



ROKITA REPORT

Office of Indiana Secretary of State Todd Rokita

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Message from Secretary Rokita

This past week I had the opportunity to share with nearly 400 Florida election administrators the success Indiana has had with Vote Centers. Florida, like nearly every other state, is looking for ways to reduce costs and decrease the size of government. We discussed how the concept of Vote Centers can accomplish those things, while at the same time empowering local governments to make decisions that best suit their communities.

While there, I took the opportunity to share the successes of Indiana's pilot program for Vote Centers, which include Cass, Tippecanoe and Wayne counties. For example Cass County experienced a 51.5 percent cost savings and Tippecanoe County experienced a 24.5 percent savings in their 2008 General Election through the use of Vote Centers. In the 2007 Richmond Municipal Election, Wayne County election officials were able to reduce the number of polling places from 30 traditional precinct polling places to four Vote Centers. As you can see, Vote Centers can reduce taxpayer dollars and save set-up costs by decreasing the number of polling places. In addition, they also allow for less confusion and stress for the voter in finding the right precinct to vote.

My office commissioned the Indiana Fiscal Policy Institute (IFPI) to conduct an independent study of how the Vote Centers concept could be executed by all of Indiana's 92 counties. The study took into consideration Election Day costs in poll worker's pay, meals, training and equipment transportation. IFPI found that by implementing Vote Centers all counties can reduce costs, have more flexibility for election administration and reduce the number of voting machines needed. I encouraged the Florida election administrators to replicate the study in their own counties, or even across the state and pledged to provide any methodology and data needed to perform additional studies.

The bottom line is Vote Centers can empower local governments to cut costs while at the same time increase voter convenience and maintain election integrity. However, if the General Assembly fails to act, the Vote Centers option will disappear. I encourage all Hoosiers to contact their legislators and tell them you want the Vote Centers option for all of Indiana's 92 counties.

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More News

Fort Wayne Journal Gazette "High number of absentee ballots requested for Indiana primary"
[Read the full article](#)

WFIE "21% of Hoosiers voted in primary election"

Secretary Rokita's office earns international award for Business Services Division online portal

Indiana Secretary of State Todd Rokita's Business Services Division (BSD) won the 2010 Merit Award earlier this week, an honor bestowed by the International Association of Commercial Administrators (IACA) for programs that improve efficiency and customer service in government administration. It's the second merit award BSD has won in three years.

The Business Services Division was honored for its efforts to make available online more than 6.5 million images of corporate documents, business filings and other registrations on file with the office. The images are accessible instantly, 24 hours a day and free of charge through the online portal found at www.sos.in.gov/business.

These document filings, specifically accessed hundreds of times a day by the legal and financial communities, along with the businesses themselves, were previously available only in person at the Business Services Division in Indianapolis or through the mail. These document images are commonly accessed to research the names and addresses of the principal officers of a business, for use in mergers and acquisitions or in the pursuit of capital to allow businesses to grow.

In 2008, the Business Services Division won the IACA Merit Award for developing a system through the online portal where new businesses can be registered online.



*Pictured from left to right are: Liz Keele, Business Services Director, Randy Moes, President of IACA and Beth Swindle, Deputy Business Services Director at the IACA Annual Conference on May 24 in Austin, Texas.

2010 Primary data shows 21 percent voter turnout; widespread use of absentee-in-person option

Data compiled by Secretary Rokita's Indiana Election Division from post-election reports filed by Indiana's 92 counties show 21 percent of registered voters cast a ballot in the 2010 primary election. Of those who voted, 11 percent, or 94,671 Hoosiers cast an absentee ballot.

Voter turnout for the 2010 primary election was slightly higher than the 2006 primary, when 19 percent of registered voters cast a ballot. In the 2004 primary, voter turnout was 21 percent, and in 2002 was 22 percent. Due to the heavily contested Democratic Presidential primary in 2008, voter turnout was an unprecedented 40 percent.

The data shows a 54 percent increase in absentee voting compared to the 2006 primary election, the most recent primary election with a similar voter turnout to 2010. In this year's primary 94,671 Hoosiers cast an absentee ballot. Of those, 48,666 voters cast their ballot in person at a county clerk's office or satellite voting office. The remaining 46,005 ballots were cast by mail or by traveling board.

Counties with Vote Centers saw the largest rates of absentee voting. In Cass County, 42 percent of voters cast an absentee ballot. In Tippecanoe County, 29 percent voted absentee and in Wayne County 45 percent voted absentee. Statewide, 11 percent of Hoosier voters cast absentee ballots. In all three Vote Centers pilot counties, some Vote Center locations are utilized for in-person absentee voting prior to Election Day.

Secretary Rokita's office developed IndianaVoters.com to help Hoosiers prepare for Election Day. Hoosier voters made 71,989 visits to IndianaVoters.com in the month leading up to the May 4 primary election.

[Read the full article](#)

Inside Indiana Business "State Reaches Final Settlement in Securities Case" [Read the full article](#)

Fort Wayne Daily "Portal to help customers connect with Hoosier firms" [Read the full article](#)

Richmond Palladium-Item "Mortgage broker faces federal charges" [Read the full article](#)

Cincinnati Enquirer "Mt. Washington man charged with fraud" [Read the full article](#)

Hoosier voters made 33,633 visits to the new "Who's on Your Ballot?" application, a tool that provided Hoosier voters with a complete list of candidates who would appear on their ballots. Previously, Hoosiers in many precincts in Indiana could not find a comprehensive candidate list for federal, state and local offices until they received their ballot.

IndianaVoters.com also provides information on registration status and polling places, helping voters plan how they would cast their ballot in advance of Election Day.

In the News

Editorial: "Democracy benefits when voting is easier"

Gary Post-Tribune

May 19, 2010

Indiana officials are realizing what is really common sense: Making voting easier will increase voter turnout. Secretary of State Todd Rokita last week announced a 54 percent increase this year in absentee voting compared to the 2006 primary.

In the same release, he noted that in Indiana counties with voting centers -- a pilot project that tests larger, more convenient polling places rather than precincts -- absentee voting increases the most.

The efforts to make voting easier in Indiana increased the voter turnout statewide to 21 percent, a decent increase over the 19 percent who voted in the similar primary in 2006.

[Read the full editorial](#)

Secretary Rokita alerts mortgage professionals of impending test deadline

Secretary Rokita is alerting Hoosier mortgage professionals of an impending deadline requiring all mortgage loan originators and principal managers to pass the National Component SAFE Test by July 1, 2010.

By July 1, 2010, all mortgage loan originators and principal managers must pass the National Component SAFE Test. The test is mandatory based on the federal Secure and Fair Enforcement for Mortgage Licensing Act of 2008 (SAFE Act). The SAFE Act does not allow for any waiver of the test. There is a 30 day waiting period after each unsuccessful attempt at taking the test.

Secretary Rokita's Indiana Securities Division began sending communications to licensed mortgage loan originators and principal managers in February to alert them of the upcoming deadline. Indiana has 1,086 licensed mortgage loan originators and principal managers. As of this week, only 46 percent have passed the SAFE Test.

If a mortgage loan originator or principal manager fails to pass the SAFE Test by July 1, his or her license will be revoked. In accordance with Indiana law, if a license is revoked the Indiana Securities Commissioner must deny all future license applications by that individual.

Mortgage loan originators and principal managers also have the option of withdrawing their licenses with the Securities Division prior to July 1, 2010, in order to avoid revocation of the license for failure to pass the exam.

Secretary Rokita's Business Services Division launches online Notary program

The Business Services Division has launched a new online Notary portal to reduce the cost of government and to increase the speed of customer service for Indiana Notaries public. Now in Indiana, Notary commissions and revisions will occur exclusively online.

A Notary public is a public officer of the state, authorized by law to certify documents, take affidavits, and administer oaths. A Notary public is appointed for an eight year term after being commissioned by the State of Indiana.

The online Notary service will allow a current Notary to update contact information in just a few moments. The online service will also accept new Notary applications and renewals. The Business Services Division will be able to expedite the Notary commission process with the online system.

To increase aptitude among Notaries public, the online portal also includes a new training module which Notaries are required to complete to receive their commissions. This training module can also be reviewed by current Notaries interested in advancing their knowledge of Notary guidelines and rules.

To access the new online Notary service, visit www.in.gov/sos/business.

Online Notary is the latest in a series of technology improvements made by Secretary Rokita's office this year in order to reduce the cost of government and increase customer service. Recent improvements also include the Dealer Services Division's Plates On-Demand online program as well as the Indiana Election Division's "Who's on Your Ballot?" and Indiana Campaign Finance online tools.
