

**Testimony of Judd Choate
Director of Elections, Colorado Secretary of State's Office
Chairman, ERIC Board of Directors**

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My name is Judd Choate. I am the State Election Director for Colorado and Chairman of the Board of ERIC.

Under the leadership of Secretary of State Scott Gessler, Colorado implemented mobile-optimized online voter registration, worked with the Federal Government to identify non-citizen voters, and actively participates in the ERIC project, making Colorado a national leader in voter initiatives. For instance, during the 2012 presidential election Colorado helped lead the way with some of the highest voter turnout levels in the country. I'm happy to be here today to share our experiences and best practices.

Let me tell you about Colorado's experience as an initial "ERIC State."

The Electronic Registration Information Center – ERIC – is a nonprofit organization created by the states, with the funding and assistance of the Pew Charitable Trusts, to improve state voter registration rolls. ERIC was established in 2012 by seven initial states: Colorado, Delaware, Maryland, Nevada, Utah, Virginia, and Washington. Since then, Oregon, Connecticut and the District of Columbia have joined. Several other states appear close to joining as well.

Using a sophisticated IBM algorithm, ERIC combines data from participating state voter files, motor vehicle records, change of address notifications, and death records. The states receive reports they use to contact eligible voters and clean voter rolls as part of list maintenance activities, consistent with the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA).

Colorado joined ERIC on July 1, 2012 along with the other six states. Two months later, in September of 2012, we sent postcards to 723,000 people encouraging them to register prior to the 29-day registration deadline for the presidential election. Just over 10% of those contacted, 74,528, registered to vote prior to the deadline. Of those, 32,430, or 43.5%, voted in the 2012 General Election.

ERIC also provides Colorado with data to clean the voter rolls. ERIC has a unique ability to link files in various formats using minimum matching criteria. This process marries data to find electors that have moved.

ERIC provides states with four kinds of data to clean the rolls...matching data indicating:

1. a move within the state or
2. a move from one state to another state
3. Matching data indicating that two files are actually the same person
4. Matching data indicating that a person on the state's voter rolls died outside of the state and is listed in the Social Security Administration Death List.

Colorado's most recent "Clean" report from ERIC, covering the months of January and February 2014, found the following:

1. 26,320 in-state movers
2. 1,181 out-of-state movers
3. 112 voters with more than one registration
4. 2,180 dead voters who died outside the state of Colorado

Colorado developed and rolled-out online voter registration in 2010. By using online voter registration both in the mailing to voters – encouraging them to register – and in the mailing to people who have moved out-of-state – encouraging them to cancel their registration online – Colorado has maximized the integrity of our voter rolls. Online Voter Registration makes it easy and straightforward for people to register, update a registration, or cancel a registration when that voter moves to another state.

ERIC is the future of elections. It cleans the rolls. It finds possible new voters. It allows jurisdictions to proactively work with their voters – our customers – instead of reacting to a bad mailing address 12 months after the voter has moved. And as more states join, the system will work better because it will have more data to match.

Another program lauded by the presidential commission and important to Colorado's efforts to improve list maintenance is the Kansas Cross-Check. The cross-check is also a data-matching program, where 28 states send their voter files to Kansas following a General Election. Since 2008, Colorado has identified approximately 15 people who very likely voted in Colorado and another state in the same election. Several of these suspected double voters received a visit from the FBI and a handful were charged with double voting in our partner states of Arizona and Kansas.

Colorado's experience in ERIC and in the Kansas Cross-Check has been very positive. We have registered new voters at an impressive rate, our voter registration database is improving all the time, and we protect that database from fraud and double-voting.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. I am happy to take questions.