April 3, 2020

Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC)

April 1, 2020 Meeting Minutes

1. The meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m.

Roll was called and no quorum was declared due to the meeting being available only by teleconference. The following participants were marked as present:

Committee Members

- Eren Mendez
- Tim McNamara
- Ayna Gutierrez
- Armando Salud
- Astrid Ochoa
- Deanna Kitamura
- Maria de la Luz Garcia
- Ky-Nam Miller
- Primo Castro
- Clarissa Laguardia
- Sunghee Richard Park
- Gurjatinder Randhawa
- Karlyn Kurichety

Secretary of State Staff

- Tiffany Mok, Chief of Legislative Affairs
- Robert Abelon, Deputy Secretary of State, Policy & Planning
- Jana Lean, Chief of Elections
- Lisa Alarcon, Special Counsel
- Adam Quintana, Election Services Manager
- Reina Miller, Voter Accessibility Coordinator

Members of the Public and County Elections Office Staff

- Deanna (Monterey County)
- Wayne (Deaf & Hard of Hearing Service Center)
- Jonathan (Asian Law Caucus)
- Mary (Shasta)
2. LAAC Members Primary Election Updates

Eren (Contra Costa County)
- Contra Costa certified last week
- Challenges they had during the election:
  - Securing schools as voting facilities
  - Recruiting of pollworkers in all languages
- Their ballot market devices had both their 14201 and 203 languages available
  - Pollworker training was more streamlined
  - Use of tablets increased
  - Have third-party interpreter calls available at each polling location

Armando (Yolo County)
- Yolo County has not certified yet
- Overall the county had a successful election
- Challenges:
  - Recruitment of pollworkers in all languages especially Korean
  - Many dropouts because of COVID-19

Tim (Los Angeles County)
- Certified last Friday
- Deployed a new voting system
- Ballot market devices were well received
- Challenges with recruitment of pollworkers
- May’s election will be all vote by mail
- June’s election will have 6 locations

Wayne (Deaf & Hard of Hearing Service Center)
- Not enough information is being interpreted for the ASL community

Clarissa
- Served as an observer during election day in Sacramento County
- Observed 20 sites which had between 1-4 bilingual pollworkers
- Fascimille ballots were on the table so unsure if voters knew about it

Primo
- While campaigning in Los Angeles he received feedback of lack of information in the Vietnamese and Spanish community
  - Community seemed unaware that an election was happening

Gurjatinder
- There are 1 million Punjabi speakers in California and would like Punjabi as one of the ballot languages
  - Shasta County has Punjabi translators at polling places

Astrid
• Focused on education and voter outreach of Los Angeles new voting system
• Pushed early voting in Los Angeles County
• In general, there were requests of translation materials

3. Secretary of State Updates

14201

Lisa Alarcon
• Data will be provided to counties within the next few weeks
• The SOS is open to all suggestions/feedback
• The SOS is working on having the VCA glossary translated into the additional languages

Voter’s Choice Act (VCA)

Robert:
• The VCA team is assisting with working groups created by SOS to tackle challenges COVID-19 may bring to the November election
  o In partnership with the Governor’s office, legislature, and other organizations
  o About 12 subcommittees
• The 15 VCA counties had observers during election day which included SOS staff, members of the public, and LAAC members
• VCA plans to contract with a researcher on language usage and needs for the 15 VCA counties
  o They will finalize hiring a researcher by the end of next week

Legislation

Tiffany
• Currently the legislature is closed until April 13th, may be extended
• AB 2314 Native American Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee - SOS is sponsoring and supporting
• AB 1913 Voter education: high school pupils

4. Contingency Planning for the November Election Given the Corona Virus

Clarissa
• More outreach needs to be done for VBM including social media

Eren
• A call to action to community group organizations
  o Consistent filler messages that can be used throughout the state
• Leverage on RAVBM so that any person can use it in any of the languages
• What information do community groups have readily available that counties can use
• Fires may be an additional challenge

Maria

• In absence of having a physical location they will receive a VBM ballot that maybe due to illeratcy go into polling places to get assistance and VBM may prevent them from voting privately/independently
  o This may cause hotlines that assist voters to be overwhelmed
  o Solution would be having more operators assist with calls
  o Also, having community organizations assist with this

Astrid

• Community organizations are necessary partners in regular educations and more now during this situation
• Concerned about community organizations capacity
  o Most effective organizations may need to be closed
  o Many rely on foundation dollars and foundations have taken a hit because of the market
• If VBM is not being provided in voter’s language, they may not know what the material is
• Timeline for providing translations

5. Public Comments and Future Agenda Items

Public Comments
• During working group calls Public Health officials should be included

Future Agenda Items
• 14201 CCROV best practices
• SOS Primary Election Debrief
• If researcher has questions the LAAC may assist with
• Brainstorming messages to inform voters of what their options are
• Contingency planning for November election given Corona Virus continued

6. The meeting was adjourned at 2:34 p.m.