

League of Women Voters of Texas Education Fund

Voting Procedures to Increase Voting Participation

Internet Voting

Also known as: Online voting

What it is: Election system using encryption, allowing voters to cast their ballot online.

What Texas does now: Remote Internet Voting is limited to astronauts who will be in space on election day and during early voting period.

How Internet Voting would work:

- *Poll Site Internet Voting* allows voters to access Internet in environment controlled by onsite election officials.
- *Remote Internet Voting* allows voter to cast ballot through any Internet connection.

Arguments in favor:

- Could increase voter turnout, especially of young voters.
- Appeals to young voters in all racial and ethnic groups.
- Is natural outgrowth of increasing use of Internet as source of voting information and forum for dialogue and mobilization on candidates and issues.
- Increases voter convenience. Poll Site Internet Voting occurs at locations people visit routinely, such as libraries, malls, grocery stores, community centers. Remote Internet Voting occurs at home or anywhere there is an Internet connection.
- Makes it easier for military and overseas voters to vote.
- Could reduce election costs.

Arguments against:

- Threatens security, integrity of the vote, and secrecy of ballot, outweighing the advantage of convenience.
- Requires measures that improve security at the cost of secrecy of ballot.
- Makes elections more elitist rather than more democratic because computer access is not equal.
- Risks voter confidence in election outcome because of suspicions about Internet security.
- Does not eliminate need for traditional polling because not everyone is computerized or will be.

Discussion question:

- How well would Internet Voting achieve goals of voter convenience and participation in the election process?

For more information: See LWV-TX *Facts and Issues on Internet Voting*.