

## **I. In Focus This Week**

### **Director's Note: Pew's Election Initiatives welcomes John Lindback**

*Former Oregon elections director joins team to work on voter registration*

By [David Becker](#)

I'm filling in for Doug this week, and am very pleased to announce a new member of our staff here at the Pew Center on the States Election Initiatives.

One of the best parts about my work is getting to meet so many dedicated public servants who are responsible for running our elections — people who usually get noticed only when something goes wrong, who nevertheless strive each day not just to do their jobs or avoid problems, but to work feverishly and innovatively to improve our democracy, to the benefit of the voters.

In my opinion, nobody has better exemplified this spirit than Oregon's former State Election Director, John Lindback.

Since I first met him years ago and long before that, John has been serving voters by constantly seeking better and more accessible ways to remove barriers and get them involved in their government.

As many of you know, for the past eight years he served as Director of the Elections Division in the Oregon Secretary of State's Office, during which time he served as president of the National Association of State Elections Directors (NASD).

Before working in Oregon, he lived and worked in Alaska for 23 years, including serving for six years as chief of staff to the lieutenant governor, a job that included oversight of Alaska's statewide election system. He also was elected by his peers to serve a two-year term on the executive committee of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's Standards Advisory Board, and sits on the National Academy of Sciences Committee studying state voter registration databases and registration policies.

As of this week, John has joined our staff as a Senior Officer, and among other things will be working with me in our efforts to study, improve and modernize our voter registration systems. In particular, Pew recognizes that modernizing the voter registration process will require a coordinated effort among states to identify new tools and best practices.

Pew's goals are to field test reforms in a real world environment and facilitate a dialogue among states to plan and design a more efficient, accurate and cost-effective voter registration system. Such a system would ensure all eligible voters—and only eligible voters—can exercise the right to vote.

In the coming year, John and I will be leading Pew's work in this area, which will include: research on innovations to voter registration that could form building blocks for a modernized system, including online voter registration and automatic address updates; convening meetings of state and local election officials to learn about voter registration reforms in places like Canada; organizing a diverse team of experts to help design a roadmap for the development and implementation of a modernized system; and piloting a modernized voter registration system in several states.

We're very fortunate and happy to have John bring his wealth of experience, his passion, and his ability to foster constructive dialogue (not to mention his good humor), to bear on this important goal, and I'm personally thrilled at the opportunity of working with him on a daily basis. Please join us in welcoming him

to this new role, and we hope to have the opportunity to speak to many of you in the coming months as we discuss bringing our voter registration system into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## II. Election Reform News This Week

- Georgia Secretary of State Karen Handel is reacting to a U.S. Justice Department repudiation of her system of [verifying citizenship of voters](#). In a six-page letter issued last week, and released this week, Justice Department lawyers said Handel's office had created a system that "does not produce accurate and reliable information and that thousands of citizens who are in fact eligible to vote under Georgia law have been flagged." Handel was not pleased. The decision, she told *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, "shows a shocking disregard for the integrity of our elections." Handel and her aides created the system in 2007 under the requirements of the federal Help America Vote Act. The law requires states to verify a voter's identity at the time of registration, but not necessarily to verify citizenship. In creating the system, Handel's office extended the verification process to include citizenship — something the Justice Department said was "discretionary on the state's part." But the system that was created, federal lawyers found, was flawed and of the 7,000 individuals flagged as potential "non-citizens," more than 50 percent were actually U.S. citizens. Furthermore, the department found, those flagged as non-citizens were overwhelmingly black, Asian or Hispanic.
- Montana Secretary of State Linda McCulloch, who took office in January, has requested that the U.S. Election Assistance Commission [conduct the first federal audit of Montana's share of HAVA money](#) to make sure the more than \$17 million it has received was spent appropriately. "I came out of an agency that had 70 federal programs," said McCulloch, who was Montana's superintendent of public instruction before becoming secretary of state. "Coming into an agency with one federal program, I want to make sure all the i's are dotted and t's crossed and spend the additional money in HAVA appropriately." When questioned about her audit request, McCulloch said she doesn't think past HAVA money was spent improperly. "I want to make sure we're on track," she said. "We have very little money left. I want to make sure it's spent appropriately and to the best use of our needs in Montana."
- [Norm Coleman and Al Franken had their day in court](#) this week - this time is it was the Minnesota Supreme Court that heard oral arguments. Monday's vigorous interrogations left no decisive signals about the justices' thinking. They challenged the arguments of both candidates, but leveled their toughest questions at a lawyer for Coleman, who is appealing a lower court verdict awarding Minnesota's disputed Senate election to Franken. Coleman attorney Joe Friedberg told the justices that thousands more rejected absentee ballots should be tallied under looser standards that were used by many local officials on Election Day. He said local practices led to counting ballots in Democratic areas that were similar to those rejected in Republican areas applying a stricter standard. But according to the Minneapolis Star Tribune, several justices suggested that Coleman's team had failed to provide proof that such practices were widespread. Franken lawyer Marc Elias also came in for some tough questions. Associate Justice Lorie Gildea asked how he could be confident about the outcome given that some of the ballots counted on Election Day apparently didn't meet the requirements of Minnesota law. Five justices heard the arguments in the Minnesota Judicial Center. Two court members had withdrawn from the case because they were on the state Canvassing Board that oversaw a recount of the election.
- Nevada and New Jersey both held elections this week with little to no fanfare. In [Nevada](#), elections in five Clark County municipalities seemed to go off without a hitch and very few voters. "We're not seeing any problems, but we certainly could use a few more voters," Larry Lomax, Clark County registrar told the Las Vegas Sun. He said the [light turnout](#) was in line with normal turnout for the municipal primaries. Across the country in [New Jersey turnout was equally light and problems few and far between](#) in the gubernatorial primary. Board of Election officials in Essex, Union, Middlesex, Morris, Somerset, Hunterdon, and Sussex Counties said they did not

have any major polling problems or challenges that weren't immediately resolved. Union County Board of Elections Administrator Dennis Scott Kobitz told the Star-Ledger his staff was out patrolling for problems and had not encountered any. "There's nothing to update. In 25 years that I've been doing this, I think this is the one of the slowest elections I've seen," said Kobitz. Board of Elections Administrator James Vokral in Middlesex County, where the U.S. Department of Justice had monitors roaming the polls to watch Spanish-speaking election staff and observing bilingual poll workers, said the monitors had not reported any problems. There were no court challenges either, Vokral said. Sussex County Board of Elections Administrator Margaret McCabe said the worst problem she has had all morning was attending to a poll worker who fell in Vernon.

### III. Research and Report Summaries

*electionline* provides brief summaries of recent research and reports in the field of election administration. Please e-mail links to research to [sgreene@pewtrusts.org](mailto:sgreene@pewtrusts.org).

Updated link for [Eyes on the Vote Count: Non-partisan Observer Reports of Minnesota's 2008 Post-Election Audit and Recount](#) - Mark Halvorson and Sarah Martyn Crowell, Citizens for Election Integrity Minnesota, May 26, 2009:  
[http://www.ceimn.org/minnesota-recount/ceimn\\_nonpartisan\\_observation\\_report](http://www.ceimn.org/minnesota-recount/ceimn_nonpartisan_observation_report)

[Voluntary Voting System Guidelines](#) (VVSG) – The U.S. Election Assistance Commission opened a [120-day public comment period](#) on June 1 for revisions to the 2005 Voluntary Voting Systems Guidelines.

Forthcoming book:

[Voting Rights--and Wrongs: The Elusive Quest for Racially Fair Elections](#) – by Abigail Thernstrom, AEI Press, June 2009: "In this provocative book, Abigail Thernstrom argues that southern resistance to black political power began a process by which the [Voting Rights] Act was radically revised both for good and ill. Congress, the courts, and the Justice Department altered the statute to ensure the election of blacks and Hispanics to legislative bodies ranging from school boards and county councils to the U.S. Congress. Proportional racial representation--equality of results rather than mere equal opportunity--became the revised aim of the act. Blacks came to be treated as politically different--entitled to inequality in the form of a unique political privilege."

### IV. Funding Resources

**Help America Vote Act (HAVA) Training and Technical Assistance** (T/TA. *Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)* announces funds to provide T/TA to P&As in their promotion of full participation in the electoral process for individuals with disabilities, including: registering to vote; casting a vote; accessing polling places; developing proficiency in the use of voting systems and technologies as they affect individuals with disabilities; demonstrating and evaluating the use of such systems and technologies by individuals with disabilities (including blindness) in order to assess the availability and use of such systems and technologies for individuals with disabilities; and providing T/TA for non-visual access. **Eligibility:** Public and state controlled institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, and private institutions of higher education. **Deadline:** June 26, 2009. **Funds:** \$367,920 is available to fund 4 awards, ranging from \$91,980-\$183,960. **Information:** [Melvenia Wright](#) at (202) 690-5557 or; or go to the [DHHS Web site](#).

**Help America Vote College Poll Worker Program (College Program).** The United States Election Assistance Commission (EAC) will award a total of \$750,000 in competitive grants under the Help America Vote College Poll Worker Program (College Program) to recruit college students to serve as poll workers. The two-year grant award will be used to recruit, train and support college students to assist state and local governments in the administration of elections by serving as nonpartisan poll workers or assistants. Proposals should include a two-year project plan and a budget supporting activities for election cycles in both 2009 and 2010. If an organization received a College Program grant last year, they are eligible to apply only as a re-competing grantee. These grantees must develop innovative programs to recruit poll workers with disabilities and develop training material to help poll workers create receptive and

accommodating polling place environments on Election Day. New applicants are eligible for awards up to \$75,000, and re-competing applicants are eligible for awards up to \$20,000. Applications are due before 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Thursday, July 16, 2009, and must be mailed or hand delivered to the EAC. Applications submitted electronically or by fax will not be accepted. The grant application and instructions can be downloaded at [www.eac.gov/grants](http://www.eac.gov/grants). Questions regarding the program can be directed to Mark Abbott by sending an e-mail to [HAVACollegeProgram@eac.gov](mailto:HAVACollegeProgram@eac.gov). He can also be reached by calling (866) 747-1471 toll-free. **Eligibility Requirements** This competition is open to state-controlled institutions of higher education, private institutions of higher education, community colleges and nonprofit organizations. **Grant Restrictions** Funds cannot be used to support any partisan, voter registration or get-out-the-vote (GOTV) activities.

## V. Opinion

National: [Military overseas voting](#); [Voting Rights Act, II. III](#); [Election-day registration](#)

Arizona: [Yuma City elections](#)

California: [Election calendar](#); [Poll workers](#)

Connecticut: [Blind voters](#)

Indiana: [Vote centers](#)

Louisiana: [Senator Vitter](#)

Maryland: [Signature collection](#); [Election probe](#)

Minnesota: [Election reform, II](#); [Instant-runoff voting](#); [Voting system](#)

New Jersey: [Paper trail](#)

New York: [Voting machines](#); [Election reform](#)

North Carolina: [Election changes](#)

Tennessee: [Convenience voting](#); [Henry County](#)

Texas: [Vote fraud](#); [Voter ID](#)

West Virginia: [Voter participation](#)

*\*\*some sites require registration*

## VI. Job Opportunities

*All job listings must be received by 12 p.m. Eastern on Wednesday for publication in our Thursday newsletter. Job listings are free but may be edited for length. Whenever possible, include Internet information. Please email job postings to [mmoretti@electionline.org](mailto:mmoretti@electionline.org)*

**Assistant Database Manager & Programmer—Franklin County, Ohio.** The Franklin County Board of Elections seeks an experienced programmer and enterprise database administrator with demonstrated proficiency in Delphi, SQL and Microsoft Office products to assist in the maintenance and support of the county's voter registration system. In addition to technology related activities, the successful candidate will be required to assist in other election administration duties as assigned. The successful candidate will hold at least an associate's degree or equivalent from a two-year college or technical school with a four-year undergraduate degree highly preferred. Three to five years experience in comparable IT environment required. The abilities to reason, identify problems, find alternatives and quickly implement solutions, properly interpret directions, work independently, collaborate within teams, and effectively communicate through verbal conversation and written correspondence are required. Basic understanding of civics, government, and the voting process required. This is an unclassified, non-exempt position with exceptional health insurance and retirement benefits; the successful candidate will be required to work nights, weekends, and holidays to meet the duties and statutory requirements of holding elections, shall be held accountable to perform duties as a Clerk of the Board under penalty of law, and must be a registered voter in the State of Ohio during the period of employment. [Email resume](#) including employment and salary history.

**Elections Director—State of Oregon (Salem)** -- responsible for providing strategic policy recommendations, direction, and proposals to promote the successful execution of the objectives of the Elections Division. This is accomplished in part, but not limited to: developing comprehensive policies to

meet both state and federal constitutional and statutory mandates; explaining and interpreting laws, rules and policies and procedures to clients in order to ensure compliance with and understanding of election law; serving as an information source for election officials and the general public; monitoring all phases of the initiative process, verification of initiative petitions, campaign and political finance processes, election complaint process, as well as conflict of interest and oath processes; developing and managing the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) program; creating and maintaining a high performance environment through positive leadership and a strong team orientation. This is an extremely visible, high profile position. The incumbent must act as role model within and outside the Agency, maintaining professional composure at all times. This position has frequent contact with hostile or angry people, works under extremely tight deadlines, and in highly public settings with strict media and legislative scrutiny. This position reports to the Deputy Secretary and serves as a member of the Agency's executive management team. This position serves at the pleasure of the Secretary of State. **Qualifications:** Your resume and/or cover letter must demonstrate experience in the following: A minimum of five (5) years of progressive experience in administration and management in the public sector; including four (4) years of demonstrated and effective experience in an elections related area; and knowledge of changes in Federal, State and County Municipal laws and regulations relating to elections. Incumbent must be or become a registered voter in the state of Oregon. Incumbent must **not** be a candidate for public office, hold a public office or position in a political party. **More Information.** **Application:** [sos.jobs@state.or.us](mailto:sos.jobs@state.or.us) (subject line: Application). **Deadline:** June 30, 2009 at 4:00 p.m.

**General Registrar, Fairfax County, Va.** -- serving Fairfax County, the largest locality in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and a suburb of Washington, D.C., is currently recruiting qualified candidates with exceptional senior leadership and management experience for the position of a non-partisan General Registrar to serve a four year term. With over 600,000 registered voters, and using advanced technology, the incumbent will be responsible for the oversight of a large and complex voter registration and election administration agency. Duties include adherence to Virginia Code Sec. 24.2, and other federal, state and local codes. Additional responsibilities include: monitoring relevant legislation at all governmental levels, conducting public education programs; speaking before diverse groups; working with federal and state agencies, professional organizations and advocacy groups regarding voting programs and voting rights; and monitoring relevant legislation at all governmental levels. **Qualifications:** Any combination of experience equivalent to graduation from college with bachelor's degree in a related field; plus four years experience in voter registration and elections management. Must be a legal resident and registered voter in Fairfax County, Virginia at time of appointment. Certification as an Election Administrator, or is eligible to obtain certification. Strong leadership skills; ability to build good working relationships; experience working with elected officials and board appointees. **Salary:** \$97,147+ (negotiable) **Application:** Submit your resume on-line through the [AIMS system](#). If this is the first time you have applied for a position with the [AIMS system](#), follow the link and [create an account](#). It takes just a few minutes. Once you have established your AIMS account you can use the Resume Builder to create a resume in a step-by-step process, or simply paste in an existing resume. If you already have an AIMS account, [Apply For This Job Now!](#) **Deadline:** June 27

**Superintendent of Elections, King County, Wash.**— responsible for over-all executive level management, oversight and planning for the conduct of local, state and federal elections in King County. It reports directly to the elected Elections Director and is responsible for the day-to-day management of elections and the supervision and oversight of program managers for voter registration, mail ballot processing and delivery, and operation sections. The position is an exempt, "appointive position", which is subject to confirmation by the King County Council. King County Elections serves more 1 million registered voters in the nation's 14th largest county. We are located in Renton, Washington in a new state-of-the-art facility dedicated to elections. This position requires an individual with strong management skills, independent judgment, project management skills and professional managerial knowledge to formulate policies and direct the strategic and logistical needs of all election processes and operations. We are looking for a strong leader to join King County as the largest all-mail voting jurisdiction in the nation. We support accurate and transparent elections, believe in accountability, respect and teamwork and invite those that share these values to join our team. **Qualifications:** Appointment to this position is subject to confirmation by the King County Council. The most competitive candidates will provide effective, strategic leadership and have demonstrated competency in the administration of a complex,

highly scrutinized, public sector organization. A significant record of progressively responsible management experience in mail ballot processing, voter registration and elections operation of a large jurisdiction is highly desirable. The candidate should be skilled in developing and guiding a strong team with a commitment to reliable, transparent and accountable election services and an emphasis on professional practices. **Salary:** \$94,440.11 - \$119,708.37. [More Information and Application](#)