Comparison of Voter Participation in Long Term Care Facilities in the 2004 and 2008 Presidential Elections

Prepared for

Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

University of Texas Center on Aging

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Prepared by

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Comparison of Voter Participation in Long Term Care Facilities in the 2004 and 2008 Presidential Elections

Summary

The right of a citizen to cast a ballot does not end when they enter a long term care facility. Long term care residents are still members of the community and are still citizens of the United States of America. This report is a summary of observations of voting problems encountered in the November 2008 general election.

An education outreach program provided voting information to facility staff several months prior to the election. Presentations to residents were given to help raise awareness of the election and their right to vote. The outreach program did not make a significant difference in the voter turnout in long term care facilities. The process, however, remained the same. It is problems with the process that will be addressed in this document.

Scope

This comparison was limited to Skilled Nursing Facilities and Assisted Living facilities that were in Harris County, Texas in 2004 and 2008 and reported a census to the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS). The total number of target facilities used for basis of comparison was 52. These were facilities that appear on both November 2004 and November 2008 DADS census reports.

The observations and interpretations are solely those of the author.
**Table of Data**

Data of 52 target facilities in Harris County, Texas.

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Total ballots cast in Harris County Texas: 1,087,461 and 1,180,401.
Total number of facilities reporting a census to DADS: 59 and 65.

Voter registration forms from target facilities submitted by Ombudsmen – 150.
Voter registrations successfully processed – 110
Total ballots by mail received – 68,323
Total ballots by mail counted – 64,302
Total ballots by mail rejected – 4,021
Voter count was determined by a match of the voter address and the facility address. Voter count includes both mail in ballots and ballots cast at the poll. Voter count does not include voters that were registered to an address other than the facility.

**Summary percentages**

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<td>Change in total census of target facilities</td>
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<td>Percent of facility census casting a vote in 2008</td>
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<td>Percent of registered voters casting a ballot in 2004 (1)</td>
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<td>Percent of registered voters casting a ballot in 2008 (2)</td>
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(1) Census numbers provided by the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services as public information.

(2) Election results provided by Harris County Clerk’s Office as public information.

(3) Registration information provided by Harris County Tax Assessor and Collector’s office via the online voter registration data base.

(4) Houston Chronicle, November 5, 2008 “Dems baffled by low voter turnout in Harris County” by Alan Bernstein
Observations

Registration

Registration is the first step in casting a ballot and many Long Term Care (LTC) residents don’t make it past this first step. In 2008, Volunteer Ombudsmen assisted in registering LTC residents. Of the 163 registrations submitted, 50 were rejected.

Reasons for rejections included:

- Check box indicating citizenship had not been checked.
- Person did not have a driver’s license and did not check the box indicating they did not have a driver’s license. The last 4 digits of the social security number was written in the appropriate location.
- Signature was not legible
- Printed name was not legible
- The address provided for residency cannot be a commercial address. Some of the facility addresses were tagged as commercial addresses and registrations were denied.
- Neither the facility, nor the appointed guardian would provide last four digits of the social security number to complete the form.
- If resident uses the last four digits of the social security number as identification, the name on the form must match exactly to the official social security record. If there are any discrepancies, the form will be rejected.

If the registration was rejected, a letter is sent to the resident requesting verification of a photo id. Residents do not usually have a photo id with them during their stay. This is because the facility recommends that residents not keep any valuables in their room. The facility is not required to keep copies of any photo ids.

One facility administrator explained that on admission, each resident is asked if they wish to vote and she knew for a fact that no resident in the facility wanted to vote. During an Ombudsman round at the facility, two residents expressed a desire to vote. That facility showed no residents that voted in the 2004 or 2008 election. The facility checked only once during a resident’s stay and did not allow for any changes.

During voter registration drives, the first reaction of residents, staff and family members, was usually one of suspicion. They felt that these drives were being pushed by the “other” party to try and change the election. It took several minutes of explanation that the registration drive was not sponsored by a political party or candidate to gain the trust necessary to continue.
At first glance, assisting a person to complete a voter registration form sounds very simple. A Social Worker with a Masters degree assisted 10 residents with registration forms and six were rejected. A post graduate degree does not increase the success rate. As demonstrated by the League of Women Voters, training someone specifically to assist with voter registration does increase the success rate.

**Casting a Ballot**

**At a polling location**

All residents were encouraged to vote during the early voting period. Special polling places were open on weekends and extended hours during the week. These locations were staffed with workers that are more knowledgeable in assisting impaired voters. Most residents were comfortable with early voting, but there were a few that preferred voting on the day of the election.

Harris County has several different types of precincts. In smaller towns this is not much of an issue, but in Houston the precincts do not align with one another. There is a County Commissioner precinct, a Judicial precinct and a voting precinct. Early voting is the only time that voters from any precinct can vote at the same location. On election day, voters can only cast their ballots at their registered polling location.

Transportation is a problem for LTC residents. Several options that are available in Harris County were investigated. There was no consistent, reliable means of transportation. There was no consistent policy regarding transportation.

Transportation options available:

- Family member
- Facility Van
- MetroLift
- HandiCab
- County Buses
- Volunteers

Some of the residents were able to get transportation to early voting by a family member. This was considered the best solution, but the least one used. Family members do not always have a vehicle that can transport an impaired person comfortably and safely. Family members may not be trained regarding transfers of a person in and out of a vehicle.
Many people assume that MetroLift will provide transportation and it is free when traveling to a polling location. MetroLift is only available to people who are certified MetroLift users. Certification requires a doctor’s letter explaining the disability, completion of the eligibility form, and appearance at the MetroLift office in downtown Houston for an in-person interview. The entire process can take several weeks.

In 2008, “Vote Now Houston” had a program in association with Yellow Cab, to transport people to the polls. Information regarding this program was broadcast during a television news report two days prior to the end of early voting. There were some restrictions regarding eligibility and only the first $50 was covered. If there were any additional charges, the rider would have to pay out of pocket. Phone calls made to the phone number given were not returned. “Vote Houston Now” received Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funds. It would have been helpful to know about this program earlier in the election process.

Harris County has several buses that are used for outings by facilities and senior groups. These buses could not be used to transport residents to the polls because the county commissioner’s name was on the side of the bus, and the county thought it might be construed as trying to sway votes. Buses can only be booked one month in advance and facilities must call at a certain time in the morning. All facilities in the precinct compete for the same buses and it is a first come first serve. No facility was able to book a bus to go to the polls.

One facility contacted their local elected state representative and staff members came out with their personal cars and transported residents to the polls.

Facilities would often say that “state regulations” prevented the residents from being transported to the polls. One facility said that each resident must be accompanied by a staff or family member during the trip to the poll and it was too much of a burden on the staff to take residents to the poll. Another facility said that the facility van could only be used for Medicare/Medicaid reimbursable trips and voting was not a reimbursable expense. One facility stated that it was not their policy to let residents leave the facility alone.

**Ballot by Mail**

Casting a ballot by mail requires that a person first submit an application for a ballot. Applications for ballot by mail must be requested from the county elections office. Only one application can be sent out at a time. A facility cannot request a package of applications for ballot by mail. However, if a facility has a computer, and access to the internet, an application may be downloaded and copied.
There were some questions regarding the payment of postage for the applications for ballot by mail. Should the postage come from the resident’s personal funds, or should the facility pay the postage.

When a person submits an application for ballot by mail, they must first have a valid voter registration number. Voter registration forms and applications for ballot by mail cannot be submitted at the same time. If the applicant does not have a valid voter registration number at the time it is processed, the application will be rejected.

After the application is submitted and approved, the ballot is mailed to the address specified in the application. There are also other steps that are taken to verify that the application and the resulting ballot match to the same individual.

The postal service delivers the ballots to the facility address. In a Skilled Nursing Facility, there are no private mailboxes for residents. The mail for the facility and the residents is delivered the same as a standard commercial delivery. The bundle of mail is brought inside the building and placed where ever the postal delivery person has been instructed. An employee of the facility then sorts through the mail and pulls items addressed to the residents. Ballots are usually held by the social worker or activity director of the facility until a time when the residents have time and materials to complete the ballot.

Again there were comments regarding who pays the postage on the return ballot. The Harris County elections department has stated that as long as some postage is on the ballot, it will be delivered to the county. If it is delivered, postage due, the county will pay the remaining postage.

Maintaining privacy during the completion of a ballot for a non-ambulatory resident can be a problem. Residents that are covered by Medicaid or do not have the funds for a private room, must share a room. In a nursing home, the rooms are usually 10 ft by 16 ft. The room space is normally divided by a thin curtain that can be drawn for visual privacy. Each resident’s space usually includes the bed, a bedside cabinet, a chair and an over the bed table. When assisting a resident that is bedridden, there is little room to work and the roommate can hear the entire process.

The application for mail in ballot and the ballot itself are much more complex than the voter registration form. The ballot packet contains 6 items in addition to the actual ballot. The items are various sizes and can easily fall on the floor and hard to retrieve for someone in a wheelchair. At this time, there are no statistics regarding the number of applications for mail in ballot that were rejected. The total number of mail in ballots in 2008 was 68,323 and of those, 4,021 were rejected. Statistics were not available to determine how many rejected applications or ballots were submitted from the target facilities.
**Conclusions**

1. There is no reference to voter registration or casting a ballot in the Licensure and Certification Handbook from Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services. There are no consistent voting policies from facility to facility, or even from election to election.

2. Government agencies require that you to come to them. There is no ability for the government agency to come to you unless you are in violation. From casting a ballot, to getting a state identification card and even to request special transportation, the government agencies require that you come to them. When given a choice, LTC residents that are ambulatory, would prefer to cast their votes at an early voting location. Election officials would like for them to go to an early voting location. Transportation is the major obstacle. Residents and facility staff are not aware of any easy, affordable means of transportation.

3. LTC residents that vote by mail, may not have their votes counted because of errors in the forms required. To submit a voter registration change of address, or request a replacement card, a complete new application is required. If there are any errors, the application is rejected, the request is not processed and the entire cycle starts again. No one at a facility is trained to assist with voter registrations.

4. The premise of the entire process is that everyone has a telephone and that most people have easy access to a computer. Many residents in long term care do not have their own phone. They must use a phone in a common a open area. Some facilities only have one computer, and it is located in the administrator’s office.

5. The degree of participation in elections can be a reflection of the administration and direct care staff’s knowledge and attitude regarding an election. Many direct care staff are not citizens and others have no interest in elections or the election process. Some administration staff just do not want to be bothered. Some staff members are afraid of being charged with voter fraud.

**Recommendations**

1. Election officials prefer people go to the polls. It is easier for them to verify the identity and assist someone in a secure, controlled environment. Many LTC residents would prefer to go to the polls. To achieve this requires 1) a consistent policy regarding travel to the polls, and 2) a consistent, safe and reliable method of transportation.
2. Residents usually do not have their social security card, driver’s license or state identification card with them. Residents are encouraged to not keep any valuable items in their rooms. The facility is not required to keep these documents for them. Residents sometimes know their social security number, but it is not common for a resident to know exactly how their name appears on their card. The facility should be required to keep copies of the residents driver’s license or state id, social security card and voter registration card in a secure area so that the resident may request the information without fear of identity theft. If the resident does not have all of these documents, then the facility should assist the resident in obtaining them.

3. The Department of Public Safety should investigate ways to transition people who become impaired from a driver’s license to a state identification card without requiring a trip to a DPS office. The DPS should also develop a method for issuing state identification cards in a mobile setting. These mobile offices could then visit state licensed facilities to issue the identification cards.

4. The county elections department should develop a training program specifically for assisting impaired voters with voting at the polls and with ballots by mail.

5. At least one person at each state licensed facility should be trained to assist residents with registering to vote. At least one person at each state licensed facility should be trained to assist with completing a ballot by mail. Verification of this training should be included as part of the state survey.

6. During the care plan meeting, the issue of voting should be addressed so that the family, facility and physician can work together so the resident can take advantage of transportation opportunities and voter assistance programs.

7. The Texas Secretary of State should send notices regarding upcoming elections to state licensed facilities to remind them of a resident’s right to vote and to prepare for upcoming elections.

8. Resident participation in general elections should be included in the state survey

9. Policies regarding transportation, training and other activities relating to resident voting should be written in to the State Licensure Guide.

10. All organizations that receive funding from the Help America Vote Act and/or provide voting related services in Harris County should be listed in
a common location with a short description of the services they provide and a working phone number.

11. Maintaining a voter’s registration status in a long term care facility should be an ongoing effort. Transportation to an early voting location should be available to residents of long term care facilities at no charge and with minimal pre-qualification. The mail in ballot forms and process should be reviewed with improvements to enable those with physical or mental impairments to cast their ballot.

12. Voter registration forms, Application for Ballot by Mail, and the actual ballot packet should be reviewed with the goal of making them easier to handle, easier to read and remove unnecessary information.

13. Provide postage paid envelopes for ballots by mail.

14. Look for ways that technology can be used to assist and support mobile voting or traveling early voting clerks.

**Appendices:**

A. Voter registration form
B. Voter registration rejection letter
C. Online Application for Ballot by Mail
D. Contents of Ballot by Mail packet
A. Voter Registration Form

1-800-252-VOTE(8683), TDD 1-800-735-2989, www.sos.state.tx.us.

**Qualifications**
- You must register to vote in the county in which you reside.
- You must be a citizen of the United States.
- You must be at least 17 years and 10 months old to register, and you must be 18 years of age by Election Day.
- You must not be finally convicted of a felony, or if you are a felon, you must have completed all of your punishment, including any term of incarceration, parole, supervision, period of probation, or you must have received a pardon.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Middle Name (If any)</th>
<th>Former Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Residence Address:** Street Address and Apartment Number, City, State, and ZIP Code. If none, describe where you live. (Do not include P.O. Box or Rural Rt.)

**Mailing Address:** Street Address and Apartment Number or P.O. Box, City, State and ZIP Code: If mail cannot be delivered to your residence address.

**Date of Birth:** month, day, year

**Gender (Optional)**
- Male
- Female

**TX Driver’s License No. or Personal ID. No.**
(Issued by the Department of Public Safety)

**Signature of Applicant or Agent and Relationship to Applicant or Printed Name of Applicant if Signed by Witness and Date.**

I understand that giving false information to procure a voter registration is perjury, and a crime under state and federal law. Conviction of this crime may result in imprisonment up to 180 days, a fine up to $2,000, or both.

I affirm that I
- am a resident of this county and U.S. Citizen;
- have not been finally convicted of a felony or if a felon I have completed all of my punishment including any term of incarceration, parole, supervision, period of probation, or I have been pardoned; and
- have not been determined by a final judgment of a court exercising probate jurisdiction to be totally mentally incapacitated or partially mentally incapacitated without the right to vote.

[Signature]

Date
NOTICE OF INCOMPLETE INFORMATION ON VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION

Dear Applicant,

Notice is hereby given that your application for voter registration has been reviewed and fails to include all information required:

You failed to include your current Texas driver's license number or personal identification number, or if you do not have a Texas license or ID number, the last 4 digits of your Social Security number; or the information you provided could not be verified. As of January 1, 2006 identification information is required on all Voter Registration Applications and must be verified by the Office of the Secretary of State with the Department of Public Safety records.

We are enclosing another application. You must fill out all information on the new application unless the items are indicated as optional. To help expedite the verification process, we respectfully request that you include a copy of your Texas driver's license and/or ID with your revised application.

If your revised application is received within 10 days of this notice, your registration will become effective 30 days from the date we received your original (incomplete) application. If the revised application is received after 10 days of this notice, your registration will become effective 30 days after the postmark on the revised application.

If you have any questions, please contact the Harris County Voter Registration Department at (713) 368-2200.

Sincerely,

George Hammerlein
Director of Voter Registration
C. Online Application for Ballot by Mail

APPLICATION FOR BALLOT BY MAIL FROM HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS — PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE READ INSTRUCTIONS VERY CAREFULLY AND PROVIDE ALL REQUIRED INFORMATION.

NAME (As registered to vote) NOMBRE (Como registrado para votar)

ADDRESS AS REGISTERED TO VOTE (Dirección de inscripción como votante)

NUMBER (Número) STREET (Calle) Apt (Apartamento)

CITY (Ciudad) STATE (Estado) ZIP (Código Postal)

MAIL MY BALLOT TO: (If different from above) (The mailing address must be the voter registration mailing address or address indicated under REASON FOR VOTING.) (Si es diferente a la anterior) (La dirección de correo debe ser la dirección de inscripción o indicada en la razón para votar)

MAILING ADDRESS: (Dirección postal)

CITY (Ciudad) STATE (Estado) ZIP (Código Postal)

AMOUNT OF DEPOSIT (Monto de depósito) 

TYPE AND DATE OF ELECTION (TIPO Y FECHA DE ELECCIÓN)

VOTING PRECINCT NUMBER* (Número de precinto de votación)

REGISTRATION NUMBER* (Número de registro de votante)

TELEPHONE NUMBER* (Número de teléfono)

LANGUAGE PREFERENCE (select type of ballot you wish to receive): English/Spanish

1. 16 years of age or older, (16 años de edad o más)

2. Disability (incapacidad)

You must indicate the type of address where you are having your ballot mailed, if you are having your ballot mailed to an address other than your address of record. Check off: [ ] hospital, [ ] nursing home, [ ] care facility, [ ] retiremen center or [ ] relative. Indicate the relationship of the relative.

SEE INSTRUCTION #3 FOR CLARIFICATION. (Consulte el número 3 para más información)

3. Confinement in jail. (Está encarcelado) Check one: [ ] hospital, [ ] nursing home, [ ] care facility, [ ] retiremen center or [ ] relative. Indicate the relationship of the relative.

SEE INSTRUCTION #3 FOR CLARIFICATION. (Consulte el número 3 para más información)

4. Expected absence from county on election day and during clerk's regular office hours for the remainder of the early voting period. Application may be submitted from out of county. It must be submitted 10 days after early voting in person has begun. YOUR BALLOT MUST BE MAILED TO AN ADDRESS OUTSIDE THE COUNTY.

(Para aquellos que anticipan estar fuera del condado el día de las elecciones y durante las horas de trabajo de la Oficina de la Secretaría por el resto del periodo. La solicitud tiene que haber sido recibida 10 días después del comienzo del periodo de votación. EL DOMICILIO ACUAL SOLICITA QUE SE LE ENVIÉ SU PAPELETA ELECTORAL NO PIÉDE ESTAR UBICADO DENTRO DE ESTE CONDADO.)

I CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION GIVEN IN THIS APPLICATION IS TRUE, AND I UNDERSTAND THAT GIVING FALSE INFORMATION IN THIS APPLICATION IS A CRIME. (“CERTIFICO QUE LA INFORMACIÓN INDICADA EN ESTA SOLICITUD ES VERDADERA Y ENTENDO QUE ES UN DELITO DAR INFORMACIÓIEN FALSA EN ESTA SOLICITUD.”)

SIGN HERE (FIRME Aquí)

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT (FIRMA DEL SOLICITANTE)

FOR WITNESS and/or ASSISTANT (PARA TESTIGO y/o ASISTENTE)

Applicant, if unable to sign, shall make mark in presence of witness. If applicant is unable to make mark the witness shall check here. [ ] PARA EL TESTIGO: Si el solicitante no puede firmar, debe hacer una marca en presencia del testigo. Si el solicitante no puede hacer una marca, el testigo debe señalar a lo que se refiere.

FAILURE TO COMPLETE THESE INSTRUCTIONS WILL BE CONSIDERED AS WITNESS WAS NOT WITNESSED OR APPLICANT WAS ASSISTED IN COMPLETING THE APPLICATION IS A CLASS A Misdemeanor. (FALLO DE COMPLETAR ESTAS INSTRUCCIONES SE CONSIDERARÁ COMO EL TESTIGO NO ES TESTIGADO O EL SOLICITANTE FUE ASISTIDO EN LA COMPLETACIÓN DE LA SOLICITUD ES UN DELITO CLASE A.)

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS/ASSISTANT (FIRMA DEL TESTIGO/ASISTENTE)

EL DOCUMENTO SE DEBE ENTREGAR EN LA OFICINA DE LA VOTACIÓN PARA SU ASISTENCIA.

X RELATIONSHIP OF WITNESS/ASSISTANT TO APPLICANT: CHECK ONE: [ ] father, [ ] mother, [ ] child, [ ] sibling, [ ] other.

X RELACIÓN DEL TESTIGO ASISTENTE CON EL SOLICITANTE: SELECCIONE UNA: [ ] padre, [ ] madre, [ ] hijo, [ ] hermano.

Complete the application and mail to:

Harris County Clerk
P.O. Box 1525
Houston, TX
77251-1525

Carolyn Mounce – 3/21/09
INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION FOR BALLOT BY MAIL

1. Name—Print name as you are registered to vote.
2. Residence Address—Give full address as shown on your voter registration certificate. If you have moved but have failed to change your voter registration address with the voter registrar, you are still qualified to vote as long as your registration has not been canceled and you still live in the political subdivision conducting the election. Indicate your new residence address on the application for ballot by mail. If you are still qualified to vote, the early voting clerk will mail you a ballot together with a statement of residence. You are required to return the statement with your ballot. The residence address on the statement of residence must match the residence address on the application for ballot by mail. If these two addresses do not match, your ballot will not be counted.
3. Mailing Address—Ballot material must be mailed to the residence or mailing address indicated on your voter registration application. Exceptions include: Voting by reason of age or by disability, the mailing address may be a facility as indicated on the application or person related to you by 3rd degree by affinity or 3rd degree by consanguinity if you are temporarily living at that address. Relatives include parent, child, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, great-grandchild, great-grandparent, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, spouse, spouse’s parent, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother’s spouse, sister’s spouse, spouse’s brother, spouse’s sister, spouse’s grandparent.
4. Type and Date of Election—If you do not indicate type or date of election, you will be sent a ballot only for the next election.
5. You may return your application by mail, common or contract carrier or fax (if fax is available in the clerk’s office). If you use common or contract carrier, it must be a business for profit carrier and the primary business of which is transporting or delivering property via compensation. To be eligible to submit an application by fax, you must fax the application form outside the county. Improper delivery will cause the application to be rejected for a ballot.
6. SIGN YOUR APPLICATION—If you cannot sign, you must have a witness sign your application. If a person helps you fill out this application, he or she must complete the box for WITNESS AND ADJACENT section.

Solución de una papleta electoral postal — instrucciones

1. Nombre — Usando letras de móvil, escribe su nombre completo, tal como aparece cuando se inscribió como votante.
2. Domicilio — Indica la dirección completa tal como aparece en su certificado de registro de votante. En caso de que se haga un cambio, informar al Registrador de Votantes de su cambio de dirección para efectos del registro, atendiendo a que se haya cancelado la inscripción de votante y mientras usted siga residiendo en la subdivisión político-legal donde se inscribió como votante. Indique su nuevo domicilio en la solicitud de boleta postal. Si usas una carta para votar, la Secretaría de Votación adelantará la envía una boleta junto con una debida declaración de residencia. Se le requiere devolver dicha declaración junto con su boleta. El domicilio indicado en la declaración de residencia deberá coincidir con el de la solicitud de boleta postal. Si las dos direcciones no coinciden, no se enviará su boleta.
3. Dirección donde se le debe enviar la papleta electoral — Siempre cuando no se indique en ella, la papleta electoral tiene que enviar al domicilio permanente o postal indicado en la solicitud de inscripción como votante. Estas excepciones incluyen: Si el solicitante tiene un mínimo de 65 años de edad o si es minusválido, la dirección puede ser una de las siguientes indicadas en la solicitud o si es un familiar que tenga una dependencia de por lo menos 75 años de edad o de discapacidad, si un familiar en el hogar de más de 18 años es una persona de discapacidad. Si se solicita por correo, la papleta tiene que ser dirigida al domicilio de la ciudad en que se encuentra o a la de uno de los parientes indicados anteriormente. Procure señalar en el lugar indicado en la solicitud de quien se la dirección a la cual solicita que se le envíe la papleta porque si no lo hace su solicitud será inhabilitada.
4. Tipo y fecha de la elección— Si no señala el tipo o la fecha de la elección por la que está solicitando la papleta electoral, sólo se le enviará la de las próximas elecciones.
5. La entrega de esta solicitud sólo se acepta por medio del correo postal o transporta comercial o fax (siempre y cuando la dirección de la Secretaría de Votación se envíe por las tarifas de correo. Si decide enviarla por un portador comercial, el portador comercial, debe ser de una empresa de transporte de correo que sea responsable de la transmisión de la documentación que se coloca en la máquina de envío de correo. La documentación debe estar en un sobre firmado, siguiendo los procedimientos correspondientes. Si desea enviar la solicitud por fax, la transmisión deberá ser enviada por un servicio de fax al número de teléfono que se indica en la solicitud de registro de votante. Si el fax es enviado por un servicio de fax, la documentación debe ser en un envío de correo que se coloca en el sobre firmado, siguiendo los procedimientos correspondientes.
6. FIRMAR LA SOLICITUD— En caso de que no sepa firmar, debe conseguir un testigo para de la fecha de la marca, se puede firmar con un falso nombre en el lugar que aparece en el sobre firmado, seguido de firma. Firmar como testigo de la marca de un solicitante en más de un surco de papleta electoral postal para elecciones determinadas, es considerar un delito menor de Categoria B siempre y cuando el segundo solicitante y los solicitantes subsiguientes no sean, los padres, cónyuges, hijos, hermanos o abuelos del testigo.
7. Fecha límites — Esta solicitud tiene que se entregar en mano de la Secretaría de Votación por adelantado a más tarde de 7 días antes de la fecha en que se celebró las elecciones y nunca más de 60 días antes de la fecha en que se celebró las elecciones. Si el domingo de cae en un fin de semana o día laboral, la fecha límite será el día hábil anterior más próximo.
EL SOBRE DE LA BOLETA

INSTRUCCIONES PARA EL VOTANTE:
1. Marquen la boleta, metan la boleta en el sobre marcado “SOBRE DE LA BOLETA”, y cierre el sobre de la boleta.
2. Meta el sobre de la boleta en el sobre postacso, cierre, firmelo, y entregue al secretario de votación autorizada por correo o por transporte privado a traves de mensajeria.
   No está permitido entregar la boleta al secretario de votación adelantada de ninguna otra manera. (Vea las instrucciones en el sobre postacso para instrucciones adicionales)
3. El secretario de la votación adjuntará debajo del sobre postacso con la boleta, una fech a las 7 de la noche el dia de la elección. No es suficiente solamente enviar el sobre para esta fecha. Si esta votando fuera de las oficinas centrales las reglas de conteo pueben quedar aplicables.

INSTRUCCIONES PARA LAS PERSONAS DANDO AYUDA:
1. Un voto puede recibir ayuda solamente el en tiempo en el momento de hacer el voto o no puede hacer la boleta.
2. Ayudar a un voto incluye el siguiente contacto con un person que no es el voto, que ocurre durante la presencia de la boleta de votar o voto de entrega, de leer la boleta el voto o dirigir el voto a leer la boleta y instruyendo al voto de boleta del voto o el dispensar al voto que complete la boleta.
3. Un voto debe recibir un voto en tal de que ése ayudando no supere la persona que le va al voto, o un agente de la persona que le va el voto, o en el sitio de la persona de la cual le va el voto a la persona.
4. Un voto no puede recibir un voto por la persona que le va al voto, o un agente de la persona que le va el voto a la persona.
5. Un voto no puede recibir un voto que no es completo con las declaraciones del voto mencionados antes.
6. Un voto no puede recibir un voto que no es completo con las declaraciones del voto mencionados antes.
7. Si el voto no puede recibir un voto por la persona que le va al voto, o un agente de la persona que le va el voto a la persona.
8. Un voto no puede recibir un voto por la persona que le va el voto a la persona.
9. Un voto no puede recibir un voto por la persona que le va el voto a la persona.
BY-MAIL BALLOT
VOTER INSTRUCTIONS

1. Please use black or blue pen to mark your ballot.

2. To vote, place an X within the blank box to the left of your choice. Make the mark clear and distinct.

   [Example]

   If more than the allowable number of marks are placed on the ballot for an office or ballot issue, the votes will not be counted for that office or ballot issue.

3. Place the ballot inside the envelope and seal it.

4. Your signature is required on the carrier envelope AFTER sealing.

5. Return the envelope to the designated election official by mail.

BALLOTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 7:00 PM ON THE DAY OF THE ELECTION.
INSTRUCCIONES PARA VOTAR SOBRE UNA BOLETA POR CORREO

1. Favor de usar una pluma de tinta negra o azul para marcar su boleta.

2. Para votar, marque con un "X" el cuadro blanco a la izquierda de su preferencia. Favor de hacer su marca clara y divididamente.

   **EJEMPLO**

   Si resalta que la boleta se marque con más de un número de marca que se permite para un puesto oficial o para una emisión de boletas, dichos votos no se computarán.

3. Coloque la boleta dentro del sobre y sellelo.

4. Se requiere su firma sobre el sobre portador DESPUÉS DE sellado.

5. Envíe el sobre por correo al designado oficial electoral.

LAS BOLETAS DEBERAN RECIBIRSE PARA LAS 7 DE LA NOCHE EL DÍA DE LAS ELECCIONES
Dear Voter:

Thank you for choosing to exercise your right to vote. You have chosen to cast your ballot by mail, and I would like to share with you information about the process of voting by mail. When you vote by mail, you may take the following steps to protect your ballot and your vote.

1. **Know your rights as a voter:** You have the right to vote for the candidates of your choice. You have the right to mark your own ballot or to receive assistance with reading or marking your ballot from a person you know and trust. Your vote is secret. You do not have to tell anyone how or for whom you voted. If a person assists you with reading or marking your ballot, it is a crime for that person to reveal how or for whom you voted.

2. **Be careful about assistance:** No one should help you with your ballot, unless you cannot read the language written on the ballot or unless you have a disability that makes you unable to write or to see. If one of these conditions applies to you, we recommend that you ask a family member or trusted friend for assistance with your ballot. The person assisting you must mark your ballot according to your instruction and cannot suggest how you should vote. The assistant must place his or her signature, printed name, and residence address on the carrier envelope.

3. **Mail your own ballot:** If you can't get to the mailbox to mail your own ballot, give your ballot to a family member or trusted friend to mail for you. That person must place his or her signature, printed name, and residence address on the carrier envelope. Do not accept offers from strangers to mail your ballot for you. Texas law prohibits voted ballots from being delivered by common or contract carrier from campaign headquarters.

If you follow these simple guidelines, your vote will count. If anyone attempts to pressure or intimidate you, we urge you to report this to your county elections office, your district attorney's office, or our office toll-free at 1-800-252-VOTE (8683).

Early voting in person begins on the 17th day before the election and will continue until the 4th day before election day. You may contact your local elections office for the locations and hours of operation for your early voting places. If you change your mind about voting by mail and would prefer to vote in person, you must take your mail ballot with you and cancel it at the polling place. You may then vote in person, either during the early voting period or on election day.

Sincerely,

Roger Williams

[Signature]

Roger Williams
The State of Texas

Estimada votante:

Gracias por su decisión de ejercer su derecho al voto. Ya que optó por depositar su boleta por correo, quiero darle a conocer cierta información sobre la votación por correo. Al votar por correo, hay que dar los siguientes pasos para proteger su boleta y su voto.

1. **Conozca sus derechos de votante:** Usted tiene el derecho de votar por los candidatos que escoge. Hace también el derecho de marcar su propia boleta o de recibir la ayuda de una persona de su confianza para leer o marcar su boleta. Si le ayuda una persona a leer o a marcar su boleta, tal persona cometerá un delito si revela cómo o por quién votó.

2. **Mucuo cuidado al aceptar ayuda:** Nadie debe ayudarle con su boleta a no ser que usted sepa leer el idioma de la boleta o que tenga alguna discapacidad que le impida ver o leer. En caso de que le corresponda alguna de dichas condiciones, le recomendamos recurrir a un familiar o amigo de confianza para que le ayude con su boleta. Tal persona deberá marcar la boleta de acuerdo con las indicaciones de usted, y no podrá sugerirle cómo habrá de votar. Ella ayudante deberá poner en el sobre de transmisión su firma, su nombre y apellido en letras de muelle y su domicilio.

3. **Envíe su propia boleta:** Si no le es posible llegar a un buzón para depositar su propia boleta, entregue la a un familiar o amigo de confianza para que la envíe por usted. Tal persona deberá poner en el sobre de transmisión su firma, su nombre y apellido en letras de muelle y su domicilio. No acepte oficinas hechas por desconocidos de enviar la boleta por usted. La ley de Texas prohíbe la entrega de boletas ya marcadas para votar por transportistas públicos o contratados provenientes de la oficina central de la campaña.

Si se atiene a estas fáciles indicaciones, usted podrá confiar en que su voto cuenta. Le instamos a que denuncie cualquier intento de presionarle o de intimidarle a la oficina electoral de su condado, a la oficina del fiscal de su distrito o a nuestras oficinas, al número gratuito 1-800-252-VOTE (8683).

La votación adelantada por comparecencia personal se inició el 17 de junio para las elecciones y seguirá vigente hasta que falten cuatro días para el día de la elección. Para informarse de los sitios y las horas laborables de votación adelantada, comuníquese con los oficiales electorales de su localidad. Si cambia de parecer en cuanto a votar por correo y prefiere votar personalmente, llève su boleta postal a cancelar en el local de votación. Después podrá votar personalmente, ya sea durante el período de votación adelantada o en el día de la elección.

Atentamente,

Roger Williams
IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT RETURNING YOUR MARKED BALLOT IN THE CARRIER ENVELOPE

1. A carrier envelope may not be returned in an envelope or package containing another carrier envelope unless the other carrier envelopes are from persons registered to vote at the same address as your voter registration address.

2. You must seal your carrier envelope before signing your name. You must sign your name next to the large “X” on the carrier envelope. If you cannot sign your name, you must have a person witness your mark. If a person (assistant) helps you in marking your ballot or deposits your carrier envelope in the mail or delivers it to a common or contract carrier, that person must sign your carrier envelope and include their printed name and address. Failure of the assistant to provide this information is a crime, and may result in your ballot being rejected.

SPECIAL RULES RESTRICTING ELIGIBLE COMMON AND CONTRACT CARRIERS

1. If you use a common or contract carrier to return your ballot, the carrier must be bona fide business, for profit carrier, the primary business of which is transporting or delivering property for compensation.

2. Your ballot will not be counted if it is picked up by a common or contract carrier at an office of a political party or candidate, office for a specific-purpose or general-purpose political committee involved in the election, or a candidate’s house unless the address of the candidate is in your address.

3. If you return your carrier envelope by common or contract carrier, your carrier envelope must be accompanied by an individual delivery receipt when delivered to the early voting clerk. The receipt must indicate the name and address of the person who delivered the carrier envelope to the common or contract carrier and the date, hour, and address where the carrier envelope was received by the common or contract carrier.

4. If your ballot is returned by an unauthorized method, it will not be counted.

If you have any questions about returning your carrier envelope, please contact the early voting clerk’s office at (713) 735-0965. If you feel that your rights have been violated or abused, you may report these incidents to the Secretary of State toll-free at 1-800-252-VOTE(8683).

Street address: 1001 Preston, 4th floor, Houston, TX 77002
E-mail: jballard@co.harris.tx.us
DATOS IMPORTANTES EN CUANTO A LA DEVOLUCIÓN DE SU BOLETA ELECTORAL MARCADA EN EL SOBRE DE ENTREGA

1. Es prohibido colocar el sobre de entrega dentro de otro sobre o paquete que contenga sobres de correo ordinarios o paquetes que las personas envíándolas, están inserto a veces y el interior indicado en sus inscripciones electorales son igual al suyo.

2. Antes de firmarlo, es necesario que cierre y selle el sobre de entrega. Fírmelo o el lugar indicado por la “X” grande en el sobre. Si no sabe cómo firmar su nombre, será necesario que tenga un testigo presente cuando lo haga su mano. Si alguien lo ayudó marcar sus votos en la boleta, también será necesario que esta persona firme el sobre de entrega porque de otra forma su boleta no se incluirá en el conteo final. Falta por parte del autorizado de proporcionar esta información en un sobre y puede resultar que su boleta sea rechazada.

REGLAS ESPECIALES EN CUANTO AL USO DE TRANSPORTISTAS O PORTADORES COMERCIALES

1. Si decide contratar a un transportista o portador comercial para enviar su boleta electoral, éste deberá ser de una empresa de firma de luces cuya razón principal es el transporte y la entrega de documentos y bienes por pago.

2. Si dicho transportista fuera a recoger su boleta en la sede de un partido político, la sede de una campaña electoral, las oficinas de un comité político, o sea de interés general o específico, que tenga algún interés en estos elecciones o el dominio de cualquier de los candidatos, su boleta no se incluirá en el conteo final a menos que el domicilio del candidato es igual al suyo.

3. Si usted envía su sobre de entrega por portador o transportista comercial al Secretario de Votación Adecuado, aseguró que este lleva un juego de recibo individual. El recibo debe indicar el nombre y domicilio de la persona que entrega el sobre de entrega al portador o transportista comercial y la fecha, hora, y dirección de dónde el portador o transportista comercial recibe el sobre de entrega.

4. Si la entrega de su boleta no cumple con todas las normas, su voto no se incluirá en el conteo final.

Si tiene alguna pregunta en cuanto a cómo devolveremos su sobre de entrega por favor comuníquese con la oficina de la Secretaría de Votación por adelantado más cercano llamado al (713) 753-6685. Si tiene que sus derechos electorales han sido violados o abusados, púlselo hacer un reporte con la oficina del secretario del estado al 1-800-252-8683 (VOTO).

Street address: 1001 Preston, 4th Floor, Houston, TX 77002
E-mail: jballeiro@co.houstontx.net
Official Ballot
BOND ELECTION
TALLY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
May 12, 2007

Instruction Text:
TO VOTE: Mark the ballot by placing an "X" in the square beside the candidate or proposition of your choice.

PROPOSITION 1
The issuance of $7,900,000.00 in bonds and the levying of the taxes in payment thereof.
☐ FOR
☐ AGAINST

PROPOSITION 2
The issuance of $7,900,000.00 in bonds and the levying of the taxes in payment thereof.
☐ FOR
☐ AGAINST