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District of Columbia’s Board of Elections and Ethics Adopts Open Source Digital Voting Foundation Technology to Support Ballot Delivery

WASHINGTON, D.C., June 22, 2010– [The Open Source Digital Voting Foundation](#) (OSDV), a non-profit public benefits corporation designing and developing freely available open source elections and voting technology, today announced that it has been chosen by the District of Columbia Board of Elections and Ethics (BOEE) to implement a pilot project to support the delivery and return of overseas ballots as part of the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act compliance.

Technology from the [TrustTheVote](#) Project, the OSDV’s flagship effort, will be used in Washington D.C.’s September primary election to digitally deliver and return the absentee voting kits of overseas, military and absentee voters. This pilot program implements a digital “Vote by Mail” ballot transport service, which addresses the problems of late ballot arrival for long distance overseas and military voters without the use of e-mail or fax – digital alternatives known to have significant privacy and security concerns.

“This election will serve as an important first step to examine the next generation of voting technology and a transparent infrastructure that is key to our democracy,” said Gregory Miller, co-executive director & chief development officer for the Open Source Digital Voting Foundation. “In the last decade, technology has initiated the transformation of industries by digitizing important documents including medical records, artwork and photographs, real estate titles and deeds. Now, we are fortunate to introduce a digital replication of a paper ballot and a digital means to transport that artifact in timely manner that helps ensure that all legitimate ballots are counted.”

Rokey W. Suleman, II, executive director of the District of Columbia Board of Elections and Ethics, explained that “this pilot project will deploy OSDV’s ability to digitally generate and transport ballots of overseas and military absentee voters, and it can lead the way to helping reinvent how America votes in a digital age.” Suleman emphasized that this is only a pilot project to test an innovative process to support the requirements of the new federal mandate known as the MOVE Act. The new law calls for elections jurisdictions to make available digital means to deliver blank ballots to overseas and military absentee voters. The pilot is currently planned only for the District’s upcoming election cycle and its performance will be closely monitored to assess its feasibility for future use for the benefit of overseas long distance voters. “We’re taking this one step at a time in examining, testing, and trying a digital means intended to be far better than existing alternatives of e-mail attachments or simple fax transmission where the secrecy of the voter’s ballot is compromised,” said Suleman.

The Board of Elections and Ethics anticipate having a public review period of the pilot system this summer in advance of the test run at the September Primary Election on September 14th.

DETAILS ABOUT THE PILOT PROGRAM

- Public Preview of the service during the month of August.
- The DC BOEE will encourage technical experts to stress test the pilot solution, in order to demonstrate the effectiveness of the privacy and security mechanisms and processes.
- The pilot program for the September primary election will include digitally transporting ballots for up to 2,500 citizens and service men and women stationed overseas.

About the OSDV Foundation:

The OSDV Foundation (“OSDV”) is a non-profit public benefits corporation based in the Silicon Valley. Its effort – known as the TrustTheVote Project – is building a next generation elections technology framework that can achieve accuracy, transparency, trust and security in public elections. This is a digital “public works” project – producing actual voting technology the public can see, touch and try. OSDV is focused on producing voting technology that any elections jurisdiction can freely adopt, adapt and deploy. To make this happen, OSDV takes an “open source” approach, meaning all work is conducted in a transparent manner under continuous public review by a small senior technical team and volunteer developers. The resulting software source code is available royalty-free. Success of this project can restore trust in how America votes. For more information, please visit <http://osdv.org/>.

About BOEE:

The District of Columbia Board of Elections & Ethics (BOEE) is the independent agency of the District government responsible for the administration of elections, ballot access and voter registration. The BOEE consists of three active Board members, an Executive Director, a General Counsel and a number of support staff who run the day-to-day operations of the Agency. For more information, please visit <http://www.dcboee.org/>.

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