

NVRA Voter Registration in Colorado

2012 ANNUAL REPORT

VOTER REGISTRATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR CITIZENS IN COLORADO UNDER THE
NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION ACT



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INTRODUCTION

The Colorado Secretary of State's office is responsible for implementing the requirements of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA). This report describes the Secretary of State's ongoing implementation and outlines how Colorado will continue to offer voter registration opportunities to all eligible citizens. The report consists of the following sections:

- NVRA Compliance
- Reporting Methods
- Process Improvements
- Outreach Opportunities

COMPLIANCE

NVRA VOTER REGISTRATION

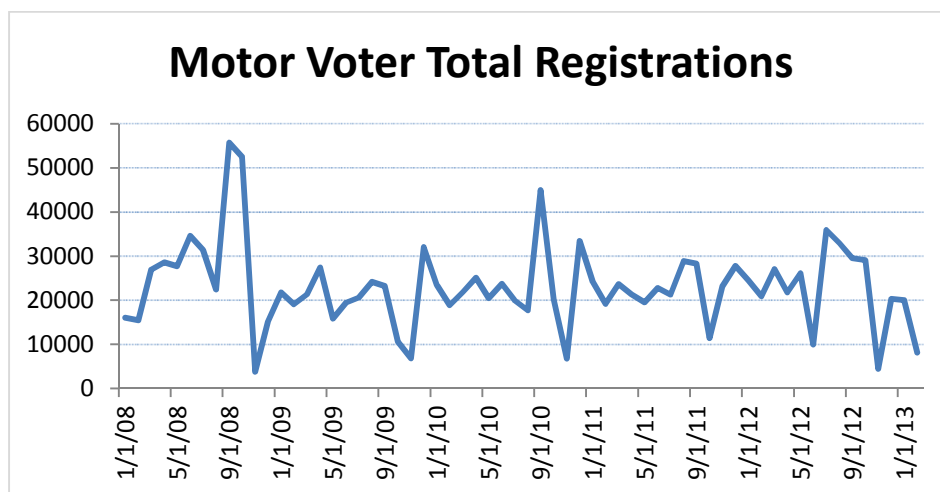
The NVRA requires each state to establish procedures to ensure that a voter registration application is available:

- simultaneously with an application for a driver's license;
- at all offices in the state that provide public assistance; and
- at all offices in the state that administer state-funded programs primarily engaged in providing services to persons with disabilities.

The Secretary of State's office is committed to ensuring that every citizen who applies for a driver's license, or requests an eligibility determination for a public benefit, is offered the opportunity to register to vote. This report refers to applications made at a driver's license office as "Motor Voter" transactions, and applications made at a public assistance office, or an office that provides services to persons with disabilities, as "Section 7" transactions.

MOTOR VOTER

In 2012, the majority of Colorado's NVRA voter registration applications—282,603—were Motor Voter transactions. The monthly Motor Voter totals from 2008 through 2012 are shown below.



This data reflects NVRA voter registration transactions initiated via the Colorado Department of Revenue.

SECTION 7 VOTER REGISTRATION AGENCIES

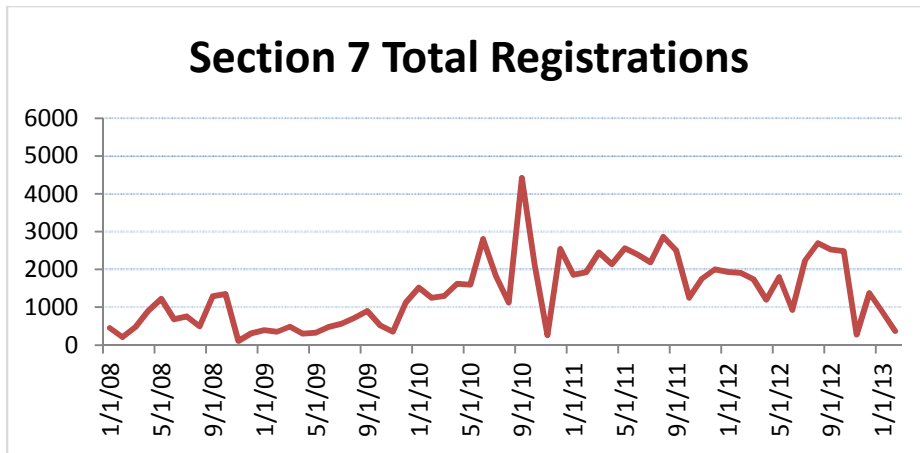
Section 7 of the NVRA uses the term “Voter Registration Agency” to describe state offices that provide public assistance and services to people with disabilities. Voter Registration Agencies serve a vital role because they provide voter registration opportunities for this segment of the population.

The following is a list of the services provided by Voter Registration Agencies—categorized by the state agencies responsible for regulating the services.

- Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF)
 - Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+)
 - Medicaid
- Department of Human Services (DHS)
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
 - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
- Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE)
 - Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- Colleges and Universities
 - Programs for people with disabilities

The Secretary of State’s office provides training to Voter Registration Agencies and surveys the agencies monthly to track their activity. Colorado has over 250 Voter Registration Agencies, which were responsible for 21,105 voter registration applications in 2012. The monthly Section 7 totals from 2008 through 2012 are displayed below.¹

¹ While preparing the data for this report, and the annual Election Assistance Commission survey, the Secretary of State’s office identified a problem. When counties create or update a voter registration record, they have the ability to make voter initiated changes or administrative changes. It was discovered that administrative changes were marked as voter initiated. As a result the data that the Secretary of State’s office has previously relied on is flawed. For this year’s report the data is filtered by day, rather than raw transaction numbers, and as a result the numbers reported for 2012 are much more accurate than in years past. A further explanation of this problem is included in Appendix D.



This data reflects NVRA voter registration transactions initiated via Section 7 agencies.

REPORTING METHODS

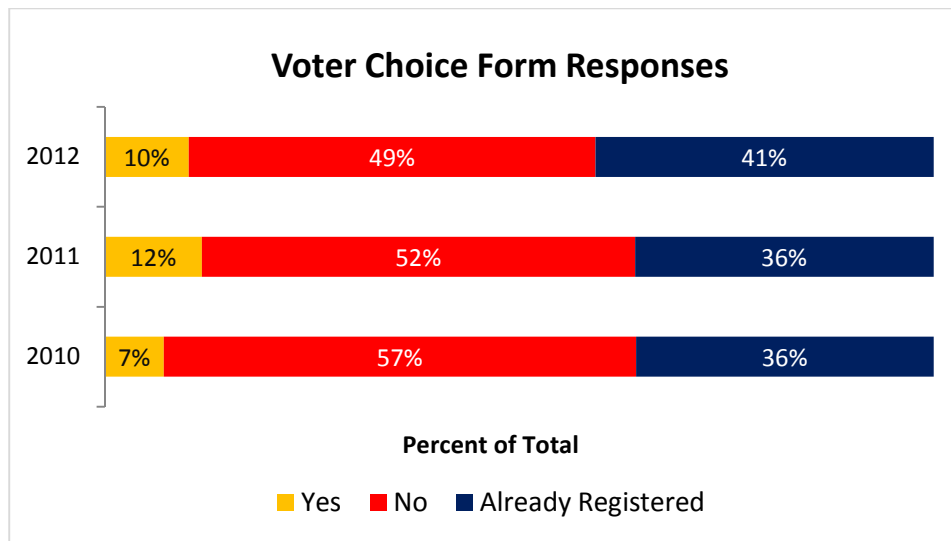
MOTOR VOTER REPORTING

The Secretary of State’s office tracks motor voter registration activity through the statewide voter registration system (SCORE). When an individual registers to vote at a driver’s license office, the application is forwarded to the county clerk and recorder. The county clerk and recorder is responsible for registering the individual in SCORE and the registration is tagged with a transaction source indicating that the registration occurred at a driver’s license office. The Secretary of State’s office runs reports that show the number of registrations by transaction source. The motor voter numbers used in this report were collected from that data.

SECTION 7 REPORTING

Before an applicant receives a voter registration application at a Voter Registration Agency, he or she either accepts or declines the opportunity to register to vote by filling out the *Voter Registration Choice Form*.² Voter Registration Agencies collect the voter-response data from the *Voter Registration Choice Form* and report it through a monthly survey tool, and the Section 7 agencies track the response. The following chart displays the cumulative percentage for each answer category from 2010 to 2012.

² As of January 1, 2013, the *Voter Declination Form* is called the *Voter Registration Choice Form*. A copy of the new form is included in Appendix A.



PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS

IDENTIFYING, REFINING, IMPLEMENTING

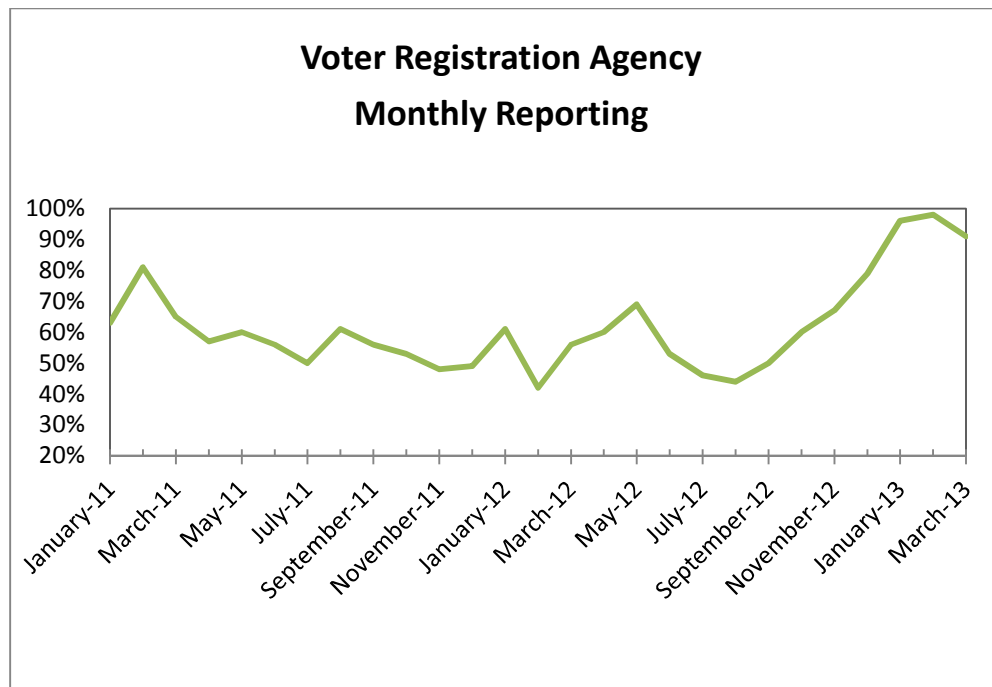
In August of 2012, representatives from the Secretary of State’s office and most of the Voter Registration Agencies listed in this report came together for a two-day process improvement session. The session taught methods for identifying current processes and refining those processes with lean business techniques. The group held a follow-up meeting in September to further discuss the NVRA process improvement methodology and implementation efforts at each agency.

The sessions helped the Secretary of State’s office and Voter Registration Agencies implement the following changes for 2013:

- Modified the *Voter Registration Choice Form*, formerly named *Declination Form* (Appendix A)
- Simplified the reporting tool by reducing the survey reporting questionnaire from 7 to 3 questions (Appendix B)

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND REPORTING RESPONSE RATE

The process improvement sessions also helped enhance the quality of the relationships between the Secretary of State’s office and Voter Registration Agencies. Working closely with the Voter Registration Agencies has led to the identification of nearly 100 new and inactive Voter Registration Agencies since 2011. And the reporting compliance rate for Voter Registration Agencies is above 95 percent in 2013. The following graph shows the Voter Registration Agency reporting rate as a percentage for each month between January 2011 and March 2013.



OUTREACH STRATEGIES

The Secretary of State’s office is committed to making voter registration opportunities available to all eligible citizens. Leveraging the partnership between Voter Registration Agencies and the Secretary of State is crucial to compliance. The Secretary of State’s office voter registration outreach focuses on building these partnerships with Voter Registration Agencies by identifying covered agencies, training them and communicating with covered agencies to collect data.

IDENTIFICATION

To comply with the NVRA, a state must identify Voter Registration Agencies. As previously noted the Secretary of State’s office has identified nearly 100 new and inactive Voter Registration Agencies since 2011. This success is due to the relationships the Secretary of State’s office has built with other state agencies. The Secretary of State’s office recognizes that building relationships with Voter Registration Agencies and state agency personnel overseeing those Voter Registration Agencies is vital to compliance. Each Voter Registration Agency appoints a coordinator responsible for NVRA activities at that office. Although each office has a coordinator, employee turnover is a barrier to maintaining the relationship between the Voter Registration Agency and the Secretary of State’s office.

State agencies are very helpful with mitigating the effects of coordinator turnover. The state agencies are now able to quickly identify a replacement coordinator because NVRA coordinator duties are part of the job function for the vacant position. Additionally, state agency personnel that oversee Voter Registration Agencies serve as liaisons that provide new coordinator contact information and encourage compliance through accountability. In 2012, the Secretary of State’s office was able to identify and establish a state agency liaison with the Departments of Healthcare Policy and Financing, Public Health and the Environment, and Human Services. Efforts continue to identify liaisons for remaining programs. For

example, the Secretary of State's office has engaged the Colorado Department of Military and Veteran Affairs to identify voter registration opportunities for those serving in the military. The Secretary of State's office is focusing initial military outreach to Colorado National Guard recruiting offices.

TRAINING

The Secretary of State's office provides an online training class that covers required NVRA activities for Section 7 agencies. Agencies prefer the convenience of the online training. The training resource was enhanced to allow for verification that an individual completed the training. State agency liaisons requested this enhancement so they can hold Voter Registration Agency coordinators accountable for completing NVRA training. In addition to the online training, the Secretary of State's office sends a quarterly newsletter called *Registration Connections* to all NVRA coordinators. Registration Connections provides updates and information about NVRA activities and compliance.

Beginning in May of 2013, the Secretary of State's NVRA staff will visit at least one Voter Registration Agency each month to witness NVRA activities.

SECTION 7 DATA COLLECTION

The Secretary of State's office tracks Section 7 NVRA data through surveys and SCORE.

- The surveys are used to collect the information from the voter choice forms. Each month Voter Registration Agencies receive and return a survey. They are asked to respond with data from the month prior by the 15th of each month. In 2013, the Secretary of State's office will incentivize participation through a gift card raffle. Each coordinator who submits a survey by the 15th of the month will be entered into a raffle to win a \$20 gift card. This program will be advertised in the newsletter and will begin during the second quarter of 2013.
- The actual number of voter registration applications from Section 7 activity is tracked in SCORE. Voter registration applications at NVRA agencies are printed on green paper, and county clerk and recorders assign the NVRA transaction source to every green voter registration form that they process.

In 2013, the Secretary of State's office created an online voter registration address for NVRA Section 7 registrations (www.govotecolorado.com/NVRA). NVRA Section 7 agencies advertise the site to citizens accessing services. The web address is also provided to those using a computer station at a Voter Registration Agency. The Secretary of State's office worked with the Department of Human Services to include this new address in the Human Services web-based benefit application service called PEAK. In future annual reports, the Secretary of State's office intends to report data to show the number of times that an NVRA specific site is accessed by PEAK applicants.

CONCLUSION

The Secretary of State's office continues to work closely with Voter Registration Agencies and driver's license offices to ensure that Colorado complies with the NVRA. In 2013, the Secretary of State's office will continue efforts to identify all offices in the state that need to comply with the NVRA. The office

strives to offer training that is comprehensive and easy to access. And the office will maintain the agency relationships that are responsible for the high reporting and compliance rate from Voter Registration Agencies.

APPENDIX A

Water Registration Choice Form

Instructions

Please read the following information and complete and sign the form below. This agency will keep the form for its records.

Important Notice

You may file a complaint with the Colorado Secretary of State if you believe that someone has interfered with your right to:

- register or decline to register to vote,
- privacy in deciding whether to register or in applying to register to vote, or
- choose your own political party or other political preference.

Send complaints to:

Colorado Secretary of State
1700 Broadway
Denver, CO 80290
Phone: (303) 894-2200

You may apply to register to vote or update your current registration today

- if you are not registered to vote where you live now, you may apply to register to vote here today.
- if you would like help in filling out the voter registration application form, we will help you. The decision whether to seek or accept help is yours. You may fill out the voter registration form in private.

Does filling out or not filling out the registration form affect services I am applying for?

No. Applying to register or declining to register to vote will not affect the amount of assistance that you will be provided by this agency.

How private is this process?

The name and location of the agency or public office where you received the voter registration application will not appear on your records. If you decide not to use this application to register to vote, that is also confidential.

Complete and sign below

If you are not registered to vote where you live now, would you like to apply to register to vote here today?

Please check only one of the following boxes. *If you do not check either box, you will be considered to have decided not to register to vote at this time.*

Yes, I want to apply to register to vote today. (Please fill out the Voter Registration Form)

You are eligible to vote if you:

- Will be 18 years of age or older at the time of the next election.
- Are a United States citizen.
- Are a Colorado resident and have lived in your current precinct for at least 30 days before the election.
- Are NOT serving a sentence (including parole) for a felony conviction.

No, I do not want to apply to register to vote today.

Your full name (please print)

Signature

For office use only

Date: _____

The applicant completed a voter registration form

Yes No

The applicant requested and was given a voter registration form for later delivery

Yes No

Employee Initials: _____

Agency-Based Voter Registration



Please read the following information and complete and sign the declination form below. This agency will detach and keep the declination form for its records.

Information about agency-based voter registration

Must I fill out this application?

No, it is your choice.

How do I turn in the application?

You may

- leave it with us and we will turn it in for you
- mail or deliver it to your county clerk and recorder's office

Does filling out or not filling out the registration form affect services I am applying for?

No. Applying to register or declining to register to vote will not affect the amount of assistance that you will be provided by this agency.

How private is this process?

The name and location of the agency or public office where you received the voter registration application will not appear on your records. If you decide not to use this application to register to vote, that is also confidential.

Am I eligible to register to vote?

You are eligible to vote if you:

- will be 18 years of age or older at the time of the next election
- are a United States citizen
- are a Colorado resident and have lived in your current precinct for at least 30 days before the election
- are not serving a sentence (including parole) for a felony conviction

Important Notice:

If you believe that someone has interfered with

- your right to register or to decline to register to vote,
- your right to privacy in deciding whether to register or in applying to register to vote, or
- your right to choose your own political party or other political preference,

You may file a complaint with:

Colorado Secretary of State
1700 Broadway
Denver, CO 80290
Phone: (303) 894-2200

Declination form (Accept or decline this opportunity to register to vote)

If you are not registered to vote where you live now, would you like to apply to register to vote here today?

Please check only one of the following boxes and sign below. *If you do not check any box, you will be considered to have decided not to register to vote at this time.*

- Yes, I want to apply to register to vote today. (Please fill out the Voter Registration Form)
- Yes, I am currently registered to vote and want to change my address, political party, or other information on my voter registration.
- No, I do not want to apply to register to vote today.
- No, I am currently registered to vote and do not want to update my information.

If you would like help in filling out the voter registration application form, we will help you. The decision whether to seek or accept help is yours. You may fill out the voter registration form in private.

Print your full name _____

Sign here _____

Today's date _____

For agency use only

The applicant completed a voter registration form. Yes No

The applicant requested and was given a voter registration form for later delivery. Yes No

APPENDIX B



Colorado Secretary of State

[Exit this survey >>](#)

NVRA Agency Reporting Form December 1 - December 31, 2012

1. NVRA AGENCY REPORTING FORM - December 1 - December 31, 2012

The National Voter Registration Act requires all designated agencies/institutions issuing voter registration applications to provide statistical data on the number of issued and completed voter registration application forms. This notification should be submitted no later than the 15th of the succeeding month for reporting periods ending on the last day of the month.

If you have questions about completing this survey, please submit them to the NVRA mailbox at nvra@sos.state.co.us or contact Minerva Padro by phone at 303-894-2200 Ext 6332.

THIS SURVEY SHOULD BE COMPLETED FOR ACTIVITY BETWEEN December 1 - December 31, 2012

***1. County Name**

***2. Agency Institution Name**

***3. Name of person completing form.**

***4. Agency Address**

Street Address	<input type="text"/>
City/Town	<input type="text"/>
County	<input type="text"/>
Zip	<input type="text"/>

***5. Name of Director**

Printed Name Director:

***6. Phone Number of Person Completing Questionnaire**

***7. The questions presented in this survey have changed. Please tally the number of clients that checked each box on the declination form.**

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1.) How many clients checked the first box on the declination form to register to vote? | <input type="text"/> |
| 2.) How many clients checked the second box on the declination form to change their voter registration address? | <input type="text"/> |
| 3.) How many clients checked the third box on the declination form declining to register to vote? | <input type="text"/> |
| 4.) How many clients checked the fourth box on the declination form stating that they are already registered to vote and do not need to update their information? | <input type="text"/> |
| 5.) How many clients refused to fill out the declination form and left it blank? | <input type="text"/> |
| 6.) How many voter registration applications were mailed from your office to clients who applied for or reactivated services remotely? | <input type="text"/> |
| 7.) How many completed voter registration applications were transmitted to the county clerk? | <input type="text"/> |

8. Please leave any comments here on the numbers entered above.

[Done >>](#)



Colorado Secretary of State

[Exit this survey >>](#)

2013 NVRA Agency Reporting January

1. 2013 NVRA AGENCY REPORTING January

Welcome to the New 2013 NVRA Survey for reporting. The survey matches the New NVRA Voter Registration Choice Form.

Your office is required by NVRA law to provide voter registration to individuals during: initial application, redetermination, & for any changes every day of every year. We thank you for all you do, day in and day out, to comply and offer voter registration to our community.

Please collect data from the Voter Registration Choice Form and respond to the questions below.

The survey will be sent the first business day of every month. Your response is due: The 15th of every month for the prior month's data. Example: January's report will be due February 15th.

If you have questions about completing this survey or you would like to update your contact information, please submit them to the NVRA mailbox: nvra@sos.state.co.us or contact Minerva Padron by phone at 303-894-2200 Ext 6332.

***1. Agency Institution Name (if you do not see your agency listed, please contact Minerva Padron at 303-894-2200, ext. 6332 or at, nvra@sos.state.co.us)**

***2. Would you like to apply to register to vote? (Capture this data from the Voter Registration Choice Form).**

1.) How many clients checked: Yes, I want to apply to register to vote?

2.) How many clients checked: No, I do not want to apply to register to vote today?

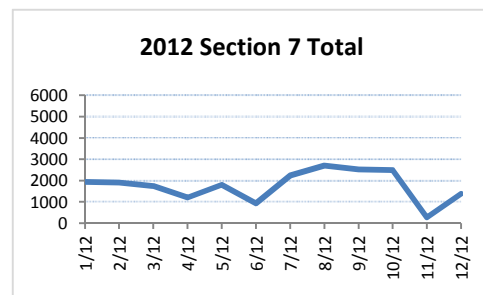
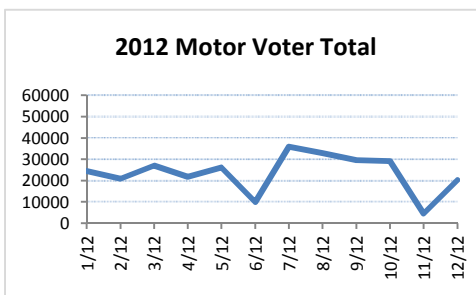
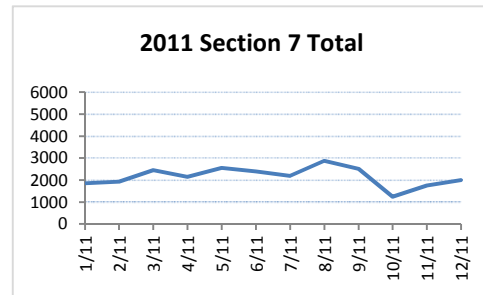
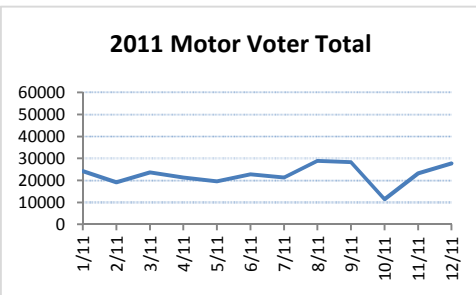
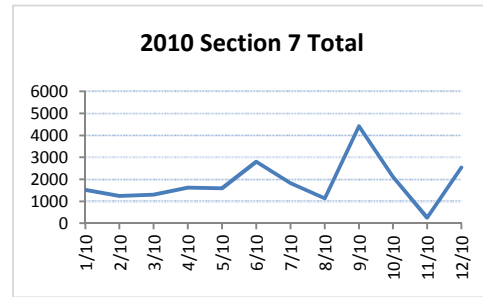
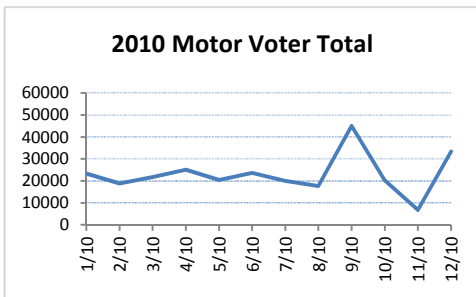
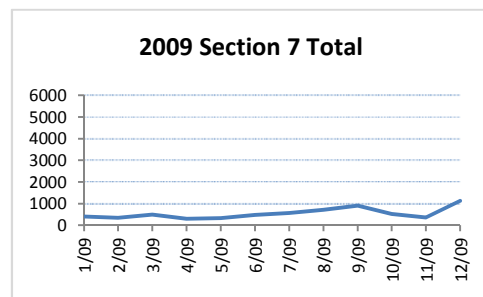
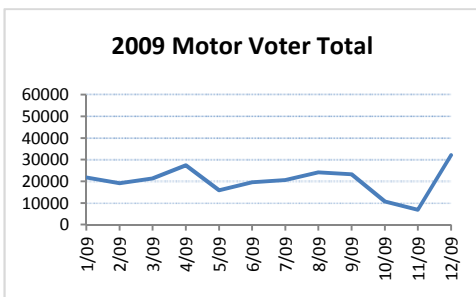
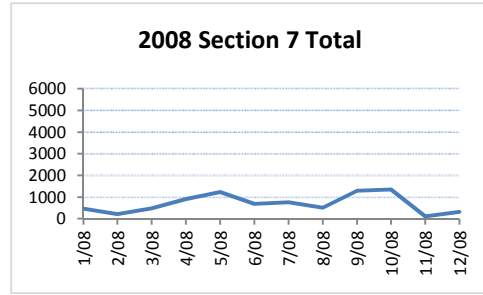
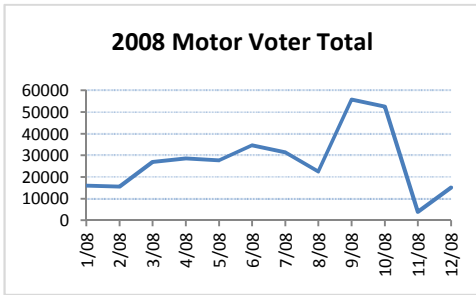
3.) How many voter registration applications were mailed to the county clerk?

3. Please leave any comments here on the numbers entered above.

[Done >>](#)

APPENDIX C

The graphs below represents NVRA Motor Voter (left column) and Section 7 data (right column) from 2008 to 2012. The Y axis for in the Motor Voter graphs is ten times larger than the Y axis in the Section 7 graphs.



APPENDIX D

The data reported in previous NVRA annual reports was inflated because of complications with tracking administrative edits made in SCORE. The root cause is a training failure. Specifically, county election staffs were not properly trained about when to use the voter initiated radio button, and they failed to use the administrative radio button. The Secretary of State's office identified that there were multiple voter initiated changes on the same day for the same record. For example, if a voter updated her registration record, and the county needed to make two administrative changes to the record, those three changes were recorded as voter initiated. This inflated a number of voter registration statistics, including the Section 7 numbers that we report each year.

To solve this problem the query now allows a maximum of one voter initiated change per day. And county staffs are trained to use the administrative radio button when applicable. The current system is configured to default each change to voter initiated. Changes to SCORE in the second quarter of 2013 will require the user to pick between administrative and voter initiated. The graph below represents corrected Section 7 data from 2008 to 2011.

