	\$ 1,892.22	\$ 283.83
Gulf	9,159	\$ 2,845.79	\$ 426.87
Hamilton	7,414	\$ 2,303.60	\$ 345.54
Hardee	11,881	\$ 3,691.54	\$ 553.73
Hendry	16,005	\$ 4,972.91	\$ 745.94
Hernando	102,389	\$ 31,813.26	\$ 4,771.99
Highlands	58,730	\$ 18,247.98	\$ 2,737.20
Hillsborough	554,929	\$ 172,421.86	\$ 25,863.28
Holmes	10,195	\$ 3,167.69	\$ 475.15
Indian River	75,828	\$ 23,560.50	\$ 3,534.08
Jackson	25,689	\$ 7,981.82	\$ 1,197.27
Jefferson	8,710	\$ 2,706.28	\$ 405.94
Lafayette	4,049	\$ 1,258.06	\$ 188.71
Lake	144,600	\$ 44,928.63	\$ 6,739.29
Lee	292,993	\$ 91,035.79	\$ 13,655.37
Leon	142,927	\$ 44,408.82	\$ 6,661.32
Levy	20,477	\$ 6,362.40	\$ 954.36
Liberty	3,858	\$ 1,198.72	\$ 179.81
Madison	10,723	\$ 3,331.74	\$ 499.76

**EXHIBIT C**

**DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
DIVISION OF ELECTIONS  
VOTER EDUCATION FUNDS  
FY 2004-05**

<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>2004 PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY REGISTERED VOTERS</b>	<b>VOTER EDUCATION FUNDING PER COUNTY</b>	<b>COUNTY MATCHING FUNDS 15%</b>
Manatee	179,585	\$ 55,798.81	\$ 8,369.82
Marion	170,748	\$ 53,053.07	\$ 7,957.96
Martin	93,598	\$ 29,081.81	\$ 4,362.27
Miami-Dade	951,774	\$ 295,725.48	\$ 44,358.82
Monroe	52,710	\$ 16,377.51	\$ 2,456.63
Nassau	37,011	\$ 11,499.68	\$ 1,724.95
Okaloosa	117,781	\$ 36,595.71	\$ 5,489.36
Okeechobee	17,145	\$ 5,327.12	\$ 799.07
Orange	454,571	\$ 141,239.65	\$ 21,185.95
Osceola	109,579	\$ 34,047.27	\$ 5,107.09
Palm Beach	672,528	\$ 208,961.02	\$ 31,344.15
Pasco	245,539	\$ 76,291.37	\$ 11,443.70
Pinellas	558,601	\$ 173,562.79	\$ 26,034.42
Polk	268,779	\$ 83,512.26	\$ 12,526.84
Putnam	42,171	\$ 13,102.94	\$ 1,965.44
Santa Rosa	87,307	\$ 27,127.14	\$ 4,069.07
Sarasota	224,031	\$ 69,608.62	\$ 10,441.29
Seminole	202,190	\$ 62,822.41	\$ 9,423.36
St. Johns	97,373	\$ 30,254.74	\$ 4,538.21
St. Lucie	128,735	\$ 39,999.22	\$ 5,999.88
Sumter	35,850	\$ 11,138.95	\$ 1,670.84
Suwannee	20,420	\$ 6,344.69	\$ 951.70
Taylor	11,066	\$ 3,438.31	\$ 515.75
Union	6,473	\$ 2,011.22	\$ 301.68
Volusia	277,813	\$ 86,319.21	\$ 12,947.88
Wakulla	14,124	\$ 4,388.46	\$ 658.27
Walton	29,213	\$ 9,076.76	\$ 1,361.51
Washington	13,186	\$ 4,097.02	\$ 614.55
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,333,469</b>	<b>\$ 2,900,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 435,000.00</b>

**EXHIBIT C****DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
DIVISION OF ELECTIONS  
VOTER EDUCATION FUNDS  
FY 2005-06**

<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>2004 GENERAL ELECTION REGISTERED VOTERS</b>	<b>VOTER EDUCATION FUNDING PER COUNTY</b>	<b>COUNTY MATCHING FUNDS 15%</b>
Alachua	142,358	\$ 41,458.30	\$ 6,218.75
Baker	12,887	\$ 3,753.03	\$ 562.95
Bay	101,315	\$ 29,505.53	\$ 4,425.83
Bradford	14,721	\$ 4,287.13	\$ 643.07
Brevard	338,195	\$ 98,491.06	\$ 14,773.66
Broward	1,058,069	\$ 308,136.84	\$ 46,220.53
Calhoun	8,350	\$ 2,431.73	\$ 364.76
Charlotte	113,808	\$ 33,143.81	\$ 4,971.57
Citrus	90,780	\$ 26,437.47	\$ 3,965.62
Clay	106,464	\$ 31,005.05	\$ 4,650.76
Collier	168,673	\$ 49,121.91	\$ 7,368.29
Columbia	34,282	\$ 9,983.80	\$ 1,497.57
DeSoto	14,901	\$ 4,339.55	\$ 650.93
Dixie	9,676	\$ 2,817.90	\$ 422.68
Duval	515,202	\$ 150,040.04	\$ 22,506.01
Escambia	189,833	\$ 55,284.24	\$ 8,292.64
Flagler	47,068	\$ 13,707.41	\$ 2,056.11
Franklin	7,620	\$ 2,219.14	\$ 332.87
Gadsden	26,884	\$ 7,829.31	\$ 1,174.40
Gilchrist	9,035	\$ 2,631.22	\$ 394.68
Glades	5,963	\$ 1,736.58	\$ 260.49
Gulf	9,627	\$ 2,803.63	\$ 420.54
Hamilton	7,645	\$ 2,226.42	\$ 333.96
Hardee	10,399	\$ 3,028.46	\$ 454.27
Hendry	17,144	\$ 4,992.77	\$ 748.92
Hernando	109,656	\$ 31,934.64	\$ 4,790.20
Highlands	60,176	\$ 17,524.80	\$ 2,628.72
Hillsborough	621,201	\$ 180,909.67	\$ 27,136.45
Holmes	10,982	\$ 3,198.24	\$ 479.74
Indian River	81,643	\$ 23,776.54	\$ 3,566.48
Jackson	27,138	\$ 7,903.28	\$ 1,185.49
Jefferson	9,300	\$ 2,708.40	\$ 406.26

**EXHIBIT C**

**DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
DIVISION OF ELECTIONS  
VOTER EDUCATION FUNDS  
FY 2005-06**

<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>2004 GENERAL ELECTION REGISTERED VOTERS</b>	<b>VOTER EDUCATION FUNDING PER COUNTY</b>	<b>COUNTY MATCHING FUNDS 15%</b>
Lafayette	4,309	\$ 1,254.89	\$ 188.23
Lake	161,269	\$ 46,965.67	\$ 7,044.85
Lee	304,937	\$ 88,805.48	\$ 13,320.82
Leon	171,182	\$ 49,852.59	\$ 7,477.89
Levy	22,617	\$ 6,586.65	\$ 988.00
Liberty	4,075	\$ 1,186.74	\$ 178.01
Madison	11,371	\$ 3,311.53	\$ 496.73
Manatee	191,635	\$ 55,809.03	\$ 8,371.35
Marion	184,257	\$ 53,660.37	\$ 8,049.06
Martin	98,857	\$ 28,789.70	\$ 4,318.45
Miami-Dade	1,058,801	\$ 308,350.02	\$ 46,252.50
Monroe	51,377	\$ 14,962.30	\$ 2,244.35
Nassau	41,353	\$ 12,043.05	\$ 1,806.46
Okaloosa	127,455	\$ 37,118.17	\$ 5,567.73
Okeechobee	18,627	\$ 5,424.66	\$ 813.70
Orange	531,774	\$ 154,866.24	\$ 23,229.94
Osceola	129,487	\$ 37,709.94	\$ 5,656.49
Palm Beach	729,575	\$ 212,470.96	\$ 31,870.64
Pasco	265,974	\$ 77,458.45	\$ 11,618.77
Pinellas	590,989	\$ 172,111.16	\$ 25,816.67
Polk	295,742	\$ 86,127.66	\$ 12,919.15
Putnam	45,344	\$ 13,205.34	\$ 1,980.80
Santa Rosa	96,359	\$ 28,062.21	\$ 4,209.33
Sarasota	240,592	\$ 70,066.56	\$ 10,509.98
Seminole	241,230	\$ 70,252.37	\$ 10,537.85
St. Johns	109,635	\$ 31,928.53	\$ 4,789.28
St. Lucie	137,951	\$ 40,174.87	\$ 6,026.23
Sumter	40,523	\$ 11,801.34	\$ 1,770.20
Suwannee	21,930	\$ 6,386.58	\$ 957.99
Taylor	11,481	\$ 3,343.56	\$ 501.53
Union	7,063	\$ 2,056.93	\$ 308.54
Volusia	309,930	\$ 90,259.57	\$ 13,538.94
Wakulla	15,396	\$ 4,483.71	\$ 672.56
Walton	32,777	\$ 9,545.50	\$ 1,431.83

**EXHIBIT C**

**DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
DIVISION OF ELECTIONS  
VOTER EDUCATION FUNDS  
FY 2005-06**

<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>2004 GENERAL ELECTION REGISTERED VOTERS</b>	<b>VOTER EDUCATION FUNDING PER COUNTY</b>	<b>COUNTY MATCHING FUNDS 15%</b>
Washington	14,421	\$ 4,199.77	\$ 629.96
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10,301,290</b>	<b>\$ 3,000,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 450,000.00</b>