

What’s New In The 2020 Election Transcript

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>> ALLIE CANNINGTON: Good morning y'all, thank you again for joining us and for your patience this morning. Um, I'm going to make this uh, really quick. Um, so that we can get right to the content. Um, but I just want to uh, remind all of us that uh, 2020 is a huge year in our country and in the state of California, particularly for the disability community, but also for, um, the general public and for any community that is fighting for equity and justice. And so, uh, one of the ways that this is a big year for us, of course is the election. Uh, both the primary um in March in California and then the general election in November. And so, uh, as the Disability Organizing Network, we inform and uh, mobilize and organize people with disabilities and our allies around the state of California around issues that matter most to us. And this is a part of what we do around informing. We want to make sure that um, people with disabilities and our allies are informed about how um, what changes are happening uh, this election uh and that we can be um, the most responsible and informed voters as possible. Uh, I also um want to really thank uh, our partners and presenters today. Uh, Paul and Gabe from Disability Rights California. We will also be hearing from some local organizers and advocates around the state um, including uh, Elizabeth Campbell Soper from Dayle McIntosh Center and um, Brian Snyder from FREED Independent Living Center, and uh, hopefully some of you all. So I'm just going to review uh, what we're, what the presenters are gonna uh remind us all today, which is first of all there are some new voting systems for us to be aware of, for us to tell our friends and family about. Then uh, they're going to remind us about the Voters Choice Act and why it matters to all of us. Uh, and then we're going to go a little bit into remote accessible vote by mail, um, that is if for some of you who may be new to remote accessible vote by mail, that is another way um, that people with disabilities uh can uh vote in a way that may be more accessible to them. Then we'll be going over primary election rules and then uh, point you in the direction of amazing resources and of course the Disability Organizing Network, uh, and Disability Rights California are here for you as well. So with that being said, uh, I will pass it over uh to Paul and Gabe from Disability Rights California and please, I encourage all of you to ask your questions uh throughout the presentation, uh and we will be going until, we'll we'll stay as close to on time as possible, um, even with the late start, uh, and so we'll be going until about 11:30.Uh, so thank you all again.

>> PAUL SPENCER: Hey, uh good morning, this is uh Paul Spencer with Disability Rights California.

>> GABE TAYLOR: And this is Gabe Taylor, uh, also with Disability Rights California.

>> PAUL SPENCER: So uh, Gabe and I you know, we work to make sure that voting is accessible for people with disabilities statewide um, and uh, you know, we're excited to give you all this presentation and kind of give you an overview of the changes that, that you and your consumers might see and um, we'll go into detail where we can. And as Allie said, you know, please um, chip in with questions. Um, wherever you'd like. Um, but just to kind of give you a quick little overview. I mean, here's the big first one is that you know, the primary election is March 3rd, uh you know, usually our primary election is in June, so it moved up. Um, you know I think Gabe and I when we talk to people, pretty frequently people are like Oh, it's in March?, you know, so that's just kind of a big one to kind of run by people, to make sure they realize it's coming up in March. Um, in some ways that job is a little easier because it's just going to be a um, how do we put it Gabe, an exciting election?

 [LAUGHTER]

>> GABE TAYLOR: Yeah. Well it's mostly just making sure that everybody has you know, one of the big focuses for, for Paul and I is to make sure that uh, people are just aware of the changes and so they can feel a little bit more prepared when they start receiving information, um, in their voter information packet, it's or, if they live um, in a county that um, will be changing the way they do voting. That they won't be caught off guard if they receive things in the mail that they weren't expecting. So.

>> PAUL SPENCER: And also the other thing too, like Gabe and I, we're always trying to make sure that people are, you know, aware of what the rules are for accessibility in elections. You know, that elections are accessible. People with disabilities should be able to vote privately and independently. So this presentation doesn't really go into that, but we have some resources on our um, DisabilityRightsCA.org website. Um, and we have resources that kind of go over the accessibility protections. But you know, if anyone has accessibility questions, please feel free to jump in.U m, speaking of accessibility, you know, all polling locations and vote centers have to have an accessible voting system, at least one, um, for people with disabilities to use. The one kind of new thing is um, in this March election, all the counties in California are going to have new voting equipment. So about 20 counties, you know, they got it in the last couple of years. But uh, what, so Gabe, in about 30 um, got new voting equipment just in the last year. Which is a good thing for accessibility, so the, you know, a lot of times, you know a lot of advocates you know you see in your county is you have really old accessibility equipment, which has been a pretty constant barrier. It's not, you know, it's buggy, it's hard to use, I mean, if you're not familiar with it, imagine you know trying to troubleshoot a computer from, um 2010.It, it's pretty hard. Or troubleshooting a computer even from2002, it it, it gets weird. So, we're going to show you some images too and kind of explain what the new voting equipment looks like, but it depends county to county. Um, another thing, we're going to talk a lot about the Voters Choice Act in this presentation, um, and we'll talk about whether or not you're in a VCA county Choice Act County, but, it's still kind of important you pay attention even if you're not in a VCA County, and we'll kind of get into that. Um, and the last thing is, you know the voting is coming up fast. You know, vote centers are going to open up on February 22nd, a lot of county election offices, you know, they'll be opening up in early February for voting. So, it's coming and ballots are going out soon. So, this is just some other things to review. Um, E-poll books, we're not going to go really quickly into what E-poll books are, um so typically when you walk into a polling location, you know, you check-in, there's the pollbook, which is the paperback, and the election worker, you know,t hey find your name, you know you sign next to your name, that, that's what a pollbook is. So E-poll books are like a tablet version of those. So some countries are going to have that, just something to make voters aware of when they walk in. Um, so and also, the two in-person voting systems, the accessible voting equipment, you know there's, most countries have these two companies, Dominion and Hart, and we'll show you some pictures next. Um, but then the last other big change that we want to talk about is uh, conditional voter registration, um, it's a mouthful, but basically what same day conditional voter registration is is it allows you um, to register to vote up until election day. So, this is new and kind of a big one, and we're going to touch on it more in this presentation, but um, you know in the past, you had to register before the deadline, otherwise you know, if you missed the deadline, you weren't, you weren't able to vote. Now with conditional voter registration, you know, everything's the same until you get fourteen days away from the election. In the past if you got to that fourteen day mark, and you weren't registered, you weren't going to be able to participate. Now, after that fourteen days, you can go register to vote in person um, at polling locations, vote centers, and at the county election office. So you know, I think this is just an important voter protection, and also you know, if you run into someone that's not registered to vote. Before we go to the next slide on the equipment, there's one thing. So, we're going to come back to conditional voter registration, because it's, it matters that we talk about the, the rules for what party you need to be to vote for a presidential candidate. We've saved those slides for the end of the presentation, so definitely save your brain power for the end.

[LAUGHTER]

 Uh, it's something that we all need to be able to explain and I think Gabe and I are still uh, we're getting better at being able to explain it, and not either put people to sleep or get ourselves confused.

[LAUGHTER]

Right, so, we'll save those for the end. But um, let's move to the next slide and we're going to look at some pictures of voting equipment. So, when you walk into your polling location or vote center, the majority of counties in California are going to have this system on the left, the Dominion system. So I'm going to explain what this looks like. The Dominion looks like a really big iPad for the screen, which is a touchscreen, it's a big one, it's vertically mounted. And then it has um, uh, Gabe, what's the controller called again, the accessible controller?

>> GABE TAYLOR: The keypad. I mean...

>> PAUL SPENCER: It has a keypad.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Yeah.

>> PAUL SPENCER: Not a keypad with an actual uh keyboard, it just has like the accessible um, uh, left right up down and the selection arrow.And those keypads are pretty good actually for access.

 >> GABE TAYLOR: It also has adjustments for volume control, um, to increase or decrease the volume.

>> PAUL SPENCER: And it has a speed control too, right? A tactile speed control.

 >> GABE TAYLOR: Yeah

>> PAUL SPENCER: Yes, which is a cool feature.

>> GABE TAYLOR: And also it has um, uh, input for folks who may use um, sip and puff devices or um, if they have any sort of paddle switch technology, it allows somebody to be able to plug in to be able to use that and, and navigate through their ballot.

>> PAUL SPENCER: And there's also headphones on there too.So you get, you get audio as well. Um, and I believe you can invert the colors on this, but, so the Dominion System, the reason we're kind of focusing on it, is this is the most common one in California, so it's probably the one you're most likely to see in your county. Uh, and then it also prints out a paper ballot. And then that paper ballot is what's submitted, so it's another thing to, probably most of you on this call know this, I mean there's no um, internet or online voting, I mean what these systems do is they're basically making a paper ballot. You can think about this as a really fancy way to accessible um, mark a piece of paper. So, a lot of times these devices are just called ballot marking devices, and you know, essentially that's what they are. I mean these are devices that you know mark a piece of paper, and then that piece of paper is turned in just like a paper ballot. Um, so in that picture there's also a printer to the right of the screen. But also, these systems, they don't count votes. Um, that's why they print out a paper ballot and that's what's counted later, typically at the county election office. Um, so let's talk about the other system on the right.T he Hart Intercivic Verity 3.1, um, you know it has a uh, screen. It's in a, it's displayed in its carrying box, and then also it has a printer. So, this system is, um, it uses a paddle wheel, like a click paddle wheel, which you would have had on an old school iPod. I think that's the best way to describe it, right Gabe?

>> GABE TAYLOR: Yeah, that's the closest control that is similar yeah, I can think of.

>> PAUL SPENCER: I don't even know if people even remember what iPods are anymore, it's been a long time for me, but um, it basically has a click wheel like an iPod, um, it's accessible.I t's passed all the requirements, uh. Only a handful of counties use Hart, so it's less common.

>> GABE TAYLOR: And one of the things that you can't, it's hard to tell from the picture, but that little um control pad actually comes out of the unit itself, so if somebody needs to um, you know put it on their lap or they need to be able to pull it closer to them, um, that's uh that's something that it can do.

>> PAUL SPENCER: And um, let's talk about the good news of these systems. So for people with disabilities that come in to vote in person, these things are a lot more user friendly. Um, for the voters, these are more akin to like, modern technology that we're used to using, especially the Dominion System, it's more like an iPad. Um, the other big thing is, you know, humans run elections, so we have poll workers and vote center workers, and uh, it's a lot easier to maintain and troubleshoot these systems than the old stuff that this equipment replaced. And you know, Gabe and I, we run a hotline on election day, and one of our most common calls is that the accessible voting system isn't working at my polling location. Um, and that's typically because equipment is just old and buggy, but now we have new equipment, so our hope is that elections are more accessible and we're going to see this when we have far less hotline calls about accessible equipment. So that's what I really hope happens in March, but we'll see.

>> GABE TAYLOR: And the, the other thing too I was just going to add, um, because these are relatively, you know, they're very new systems and you know, they haven't been used in previous elections, one of the things that um, the counties are trying to do more of, the county elections staff are um, demonstrations, um, for different groups and different organizations. So if your organization, if you think your clients or consumers might benefit from um, having uh, like an in-person demonstration, or maybe gathering a group, scheduling a time to go to your county elections office and have a demonstration. Many of the county elections offices are open to doing that. So you can just, you know, maybe contact your county elections, the registrar's office and see about setting something like that up.

>> PAUL SPENCER: I love doing presentations when a country comes and brings voting equipment, cause it, it's just better.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Oh yeah!

>> PAUL SPENCER: People can then use the equipment afterwards, um, most countries have never been asked to do this, so you might have, you're just going to have to ask. And then also, if you haven't forgotten, tell them to bring at least two systems so people don't have to wait. Um, and even three or four or five could be pretty awesome, cause that way people aren't having to wait after your presentation to use the equipment. But that, that's a really good point Gabe, yeah. It's awesome when counties will bring this equipment out. Um, and then real quick before we go to the next slide, LA County has a different um, type of voting equipment. So, if you're in LA you'll see something different. It's a little beyond the scope of , but um, LA also has new accessible voting equipment. Which is Gabe, I guess you could say somewhat similar to the Dominion system on the left, it's got a big touch screen.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Yeah, big touch screen and um yeah, it has uh, um a control panel or control pad that you can also sort of pull closer to you.U m, they're in the process of certification for that system, so it's not official official yet, but um, they are moving forward, and it's been in the works forum, about uh over ten years now, the design process, so um they're coming towards the tail end of that whole uh, journey for them, so.

>> PAUL SPENCER: Okay, and last one with the voting equipment.I t's always important, always remind people, every polling location and vote center is going to have an accessible voting system, it's state and federal law, but it's, I'd say the general public awareness that those are there is pretty low. Uh, Voter's Choice Act! So we're gonna kind of cover it over pretty quickly, um so if you're one of the participants and you've looked through this list of fourteen counties, and you don't see your county, avoid the temptation to uh tune out, because it's still important, even if you're not in one of these counties, because lots of us have clients that might live in another county. And also if you look at these counties that are doing the Voters Choice Act, So Sacramento, Los Angeles, Orange County, um, these are big media markets, so if you live in a county outside of these areas, you're, you, your neighbors, your consumers, they're still going to hear ads about the Voters Choice Act. So, you need to be aware of what it is, how it works, um, so even if you don't live in a VCA County. Um, but uh, so these are the, so...five counties did this in 2018, and then there's going to be nine more in 2020.So all of these countries are doing the Voters Choice Act again, um. Real quick, let's do a poll. Oh, I'm actually going to read the counties out to you, for you folks. So, uh, the 2018 ones are Madera, Napa, Nevada, Sacramento, San Mateo. So, they did it in 2018 and they're going to do it again in 2020.And then the new counties are El Dorado, Fresno, Los Angeles, Mariposa, Orange, Santa Clara, Amador, Butte, and Tuolumne. So, we have a poll question, cause we're just kind of curious, if uh, whether or not, so, there's a poll question that's coming up, whether or not you live in one of these VCA counties, so if everyone could go ahead and answer the poll for us, that'd be awesome.

>> MEGAN COWDELL: So if you live in one of these countries, uh go ahead and select yes on the poll. So the counties are Madera, Napa, Nevada, Sacramento, San Mateo. And then new ones for this year are El Dorado, Fresno, Los Angeles, Mariposa, Orange, Santa Clara, Amador, Butte, or Tuolumne. So if you're in any of those counties, go ahead and let us know by selecting yes. If you're not, go ahead and select the no button. Okay, and I'm going to go ahead and close the poll and share the results. Uh, you guys, it looks like we have about 39% of people on the call today are in one of these 14 counties, that's actually pretty good percentage. And then 61% of you are not in one of these countries listed. So thank you for your participation.

>> PAUL SPENCER: Okay, so uh let's stay on this slide real quick, and we're just going to cover the basic difference between the Voters Choice Act and other countries. So the Voter's Choice Act County, everyone gets sent a vote by mail ballot. Whether or not you're signed up for vote by mail, so everyone automatically gets a vote by mail ballot. And then, uh, instead of neighborhood polling locations, there's vote centers. So we'll talk about how many vote centers there are, but um, you know in a small country like Madera county, you know there's four or five vote centers. And then in a really large country like Los Angeles, there might be a thousand vote centers. But, um, basically there's one vote center for every you know, 10 to 50 thousand voters. A vote center is basically a really big polling location. Um, the other thing is, the Voters Choice Act requires um, community input on the election plan, and there's also some other really good protections for voters with disabilities. But that's the real nutshell Voter's Choice Act, um with a, with a quick caveat, is that LA County has its own modified version of the Voter's Choice Act. So, all voters don't get a vote by mail ballot, but there's going to be more vote centers per number of voters in the county, so there will be a denser amount of vote centers. Um, it's also sort of a big deal, you know1 in 4 voters in California live in LA, there's a lot there.LA also has a new voting system. Um, so it's a little different in LA County, um, but typically though, uh, you know, everyone's going to get, in the other 15 countries they're all going to get a vote by mail ballot, and um, Vote Centers will be open from, um, starting 10 days before the election. So uh, that's LA. Let's kind of go to the next slide and we'll talk about some of the voting options. So, one cool thing about the Voter's Choice Act is there's 11 days of in-person voting. And, this is a big one. Voters can go to any Vote Center in the county and vote the ballot. So the way it works right now, you know if you don't go to your neighborhood polling location, if you go to another location, you know, in a traditional election, you know, you can still vote, but you're not going to be able to vote your actual ballot with all of the race that you're eligible to vote in. In the Voter's Choice Act County, it's pretty cool, you can go to any Vote Center in the county, so, you know, especially if you commute 35 minutes to work, you know, you can vote there, you don't have to vote at home. A lot of that is really convenient, it's also good for accessibility in the sense that, you know, especially if you rely on public transportation, you just have a lot more options of going somewhere to vote in-person. Especially if you need to vote in-person because you want to use the accessible voting system, um. Vote Centers you know, some counties sort of advertise them as uh, uh, how do they put it, Gabe? A um, um, Voter Assistance Center, because you know, there's a lot of workers there, you can get questions answered, you can just, you can drop off your completed vote by mail ballot, um. The other thing about Vote Centers, and this is a good reminder for folks that don't live in the Voters Choice Act counties is that these are some of the accessibility requirements that they're there when you go to vote in-person. These are at polling locations and also Vote Centers. Um, so curbside voting is still an option. You know, uh, you can have a ballot runout to your car, um, if you're a person with a disability. There's other assistive devices there, like ball grips, magnifying sheets, um, a signature guide, we'll be in for some locations.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Yeah, Paul

>> PAUL SPENCER: The other thing, oh go ahead Gabe, sorry.

>> GABE TAYLOR: I was just going to say, yeah, um, I mean, it, we're talking specifically about the Vote Centers, but all of these things are automatic things that should also be, I mean, should be provided regularly at a polling place, at an already established polling place. So, like Paul said, if you don't live in a VCA county, even if you don't live in a VCA county, accommodations like this should be available to you.

>> PAUL SPENCER: Yeah, and also uh, you know, poll workers and vote center workers, they are supposed to receive training on voters with disabilities, um, the one fact in Voter's Choice Act counties, since they have to hire less election workers, generally, they've been able to give them more training. So for example in Sacramento, instead of one-day training that poll workers typically get, their Voter's Choice Act workers are getting um, up to three days of training. So, the idea is you know, they're better able to serve the needs of people with disabilities, and you know, for example in Sacramento, they get a full dedicated session to using the accessible voting equipment. Whereas in a lot of counties, um, for those of you that have done poll worker training, it's a slog, you get through it, and then typically at the end when you're the most tired, they give you a training on the election equipment. So, that's one other nice thing about the um, Voter's Choice Act. Just kind of more of what's in a Vote Center. Um, there's three accessible voting machines. So, when you walk into a Vote Center, you're going to see at least three of those Dominion machines, or three of those Hart machines. Um, also the Vote Center, you know, you can register to vote, you can drop off your ballot, you can get a ballot replacement, as we talked about, you can vote in any Vote Center in the country. Um, so, I mean, these, these are things that are very voter friendly, um, you know there is a big negative that we'll talk about in a couple slides, but I mean, this is something, and also we're going to go into how communities can provide input on where these Vote Centers should be. So, that's another nice thing, in traditional elections, you don't have much say in where your polling location is going to go, but the Voters Choice Act Actually gives you that voice. So, some more, just another, next slide, some more logistics about how many Vote Centers there are, um, so ten days before the election, there's one Vote Center for every 50,000 voters. Um, and then three days before the election, so you've already got four days to vote in, there's a Vote Center for every 10,000 voters. They're just open for normal business hours, um, and then uh, you know, on Election Day they're open from the traditional time, which is 7:00 AM -8:00 PM. Um, one note for people that, you know, if you're in a really small county, that has less than um, 50,000 voters,they'll have a minimum of two Vote Centers which is nice as well. Um, but let's kind of talk about one downside to Vote Centers, we'll go to the next slide. So, you know, you don't have those really convenient, um, local polling locations, so the VCA county, voters with disabilities will not have the convenience of what we call hyper local polling places. So, you might have to travel a little farther, uh, which you know, that, that's not good, especially if you ride public transportation, you know, you might have to go a little farther. Ideally, that's offset by you know, placing the Vote Centers, thinking about what people with disabilities live and public transportation, and then also they're open for longer hours, but you know, this is one thing to be aware of,you know, especially um, if you're a person with a disability or you're advising someone with a disability that needs to vote in-person so they can use the accessible voting equipment, um, you know, this is a challenge of the Voter's Choice Act. So it's one thing to be aware of But um, let's kind of move on now to what, the community input, um, portion of the VCA, I'm going to kind of pass the baton to...

>> ALLIE CANNINGTON: And, and um.Hi Paul, this is Allie, we just have two quick questions that have come through, uh, and I uh, actually a third, from me, I just want to make sure everyone understands. So, um, the first question was from Jamie, uh “How can we become a VCA County?”

>> PAUL SPENCER: Uh, so becoming a VCA County is up to your, your county election officials, and it's also up to typically the Board of Supervisors in a county. Because the Board of Supervisors is who approves the additional funding you're going to need to become a Voter's Choice Act county. So, Jamie it depends sometimes on the, the rules and the politics of individual counties, and there's 58 counties, um, but typically, uh, the counties, and you know, this is the other 14 counties, is that, you know the election officials might want to do this, and they'll submit a proposal to their Board of Supervisors, and uh, the Board of Supervisors will vote on whether or not to approve the additional funding. Um, so that's typically how it works,you know, it has been like all local political decisions, there's definitely contentions in some countries about whether or not to do the Voter's Choice Act. Um, one issue is that, you know, the idea, I think one of the lofty goals of the Voters Choice Act is that you know, it'll save money over time. For example, cause you have to, you're not having thousands of polling locations, you're having, you know, just a handful of Vote Centers, it should be cheaper.But initially, you know, you've got to buy new equipment, you've got to do a lot of training, so there's upfront costs, and you know, typically the county Board of Supervisors are who controls the purse strings, so they sort of control whether or not you become a VCA county. But, Jamie, I'd just like to end you know, if uh, you know, your county is thinking about becoming a Voter's Choice Act county for the elections in 22, 2022, you know, you should definitely participate in that process. Um, you know, you're welcome to go you know, comment at a Board of Supervisors meeting, write a letter to the paper about whether or not you think your country should do the Voter's Choice Act. Uh, and I can answer the next question. And Jamie, I apologize, that was probably the wordiest answer you ever expected on whether or not your country can become a Voter's Choice Act County. Uh, that's just something Gabe and I've been really thinking about for the last uh, what, years now Gabe?

 >> GABE TAYLOR: Yeah

>> PAUL SPENCER: On which countries are doing the Voters Choice Act, why they're going to do it, because it's um...what really matters, we're trying to plan our internal logistics for how, you know, these countries meet their accessibility requirements, so it's uh... I don't know Gabe, it's been somewhat stressful about whether or not countries do the Voter's Choice Act or not for us, so.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Yeah, and also, I'll, I mean, I'll go into a little bit more in detail in the next part of the PowerPoint, but, or the presentation, but um, one of the things that's also, uh, a huge part of it, um, is getting organizations and sites to, to buy into this idea that um, they could maybe be a potential vote center, and explaining to them what that, what all is involved with that. And so, um, you know, a lot of it as Paul said is making those connections to your community partners, and being able to connect with people and not only get them educated, but also get them to collaborate with you. So, um, but we'll go into a little bit more in detail in just a few.

>> PAUL SPENCER: And, and we have another question, Is Stanislaus County doing the Voters Choice Act county? They're, so Stanislaus is not doing it in 2020, um, but you know they might do it in the future. So, it's just uh, one thing you've gotta keep on your radar, and you know, especially if you're, you know, a local advocate, you know, you might want to have relationships with your election office so you can kind of feel them out whether or not they're going to do the Voter's Choice Act, but um, just to give Gave an awesome intro to doing community input on the VCA, uh, you know.

>> ALLIE CANNINGTON: And...

>> PAUL SPENCER: Go ahead.

>> ALLIE CANNINGTON: Oh and um, Paul, I just want to reiterate because we do, you know, more than half of our participants are not in a VCA county, so can you just remind people as we continue to move forward when talking about the VCA is relevant for all of us.

>> PAUL SPENCER: Uh, sure. So uh, you know the Voter's Choice Act has a big impact on people with disabilities. In that uh, you know, you're losing your neighborhood polling location, um but you're gaining some other things. And one big thing that you're gaining as a Voter's Choice Act county is the county is required to have committees, workshops, and outreach for the disability community. So, that to me is a big pro for doing the Voters Choice Act. Um, so, you know, perhaps you live in a county, like I live in San Diego county, we have, there's been committees and things for voters with disabilities without the Voters Choice Act, but uh,y ou know, it can be one way to make your election office do more outreach to the disability community, so that could be one reason you might be interested in whether or not your country is going to do the Voters Choice Act. But um, so Gabe's gonna, gonna talk now about one really cool thing about the VCA is this community input aspect.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Yeah. So I'm, and Allie, I'll just add a little thing um, I was having, we were having a conversation about this, a couple days ago, um, that one of the things that's really hard in, especially if you are in one of the Southern California counties that aren't doing VCA, i.e. like Riverside County or San Bernardino County, um, you still live in an area that if you're driving around in your car, and you're listening to KNX 10.70 radio, um you may hear a story about Oh, the vote center site locations or you know, being automatically mailed your vote by mail ballot. And so it's gonna be very very um, important for you know, this, this ongoing conversation and dialogue to, to happen with your clients, or consumers or community, other community partners if you don't live in a VCA county just to make sure that people are getting the correct information that applies to them. So, um, but uh, you know, one of the big things that's really really going to be important as we've sort of said it in a lot of different ways is the um, active participation by all of you. Because you go to your, um, community meetings, you go to, you are on different county committees, you go, you do presentations and trainings to partnering organizations and um, groups of clients and consumers. And so um, odds are that if they haven't heard about the Voter's Choice Act yet, they will. And so making sure that, that folks have, a good, you know, that A that you've, you're able to talk with them about it if they have questions or if you don't have the answers to their particular questions, being able to direct people to the, the most helpful resources, so, um.

>> MEGAN COWDELL: Gabe

>> GABE TAYLOR: Yes?

>> MEGAN COWDELL: This is Megan, it looks like we have someone raising their hand to ask a question, are you guys okay taking that right now?

 >> GABE TAYLOR: Sure

>> PAUL SPENCER: Sure.

>> MEGAN COWDELL: Perfect, Sheila I'm Going to go ahead and unmute you, so go ahead and an, uh, ask the question to us.

>> SHIELA: Anyway, okay. So um, I'm late because I didn't receive the ding dong because I um, registered late. But my question is whether Alameda isone of the counties that's doing this VCA thing or not?

>> PAUL SPENCER: Uh, Alameda is not one of the counties currently, so they might choose to do it in the future, but it's not happening for the elections in 2020.

>> MEGAN COWDELL: Great, thank you guys.

>> GABE TAYLOR: So um, we, we touched on it a little bit, um, I think Paul and his discussion mentioned some of the community meetings that have taken place in um, some of the, the uh, counties that have already gone towards the Voters Choice Act or will be implementing it this year. Um, but those are really great opportunities for um, community advocates to be involved, because this is um, this is the one opportunity where you can provide, um, suggestions on where you think um, good locations would be for vote centers and drop box locations. So uh, in, for example, in um, both LA and Orange County, they had um, a section of their website where voters, or where um, interested people could go and suggest offer suggestions, and they could just input whether it was a business or residence or a library, uh or you knows community center. They were able to um, put that in as a suggestion into a, a database portal on the county election site, and what us the counties do is they go in and they take all of the suggestions that have been given, and then they consider them and they often will go out to those locations and see if um, they are workable locations. Um, whether or not they have enough space, and whether or not they're accessible. Cause that's one of the big things that's really important about all of the vote center locations is that they need to be accessible for voters with disabilities. So that's one of the things that they go out and they do these site visits to make sure that all of these locations will be um, locations that a voter with a disability can get to, so. Um, and so, so yeah, so it's um, that's, that's a really great um, opportunity. And the other thing that's also really uh, um, helpful is when the counties are, get to the point where they, they have to um, put together a, an official plan on how this is, how the, the election will work, how all of the different um, steps and stages will work, and they have to make that public, so what they do is they put it all together, they get a lot of community feedback, and in um LA County and also Orange County, they um hosted uh, multiple community meetings. Where um, members of the public could come and um, provide some you know, some feedback or suggestions um, and you know on things they would like to see, locations that they think would be helpful. Um, it's also a great opportunity for the folks to be able to um, get, to get information that they can then share with their clients and consumers. So um, they, each county does it a little bit differently, some host multiple meetings, others will host um, maybe just one or two. So um, so yeah, so they, they talk about all of the voting options, and um, the the different things, all of the changes. And so, they're um, they're required to at least have one um, workshop that is um, directed for all of the languages that are covered in that specific county. Um, and then they are also required to have a workshop for um, voting people with disabilities. So, they will, and they're, they usually designated um, to to, so people will know if they have um, if they're from a bilingual community, or if they are a voter with a disability, they'll know that this is, you know, that they have a specific meeting that is scheduled um, that will cover information uh relevant, you know, that relates specifically to their particular needs, so. Um, and I wanted to also at this point, um, bring Brian and Russell in, because one of the things that they were really helpful in um early on, so uh, Brian up in Nevada County and Russell in Sacramento were really great in sort of mobilizing a lot of community members and community partners and consumers to get to some of those early meetings. So, I don't know if you all um, if Brian and Russell, if you can share a little bit about um, you know, some of, some of the experience that you had sort of outreaching to, to community partners.

>> BRIAN SNYDER: Who would you like togo first?

>> GABE TAYLOR: Um Brian, if you want to chime in that's fine, and then Russell.

>> BRIAN SNYDER: Hello, this is Brian from FREED, uh, Center for Independent Living in Grass Valley. Um, as Paul mentioned earlier about brain power, I apologize, I used mine up about a year and a half ago, so, just bare with me. In any case yeah, what we did was we formed a uh, the Future Elections of Nevada County Coalition, and that coalition was comprised of uh FREED of course, um the uh League of Women Voters of Western Nevada County, uh, the Sierra Fund, uh, Partners in English Language Learning, uh Truckee Family Resource Center, and um, we started early on and just started collaborating and seeing how we could outreach to ourum, our target audience, or audiences. Um, and which were older adults, people with disabilities, and uh, Spanish Speaking community members. And um, what we did was actually the first major initiative we did was we created aum, actually a video that explained uh, the Voter's Choice Act, and uh, we had two different videos, one that was in English And one in Spanish, uh with Spanish Captions, and um that was played on our local, um, community uh, Access TV station. It was also on YouTube, uh, and we posted on Facebook, and it actually got quite a few views, around 4,000. Um, and so that was one of our major outreach events, and it was also played at candidate forums in the beginning um, uh, Janis of the League of Women Voters And myself, we introduced the video, discussed the Voter's Choice Act, fielded questions from the audience after the video was shown. And so, um, yeah, we did a lot of, we tried to um, just reach everybody we could, either through the videos or through um literature or i'm going to assisted living facilities, um, skilled nursing facilities and just kind of, just introduce ourselves, hand out the pamphlets for the Voters Choice Act, and um, and by the end of it, um by this, I guess this would have been 2018, people were saying, you know, what are we going to do in 2019? And the consensus was everybody in the county says it's enough already with the Voters Choice Act, we get it, we get it. So I think um, uh, my mission was accomplished because we did not receive any complaints through the county, um and we did not, FREED didn't, you know, I kept checking and see if we had any messages about uh, issues with voting, and I don't believe that we received any. Um, and so, it seems to be going smoothly as far as we can tell. Um, the only downfall is we were not able to reach uh, as many Spanish speaking community members as we would have liked to. Um, and we did the best we could, both the elections department and uh our community partners as well as trying to reach uh, marginalized community members. Um, and so um, I believe that is it, this is, does that sound right? Is that, is that okay? Yeah.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Yeah, I think that gives a great, great overview. And Russell if you have any sort of, um, you know, experiences that are particular to uh, Sacramento County and everything that you did um, um, you know, whether or not it was reaching community partners uh or working with consumers that, that would be helpful. And sort of how to get them engaged.

>> RUSSELL RAWLINGS: Thanks, yeah, thankyou Brian, um, a lot of what happened in Nevada County also happened here in Sacramento County. I was fortunate and attended our first um, VAAC, Voter Accessibility Advisory Commission uh meeting, and was us brought into the committee early on, and uh, saw a lot of the partnerships that Brian Had mentioned. One of the things that was really important I think here in Sacramento is that there was a proposed, uh, vote center location that had uh, accessibility issues, um, it was not meeting the state standard set forth by SB 450 for a vote center. Um, there were issues with the exterior of the building um access, and in the county, elections office, and the VAAC, uh we worked together to um, identify the issues and ultimately made the decision at that time to not have uh, it be a vote center. Um, it was a difficult decision, we were able to find an alternate location in nearby town, but given that this was a very rural community, it was very challenging. However, I'm excited to say that because of the work that we did, um, the fact that there was the barriers and that we were able to maintain in constant contact with uh, the Board of Supervisors and the community in Isleton, um that we all are able to announce that Isleton will be a vote center in this upcoming May election. So we're really excited to hear that, um that's all work that came about through through the work of the VAAC. So um, you know the vote center model uh is very different, but there's so many pieces of the law that require additional standards on accessibility. Um, in fact, just last night at the Sacramento County Disability Advisory Commission meeting, um, our Registrar of Voters was talking to the Disability Advisory uh, committee, about um, about the changes and some of the new access, and it's interesting because all of that conversation used to just be a small piece of the DAC's purview, but now it's its own commission. So, the Voter Accessibility Advisory Commission is a really powerful tool, and I encourage, even if you don't have a VAAC, or you're not a VCA County, you can start building the community connections that Brian was talking about with other organizations, and I think that's really powerful. There was one here that was built called the Sacramento Vote Coalition. So, those are, those are the highlightsI think there are many other reasons to get involved, it's a good way to get out into the community, and um, meet with people and talk with them about voting.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Great. Thank, thank you both for sharing a little bit about the experiences, um, in your specific...

>> BRIAN SNYDER: May, may I interject one last thing?

>> GABE TAYLOR: Sure, sure sure.

>> BRIAN SNYDER: Um, one of the things that I remember hearing on our um, on our DO Network calls is issues with advocates and organizers having uh, difficulty connecting with their Elections Department. And um, one of the things that I think was crucial, uh, in terms of forming a relation with the Elections Department was Paul Spencer, he uh came up to our VAAC meetings and kind of reinforced his presence there to keep uh, the conversation on track, with regards to making sure that everybody was in compliance with the Voters Choice Act. Um, and so I would encourage uh advocates and organizers to call upon Gabe or Paul uh, if they're having any issues um with uh, Elections Departments in their countries to kind of, they can you know, kind of facilitate a dialogue, and I think through that, it really helped our country, Nevada County, because I'm in the beginning we weren't sure how to communicate with them, and you know ,because I just didn't want to bother them to some extent, but on the other hand uh, you know, that relationship grew and now they're reaching out to us all the time. And uh, so I think um, in order to make things smooth for everyone, um, and uh inclusive, I think it's really important to reach out to Gabe or Paul and uh if there's any issues with connecting with your Elections Partners in your counties. Over, thank you.

>> PAUL SPENCER: Yep, and Brian, this is Paul, hey, I totally agree. Uh, Gabe and I are always happy to help in any of the other counties, especially if you're looking to start um, some of these committees for voters with disabilities that we're going to talk about next, but Brian, you've done an exceptional job uh you know, building a coalition you know, it's just ongoing work. You know, it's keeping people interested. Um, and sending out agendas which you've done a great job with. And it's establishing relationships with the Election Office, um. And Brian, I think as you discovered and I discovered other countries, you know them, especially as County Election Officials are trying to do a better job meeting the accessibility requirements, it really helps to have an expert like you Brian to call and ask. Um, and also regular meetings, you know, helps keep everybody on track. Yeah, and then Russell, I like the contrast between Russell and Brian too,s o you know, in Sacramento, you know, there's been a little bit more longstanding, you know, committees for people with disabilities, but you know, as Russell talked about, you know, ran into a really uh, sticky issue where the county wanted to use a vote center that wasn't accessible, um, you know, Russell did some great advocacy work to make sure that that didn't happen. Um, so it just, maybe you know Russell had the relationships to you know be nimble and find a solution, which is great.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Yeah.

>> PAUL SPENCER: But probably the big thing is we're going to talk about in these VAACs in the next couple of slides, is these are kind of a good way to get your foot in the door and kind of get the ball rolling on accessibility. And even if this slide doesn't make it abundantly clear, and we'll talk about it, you don't have to be a VCA County to have these committees, um, and one way to think about the Voters Choice Act is that disability advocates got a whole lot of best practices for making elections accessible added into the Voter's Choice Act. So, the requirements for the VA counties, but they're still best practices that other countries can adopt. And for example, Sacramento and Nevada County, you know, before they started the VCA, you know they formed these committees which is a good practice, especially if you're one of those folks within another country that's thinking about doing the VCA, it's a good time to get the Scrolling or to go ahead and join. Hey Gabe, I'm sorry, I have one last thing to say for uh Russell and Brian, just, just to uh. So, Russell, Brian, and DRC, our organizations collaborated with the Sacramento Elections Office on making uh, a PSA video on vote centers. So, it's uh, it's on our YouTube channel, if you want to check it out, uh, Russell and Brian are both in the videos, and it's just a really cool collaboration, cause we had two nonprofits, we had an Election Office, and we had DRC another nonprofit, um made this really cool thing, and you can see how we all collaborated to do it. Um, so uh, I also, I think the video is pretty good, and Russell and Brian are in it, and Gabe's even narrating it, so um, it's definitely something to check out our YouTube channel.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Yeah, for sure.

>> PAUL SPENCER: And Russell and Brian, I appreciate you both um.

>> BRIAN SNYDER: Thank you, the feeling is mutual.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Yes, you, I mean just, just again, it, it speaks to the power and to the gift that collaborating together um, can really bring. And also, just to touch on it a little bit, the really great thing about these VAACs, and we'll kind of briefly touch on VAACs and then move on to the, the next um uh, topic of remote accessible vote by mail. Um, the really good thing about these committees is they're the local voice. So, because you know, uh Paul and I, we go to a lot of the VAACs, but we may not live in that specific county, so we don't know the ins and outs of the different organizations and differential, public transportation routes, and so having that involvement and that engagement from local community members is really important because the community, the local voice are the voices of the people that know what works and what doesn't on a day-to-day basis. And so, it's really really crucial to, to get those voices at, to the table, and almost as important as you know, any sort of accessibility experts or um, sort of outside voices that would becoming in to provide input. So.

>> PAUL SPENCER: Yeah, also Gabe, just like for an example, you know, I think this was in a Sacramento VAAC meeting, and you know, someone was talking about public transportation route, but you know, Russell was able to point out that Yes, this route was there, but practically, you know, um, if you're a person with disability, it really doesn't take you where you need to go, so Russell had that like on the ground local experience that really informed the discussion of where they were going to place vote centers.

>> ALLIE CANNINGTON: This is Allie, um, hi y'all. I'm just so glad we're um, that I'm really hoping that folks on the webinar are able to get a sense of the opportunities available in their local counties, whether or not they have adopted the Voters Choice Act. Um, due to time and um the, you know, all of the important content in today's webinar. I'm going to request that anyone who's interested in um, who is not already involved in their local Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee, or maybe your country doesn't have one, but you want to get involved and maybe help get one started, um, I'm going to ask that we um, move forward to the Remote Accessible Vote By Mail, and um that for anyone who wants to get that information and get involved to contact us directly, you can put it through um the uh, webinar uh, evaluation, or you can email us, and uh we can get you connected to uh the advocacy that is so necessary across the state. Uh, and so, uh thank you so much and if, thank you!

>> GABE TAYLOR: Sure, sure yeah.

>> PAUL SPENCER: Keep it moving, Allie! You do have two epic talkers to do a presentation.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Right, yeah! You've gotta keep us on task for sure. So yeah, so I will go in, I’ll touch some on the, the remote accessible vote by mail, so any of you all that haven't heard of this as an option, um, it's an option primarily for people with disabilities, and what it does is it allows a voter to mark and review and then print out a ballot using their home computers, and oftentimes if you use any sort of assistive devices on your home computers, it allows you to do that from the comfort and privacy of your home, and then they, um, count all countries are offering this option, and they are including a prepaid envelope. So, you'll be able to mark your ballot, review it, and then once you print it out using your home um, computer and your printer, um, you can then mail it back in or if you're, um, you know, you want to drop it off, you can always do that. But they do provide a prepaid envelope for YouTube able to just send it back in via mail. So, so how does it work? So, you have to, because it's um, uh, a service that is primarily um provided for voters with disabilities. And it's also um, I mean it's available for anybody, but it's primarily um geared to be an accommodation for a voter with a disability, you have to contact your county elections office to be able to get the application to, uh, um become remote accessible vote by mail voter, and you can do that through, by phone, by email, or often times I’m, depending on your county, um they'll have the a link on their website that you can go to that will um allow you to print out uh, the application form. So, um once the request is received by your county election's office, um, they will email you a link to the remote accessible vote by mail, um, so you'll receive that in your um email. So if that is something you're interested in doing, be sure that you're giving them uh an active and a frequently used email address, just so you can be sure to get it. So, um, once you do that, you'll get a link that will um, provide, have all of your um, you'll be able to enter all of your voter information into a secure portal, um, and so it will also ask you to affirm that um, you are in fact a voter with a disability, it doesn't ask what your specific disability is, it just wants you to acknowledge that you in factory, um, you do have a disability. So, um then it will download the specific ballot type, and any additional information, like instructions on how to mark and return the ballot. Um, and oftentimes you'll see it, it'll come in a little folder, and they'll it'll designate the folder that explains instructions and then uh, there will be an icon that will oftentimes you can click on it and it will direct you right to the ballot. So um, like we mentioned, the uh voter is able to use their assistive technology, um, whatever that happens to be um, from your home computer to um complete and mark your choices on your ballot. And, as Paul mentioned earlier, we have a video on um, our YouTube page, so go to um, type into uh the YouTube, you can just do Disability Rights California Remote Accessible Vote By Mail and you should be able to call up the video, and it gives you a step-by-step of what the process looks like. Um, so and then, once you complete it, uh, you are able to print out your ballot, and that includes the choices that you've made and then place it in the envelope. And the envelope, you can then uh, you also, you have to sign the envelope to verify that you have completed it, and you can, as I said, either return it by mail, drop it off at one of the many drop box locations, or um go to any polling place or vote center by 8:00 PM on election day. So, you're also able to um, you can check the status of your ballot as well.

>> PAUL SPENCER: Alright so, okay, we saved this one for the end, we only have two slides left. But um, so, for the March primary, normally you know in California, it's up to, it doesn't really matter what party you're in for what you're voting for. However, it's different for um, the presidential primary, so um, let's just do the easy part first, so. If you're already registered with a political party, you'll get that party ballot with their presidential candidates, so that's pretty normal. You know, if you're in a party, you're going to vote for those parties candidates. So, if you want to vote for a candidate in another party, um, you're going to need to re-register with that party. So just kind of linking back what we were talking about with conditional voter registrations, that you know they have registration deadlines, not quite as serious anymore, but you should still do those ahead of time. Um, otherwise it's going to be inconvenient because you're going to have to go re-register in-person, you also want to make sure you're-registered before vote by mail ballots go out, um, because, if you get a vote by mail ballot, you might get the wrong one. So again, let's just go back to this easy part, you know, if you're already in a party and you want to vote for that party's presidential candidates, that's what you're going to get. You don't really need to do anything different. If you are a nonpartisan, or independent, uh, so what this is called in California officially is No Party Preference, um, so some people call it Decline to State, you can think about it as nonpartisan independent, so you know, if you are No Party Preference, um, you're not going to see the presidential race on the primary election ballot at all. So it'll just be blank, it won't be there. So, to vote for that, uh, you've got to do something else, if you're a nonpartisan, again, if you are registered as non partisan, or again, excuse me, if you've registered as No Party Preference, which is what it's officially called in California, I'm like what? You know, it was formally called Independent, but if you were registered as No Party Preference And you want to vote for, in the presidential primary, you've got to do something a little bit different. And I uh, lied to you, we have three slides on this stuff, but um so, so this is kind of breaking it down by party. So, you know, if you're in the American Independent, Democratic, or Libertarian party, um, excuse me, um these are the parties that are allowing non partisan voters to cross over and vote for their presidential candidates .But, you've got to let your election office know that you want uh, a crossover ballot, from one of these parties. So, again, just to kind of summarize, you can be a No Party Preference and if you request the ballot, you can vote in the American Independent, Democratic, or Libertarian parties for their presidential candidates. Um, so in the next bullet point, it's the Green Party, the Peace and Freedom Party, the Republican Party are not allowing No Party Preference voters to vote for their presidential candidates. You actually have to be registered in one of these parties. So, if you want to vote in the Green Party for their presidential candidates, you actually need to re-register as the Green Party. That's kind of what it comes down to, foremost people, you know your, the party you're in, that's who you're voting for, things are fine. But you know, a lot of people in California have No Party Preference, so you need to be aware of these rules so you don't get a surprise when you either A) Open your vote by mail ballot or show up on March 3rd and you want to vote for presidential candidate, but you're No Party Preference, so if you want to get one of these ballots, you need to go on your country's elections website, check things out, and you're going to need to request one ahead of time. But that's the primary rules in a nutshell but just something to watch out for.

>> PAUL SPENCER: This we just kind of want to go over some of the resources where you can get nonpartisan voter information, so, um, votesmart.org,vote411.org, easy voter guide.org,um, so easyvoterguide.org is my personal favorite, I really like that one. It does a really good job explaining what's on the ballot, in an easy to understand format. So, kind of some drier ones is you can read the official voter guide, um, i voterguide.sos.ca.gov, so, you know the Secretary of State has the Voter Guide, it’s got a lot of information on there too. Uh, another I would say if you're in a Voter’s Choice Act county or you're curious about the Voters Choice Act, I’d strongly recommend you go tovoterschoice.org um, it's got great stuff on the Voters Choice Act, it's a really good resource. Um, so.

>> GABE TAYLOR: And it's also updated with any um, new developments, I mean they try to update it fairly regularly, so it's helpful for those counties that may be in the process of, of planning or thinking about it, uh, just to get um, regular, ongoing news on what, what's happening in your county.

>> PAUL SPENCER: And then uh, last plug too is again for Disabilityrightsca.org, we've got lots of resources promoting disabilities. We have some toolkits for if you're looking to start a VAAC, or join one, or you want to know more, we've got toolkits there, we've also got a toolkit that's geared towards election officials that are starting a VAAC, you can, you can, hand them a copy of that. There’s also information on conservatorships and just the general rules for accessible voting. But also check out our YouTube channel, we made a video of remote accessible vote by mail, and we also have the video on vote centers that we made with Russell and Brian, and then we have another older video which um, is more about accessibility in polling locations. So, so we've been trying to make some good video content.

>> GABE TAYLOR: And it also has, um, also on our website there's a link um that goes to publications, and um we have one on uh, best practices for um, starting a VAAC, and the sort of, you know, things that are, are helpful tips and tools to um, if your county is starting to do that, and so, that's helpful if, if you're wanting to sort of assist your county in doing some outreach to get more VAC members, on on your local VAAC Committee. So.

>> PAUL SPENCER: Uh, so, we've got a question, on you know, to inform our community on the weirdness of the primary, I like how you put it, uh, is there a factsheet available? So there are resources on the Secretary of State's website, uh, on the primary, they’re pretty good, um, and then also I Recommend you look at uh, your county election’s office website, for resources in, you don't have to go too deep into the weeds. There are a couple of differences at the county level, so um, you know, San Diego, you know, they've got a good fact sheet that they've put out, but you also want to check um, with your county elections office. Um, but it's a tough one to explain on a fact sheet too that doesn't turn into like a choose your own adventure with uh, meandering paths every where.So, I've seen some resources that are pretty good, and some that are pretty tough to follow. Um, just one other thing about the, uh, I think Russell and Brian kind of talked about it, it is a lot of work to kind of get these VAACs going and build um community coalitions, but kind of once you get them running, the idea is that they kind of start to run on their own. Um, and they kind of build up some momentum, which is really helpful too.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Yeah, and the great thing about the VAACs too is um, if um, to get, you know, to, to try and sort of getas much um, perspective, um it's really helpful to um, reach out to different service organizations, um, one of the things that I've really tried to um to, stress is getting um, young representation getting um, like college aged representation, getting somebody from, who can um, maybe if you have a good relationship with your um, paratransit folks, um, maybe get somebody from that organization to come and um, be a member. Or, you know.

>> PAUL SPENCER: They make great VAAC members.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Yeah, but just to, because the thing that's really helpful is when you get to the point where you're trying to coordinate a lot of the things of like where um, drop boxes are going to go, and where um vote center locations are going to go. Being able to have somebody who has a beat on the pulse of public transportation, is really really helpful. And so, and being able to have a, um somebody who may be of the college aged crowd, who may have a really good um, a lot of experience doing social media and outreach and using a lot of the different social media platforms, um, that's really helpful to engage the, the community, so, just making sure that you have this as wide-sweeping representation as you can.

>> PAUL SPENCER: Also, if you're unsure if your county has a VAAC or not, um, you know, check their websites, some websites are better than others, and also, reach out to Gabe and I, we can let you know if your county has a VAAC. And a handful of counties, they have VAAC they're just not meeting regularly, so they kind of need a jumpstart. And we're happy to help you with that.

>> ALLIE CANNINGTON: And, oh go ahead go ahead, and then we do have a few questions.

>> PAUL SPENCER: Oh, we do! I didn't see any questions.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Okay

>> ALLIE CANNINGTON: Yeah, so, Megan, Megan will um, help to facilitate that, and then, this is Allie, and I also have a question I wanted to make sure that um I understand fully, so that I can inform everyone that I know. So, um, Megan go ahead.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Well, can this just.

>> MEGAN COWDELL: Thanks, Allie.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Megan can I just add one little additional thing, and then I'll be quiet.

>> MEGAN COWDELL: Absolutely, go ahead.

 [LAUGHTER]

>> GABE TAYLOR: I, I just wanted to say that a lot of people um, you'll get the, the response when I've outreached to people and say Hey, you'd be, you'd make a great VACC member, we'd love to have you on the county VAAC. Um, a lot of the responses that I get is Well, I don't really, I don't really know a lot about elections or election law or accessibility, and that doesn't matter. You will learn, you will learn first off. And then you're also um, surrounded by people who if you're not sure about a regulation or a rule, um, you will, we can share that with you. And so um, if you're interested and passionate and want to have a voice and have a say, contact your county elections office about it.

>> PAUL SPENCER: That's a good point Gabe, yeah, I certainly agree.

>> GABE TAYLOR: Yeah

>> PAUL SPENCER: Uh, Megan, questions?

>> MEGAN COWDELL: Perfect, yeah we have a few people who have their hands raised.

>> PAUL SPENCER: Oh sure.

>> MEGAN COWDELL: So Lauren, I'm going to go ahead and unmute your line, um, so please go ahead and ask the question you have for our panelists, Lauren. Okay, anyways, it looks like Lauren got off the call, but we have a question again from Sheila. So Sheila, I'm going to go ahead and unmute you, okay?

>> SHIELA: So, first of all, um what is the date by which one should register, um, for the March election? And then I have a comment.

>> PAUL SPENCER: Uh, uh, the easiest, so Sheila, the easy answer, this is Paul um, you should register now. Um...

>> SHIELA: Yeah, but what's the 30 days date or the 90 days date or whatever it's

>> PAUL SPENCER: So, kind of the big deadline now is if you're not registered within 14 days of the election, you're going to have to go register in person.

>> SHIELA: Okay

>> PAUL SPENCER: So, you know, I think that is going to be...

>> SHIELA: Definitely. Okay, but the comment that I wanted to make is...

>> PAUL SPENCER: Sure.

>> SHIELA: Huzzah for the 18th Century ink and parchment people, I cannot use remote access vote by mail because they've shoved print down our throats yet again. And I've made that comment to the SOS many times, and as a blind person who does not own a printer, and many of these um RAVBM places will not let you use a public computer and do it, you, you can't do it if you down own your very own printer.

>> PAUL SPENCER: Yeah...

>> SHIELA: Which is...

>> PAUL SPENCER: I, I think there are some problems with the remote accessible, like you know, you've got to have a computer, you've got to have a printer, and you know some of this is a compromise for security, but um, yeah, it's not. It's good for some people with disabilities, but not everybody, so um, yeah, it's, it's not perfect, Sheila.

>> ALLIE CANNINGTON: And this is Allie, I'll ask my question, well actually, does anyone else have any questions for um, our panelists? Well while you're mulling it over, um I will ask mine, so um, let's say I um, am registered um as No Party Preference, uh, do you have to request a, the crossover ballot before the election, or do, can you request it um, if you go to your, once you arrive at your local polling place and or vote center?

>> PAUL SPENCER: You...you can still request it when you arrive even on election day. So, you can.

>> ALLIE CANNINGTON: So the key words are crossover ballot, correct?

>> PAUL SPENCER: You can, um, it's just ideally you'll have done it ahead of time, just um, you know it will take longer to vote in person, it's also um, you know, it is a burden too on the elections office, cause they have to process um, that differently. Um, so, you can still do it on election day, but it's recommended that you do it ahead of time.

>> MEGAN COWDELL: Thank you Allie and thank you, um, Gabe and Paul. Uh, this is a lot of great information. I'm not seeing any other questions come through. If you do think of anything, you can go ahead and reach out to Disability Organizing Network, um and we can answer any questions or refer you to the people who might have that information, um, at a later time. So we're going to go ahead and close out today's webinar, once again, thank you to everyone who presented today, so Gabe and Paul as well as Brian and uh Russell, and then Elizabeth Campbell Soper who did a lot of work behind the scenes to get today's presentation up for everyone.