

New system streamlines process

By Leah Burcat
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DOVER — A new statewide electronic voter registration program, known as eSignature, will reduce paper waste, increase efficiency, improve privacy and save the state money, government officials said at an event Monday at the Division of Motor Vehicles office in Dover celebrating the launch of the program.

The system was created through a partnership involving the state Department of Elections and the Division of Motor Vehicles, in coordination with the Department of Technology and Information.

It was funded entirely by a federal grant and is expected to save the state hundreds of thousands of dollars a year in manpower and paper costs.

"This is exactly the type of project we want to see. It is an example of state agencies working together," said Lt. Gov. Denn.

Delaware is the eighth state to initiate such a project.

The goal of the eSignature collaboration was to provide Delawareans a streamlined method of registering and maintaining voter registration.

Through this process, citizens can initiate and update their voter registration information at the same time they obtain or make changes to their Delaware driver's license or identification card.

With the newly automated system, data is instantly transmitted to the Department of Elections from the Division of Motor Vehicles.

"This project makes government more effective and efficient, and it is a great example of how government agencies can work together to improve services to the public," said Gov. Jack A. Markell.

"The eSignature project will ensure that information pro-



Jennifer Cohan, left, director of the Division of Motor Vehicles, and Lt. Gov. Matthew P. Denn, chat at the launch of the electronic voter registration system.

vided from the Division of Motor Vehicles to the Department of Elections is accurate and secure," said Jennifer Cohan, director of the DMV.

"Because the DMV touches so many lives in Delaware, we are constantly finding ways to address and partner with other agencies in order to further benefit both our customers and the state."

The effort to initiate the electronic voter registration system began after the 2008 election to ensure that every application from the Division of Motor Vehicles was received and processed correctly, said Elaine Markove, elections commissioner.

The eSignature project, which was begun as a way to improve accuracy, has since evolved into a significant money and manpower savings initiative, she said.

It is estimated that during an election year, more than 1,000 printed pages are utilized per day, at each of the four Division of Motor Vehicles offices in the state.

On non-election years, printing averages about 300 pages a day.

In addition to savings in paper costs, the program will save thousands of taxpayer dollars in equipment maintenance and staff time.

The Department of Technology and Information, in partnership with the Department of Transportation's Office of Information Technology provided the technical expertise and "back office" support needed to build a framework that supports this variety of computer applications from multiple agencies, while creating a customer-friendly approach for its users.

VOTER REGISTRATION REFINED



Scott Wien, chief of driver services with the state Division of Motor Vehicles, updates his voter registration information using eSignature Monday afternoon at the DMV office in Dover. The new system is expected to save the state hundreds of thousands of dollars a year in manpower and paper costs.

"DIT is proud to have partnered with the Elections Department and the Division of Motor Vehicles/DeIDOT in this new eGovernment service for Delaware's citizens," said Jim Silis, chief information officer for the Department of Technology and Information.

"DIT's 'behind the scenes'

team members were key contributors to today's success story, estimated to save state government hundreds of thousands of dollars annually."

Staff writer Leah Burcat can be reached at 761-6239 or leah@delawarestate.com.