EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Written Testimony of Charles Stewart III
Kenan Sahin Distinguished Professor of Political Science, MIT
Director of the MIT Election Data and Science Lab
Co-Director of the Caltech/MIT Voting Technology Project
Before the State Government Committee of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives

March 18, 2021

- Election policy in the U.S. for the past forty years can be characterized as the gradual expansion of opportunities for voters to cast ballots by mail.

- The 2020 election interrupted the trend of <u>gradual</u> expansion of opportunities to vote by mail with a seismic shift in the use of the mails to cast ballots.

- Pennsylvania has several features in its absentee ballot policy that reflect best practices.

- Overall, Pennsylvanians were confident that their votes were counted as cast, and that votes in the county and in the commonwealth were counted as cast.

- Pennsylvanians reported an overall positive experience voting by mail in the 2020 election.

- Pennsylvania's restrictions on pre-election processing of ballots are outside the national norm.

- There may be better options for verifying the identity of applicants for absentee ballots and for the verification of those who return them, including a requirement that returned ballots be verified with a unique identification number known only to the voter and the commonwealth.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Charles Stewart III is the Kenan Sahin Distinguished Professor of Political Science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he has taught since 1985. His research and teaching areas include voting technology, election administration, congressional politics, and American political development.

Since 2001, Professor Stewart has been a member of the Caltech/MIT Voting Technology Project, a leading multidisciplinary research effort that applies scientific analysis to questions about election technology, election administration, and election reform. He is currently the MIT director of the project.

In 2016, he founded the MIT Election Data and Science Lab (MEDSL). The Lab performs scientific research into election administration (election science), serves as a research hub among affiliated researchers and academic institutions, and encourages collaborations between election officials and academic researchers. In 2020, he joined Professor Nathaniel Persily of the Stanford Law School to form the Stanford-MIT Healthy Elections Project, devoted to encouraging evidence-informed responses to voting during the pandemic.

Professor Stewart has published numerous scholarly books and articles. Most recently, he co-edited *The Measure of American Elections* (with Barry C. Burden, Cambridge University Press, 2014), authored *Analyzing Congress* (Norton, 2nd ed., 2012), co-authored *Fighting for the Speakership* (with Jeffrey A. Jenkins, Princeton University Press, 2013), and co-authored *Electing the Senate* (with Wendy J. Schiller, Princeton University Press, 2014).

Professor Stewart has been recognized at MIT for his undergraduate teaching, being named to the second class of MacVicar Faculty Fellows in 1994, awarded the Baker Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, and received the Class of 1960 Fellowship. From 1992 to 2015, he served as Head of House of McCormick Hall, along with his spouse, Kathryn Hess.

Professor Stewart, a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, received his B.A. in political science from Emory University and an S.M. and Ph.D. in political science from Stanford University.

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Chair Grove, Democratic Chair Davidson, and distinguished members of the Committee: thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today about absentee/mail voting policy in the United States and Pennsylvania in particular.

I am a professor of political science at MIT, where I have taught and conducted research about American politics for thirty-six years. For the past two decades, I have been the co-director of the Caltech/MIT Voting Technology Project (VTP). In 2016, I founded the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, which is committed to nonpartisan, impartial, scientific research into election administration and forging collaborators between university researchers and election officials to make American elections more convenient and secure.

I have been asked to testify on the issue of absentee balloting and voting by mail. I base my testimony on over twenty years of experience studying issues of election reform, which has included innumerable opportunities to learn from election officials about their experiences from across the country and from various political perspectives. The material I will refer to in my testimony was taken from research I have performed myself, or conducted on behalf of MEDSL.

To summarize my testimony:

- For the past forty years, election policy in the United States can be characterized as the gradual expansion of opportunities for voters to cast ballots by mail.
- As more voters have been provided the opportunity to cast ballots by mail, there has also been an expansion of opportunities to return those mail ballots in person.
- The 2020 election interrupted the trend of <u>gradual</u> expansion of opportunities to vote by mail with a seismic shift in the use of the mails to cast ballots.
- The 2020 election's expansion of mail ballots is not a policy equilibrium; states are currently grappling with the question of how to rebalance voting options among Election Day, early in-person, and absentee voting.
- Pennsylvania is advantaged among the states, to the degree the framework of its absentee ballot laws reflect national best practices.
- Pennsylvanians report an overall positive experience voting by mail in the 2020 election.
- Overall, Pennsylvanians were confident that their votes were counted as cast and that votes in their county and the Commonwealth were counted as cast.
- Voters who cast ballots by mail were more confident than voters who cast ballots on Election Day.

History of absentee and mail voting in the United States[1]

The idea that ballots could be cast anywhere other than a physical precinct close to a voter's home has not always been employed in the United States. It still is not embraced in all countries around the world. Based on data gathered by the Electoral Integrity Project, before COVID-19, roughly one-quarter of 166 countries for which data were available for national elections. Postal voting is most commonly allowed in North America and Europe and generally disallowed in African, Caribbean, Middle Eastern, and Latin American countries. Asian countries lie somewhere in the middle.[2]

Absentee voting first arose in the U.S. during the Civil War, when both Union and Confederate soldiers were allowed to cast ballots from their battlefield units and have them be counted back home. Absentee voting next became a significant issue during World War II, when Congress passed laws in 1942 and 1944 related to soldiers stationed overseas. Both laws became embroiled in controversies over states' rights and African Americans' voting rights in southern states, so their effectiveness was muted. Subsequent laws, particularly the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) and the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act, have been more effective in encouraging absentee voting by service members.

States began passing absentee ballot laws for civilians in the late 1800s. The first were intended to accommodate voters who were away from home or seriously ill on Election Day. The number of absentee ballots distributed was relatively small, and the administrative apparatus was not designed to distribute a significant number.

In the 1980s, California became the first state to allow eligible voters to request absentee ballots for any reason at all, including their convenience. By 2020, 30 states and the District of Columbia had adopted no-excuse absentee laws. The following figure classifies states according to their absentee/mail ballot regimes.[3] According to statistics in the 2018 Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS) (i.e., pre-COVID-19), 26% of voters in no-excuse states cast their ballots by mail, compared to 9% in states that still required an excuse.[4]

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[1] Much of the text in this section was adapted from MIT Election Data and Science Lab, "Voting by mail and absentee voting," https://electionlab.mit.edu/research/voting-mail-and-absentee-voting. This section also benefitted from the analysis by Professor Nathaniel Persily (Stanford University) and me that will appear in a forthcoming issue of the *Journal of Democracy.*

[2] Pew Research Center, "From voter registration to mail-in ballots, how do countries around the world run their elections?" https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/10/30/from-voter-registration-to-mail-in-ballots-how-do-countries-around-the-world-run-their-elections/.

[3] This classification is based on the permanent laws governing mail and absentee ballots in the states, not considering 2020-only changes, or considering changes made during the 2021 sessions of the state legislatures. The one difference with the NCSL coding is Massachusetts, which does not have a no-excuse absentee law, per se, but does have a mail-in option in its early voting statute that functions like a no-excuse absentee law.

[4] The year 2018 is used as a benchmark rather than 2020 because it is unaffected by pre-COVID-19 concerns.
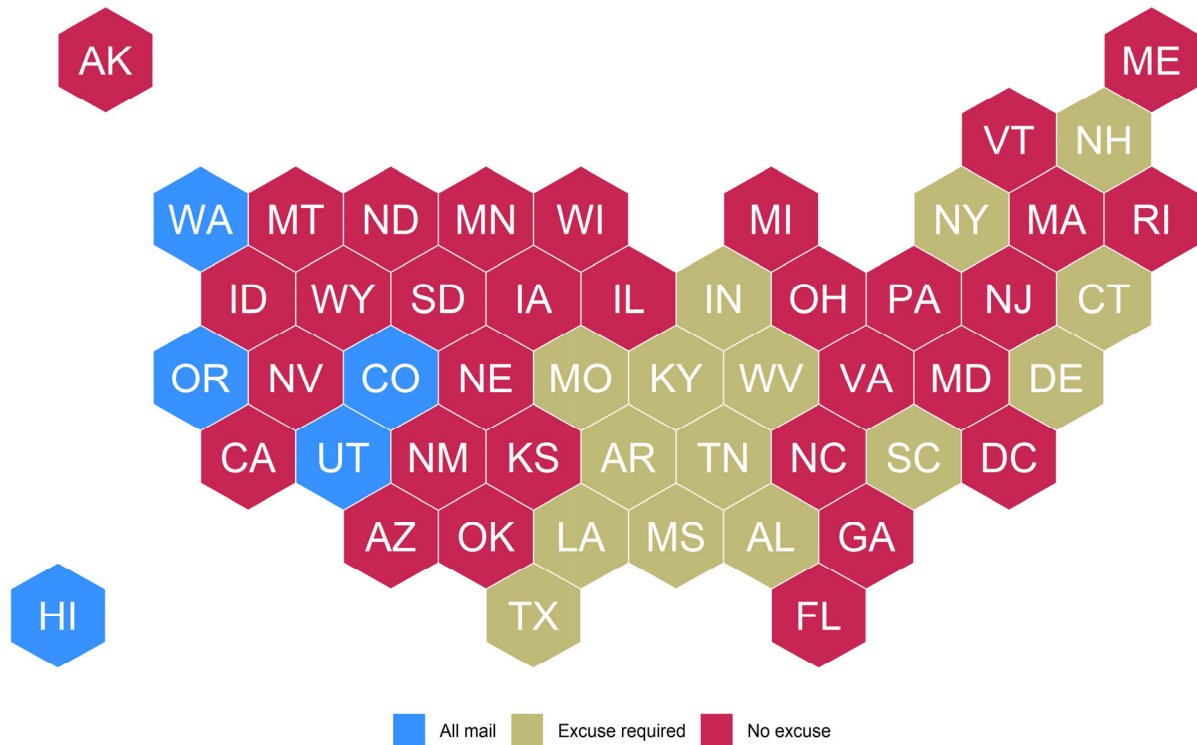
Source: National Conference of State Legislatures
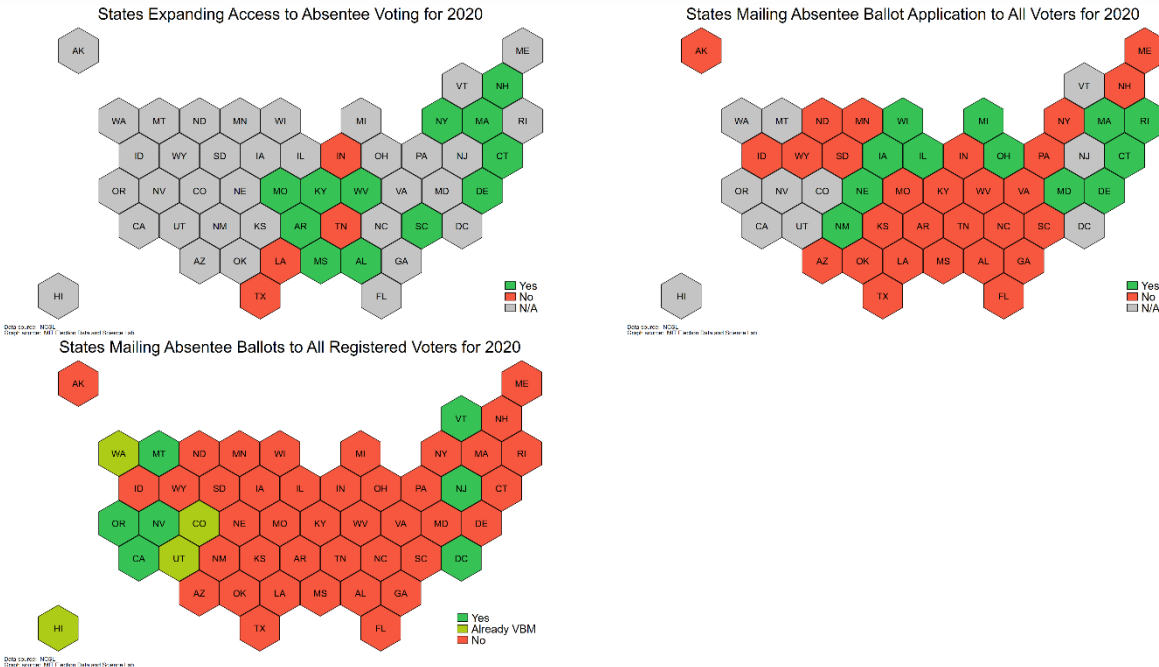VOPP: Table 1: States with No-Excuse Absentee Voting

Ever since California instituted no-excuse absentee voting, several states have taken an additional step and allowed all residents to request an absentee ballot for every election. These permanent absentee states now have even greater use of absentee ballots. In 2018, the EAVS reported that 68% of voters in states with permanent absentee laws voted with an absentee ballot.

The development in mail-ballot policy that caused the greatest expansion of voting by mail occurred in 1998 when Oregon passed a referendum that required all elections to be conducted by mail. Washington followed suit in 2011 and Colorado in 2013. They were recently joined by Hawaii and Utah, which passed laws to begin voting by mail permanently with the 2020 election. California, D.C., Nevada, New Jersey, and Vermont mailed ballots to all voters in 2020 as a COVID-related adaptation. (Montana allowed counties to decide whether to send ballots to all registered voters in their county.)

It is important to note that although several states now distribute all their ballots by mail, voters do not *return* them all by mail. According to responses to the 2020 Survey of the Performance of American Elections (SPAE), 91% of voters in Colorado, 71% in Oregon, and 70% in Washington returned their ballots to some physical location such as a dropbox or local election office. [5] Thus, it is more accurate to describe these states as "distribute-ballots-by-mail" states.

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[5] The SPAE is a post-election survey undertaken by MIT every year since 2008, intended to gauge voters' experience in the most recent presidential election, and designed to allow comparisons across states. In 2020, the sample size was 10,800, with no fewer than 200 interviews in any state.

The use of mail balloting has gradually expanded over the past fifty years. Most states gradually stopped requiring excuses for absentee ballots, and a few went beyond that by instituting permanent absentee lists or complete vote-by-mail systems. The 2020 election interrupted this pattern of gradual evolution in mail-ballot policy, as most states, regardless of their regular policies, enacted emergency measures that effectively eased restrictions on the use of mail ballots. According to information reported by the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), twelve states with absentee-ballot restrictions temporarily expanded eligibility for the 2020 election, while four did not. Also, 12 states mailed absentee ballot applications to all voters, and seven mailed ballots to all registered voters, both solely for the 2020 election.

States Expanding Access to Absentee Voting for 2020

States Mailing Absentee Ballot Application to All Voters for 2020

States Mailing Absentee Ballots to All Registered Voters for 2020

The response to the COVID-19 pandemic caused a seismic shift in balloting in the U.S. For the two decades before 2020, voting by mail and voting in person before Election Day had been growing at a steady pace; simultaneously, Election Day voting was gradually declining. The 2020 election interrupted that gradual evolution, with Election Day voting falling by half (from 60 percent to 28 percent) and mail balloting doubling (from 21 percent to 46 percent) compared to 2016.
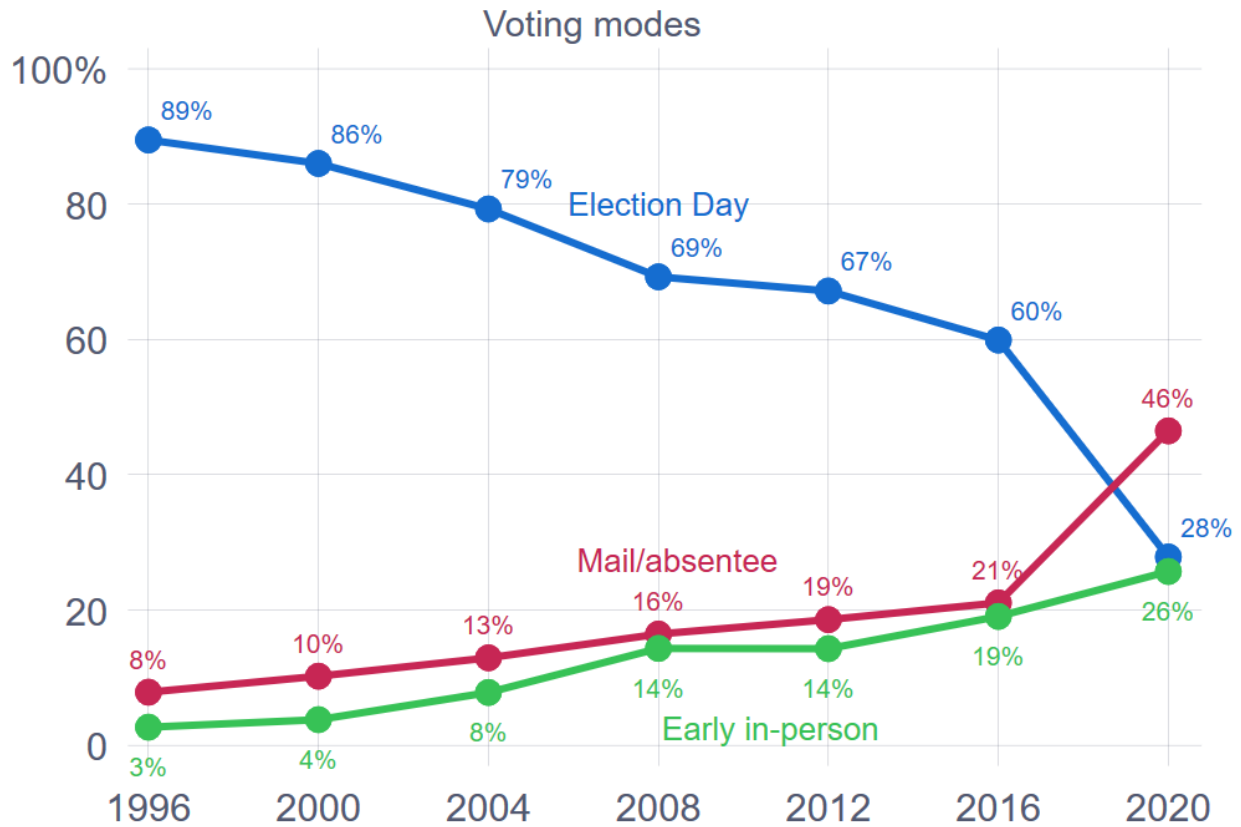
Voting modes

Data sources: Census Bureau, Voting and Registration Supplement, 1996 - 2016; SPAE, 2020

Not all states' voters shifted their voting modes in the same way or to the same degree. This shift can be illustrated using the accompanying figure, which uses a triangular plot to show the changing mix of voting modes from 2016 to 2020. This plot employs points to show the mix of voting modes used in each state, as reported by voters in the 2020 SPAE. Attached to each point is a line that indicates the distribution of modes used in 2016 by that state. Election-Day voting dominated in the states toward the top of the plot; states toward the lower right mostly voted in person before Election Day; and mail balloting dominated in states toward the lower left.
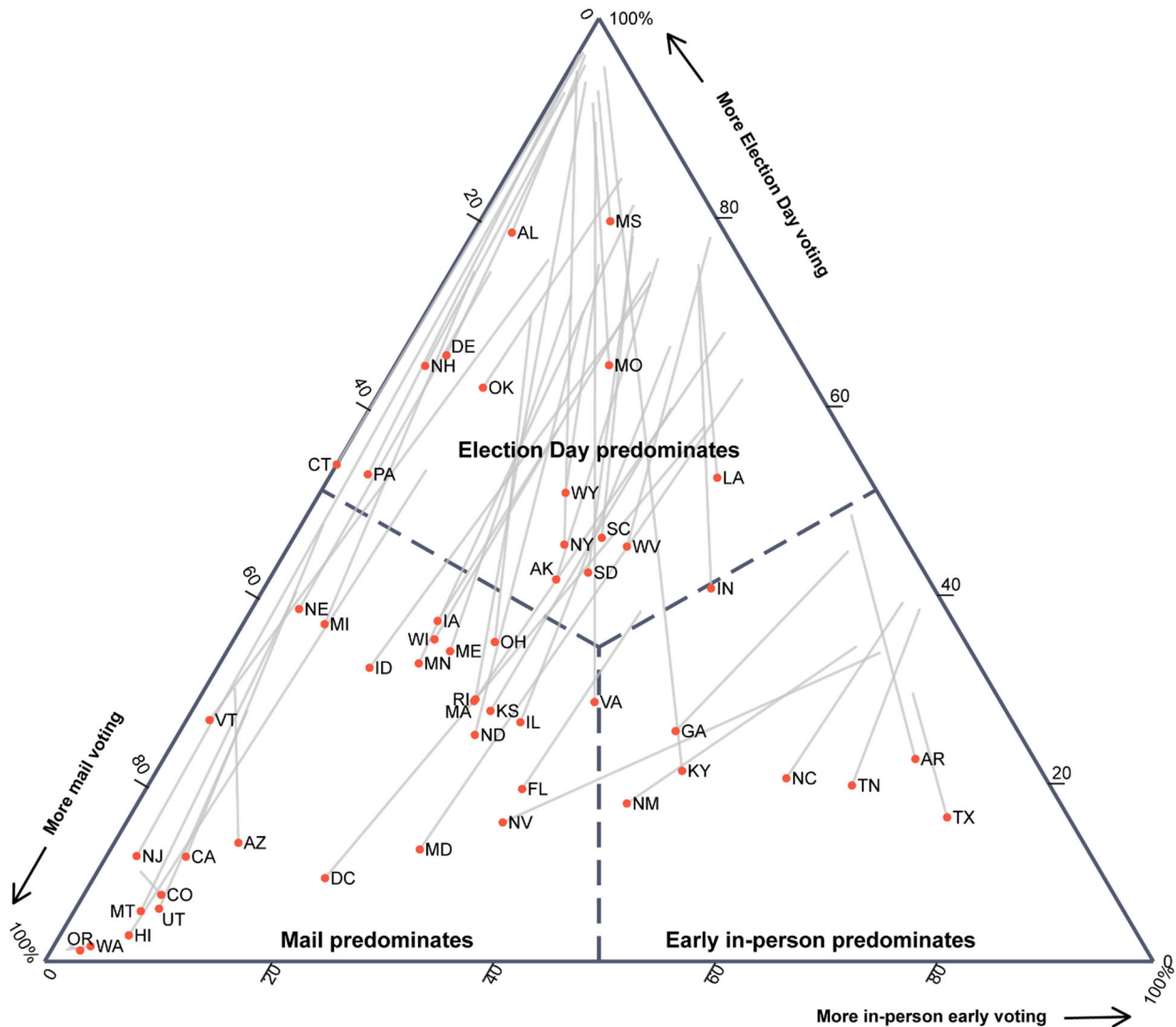
The most common path of travel in the graph is toward the southwest, that is, toward greater use of mail ballots, but not entirely. Of the 14 states in which over 80% of voters cast ballots on Election Day in 2016, for instance, six (Mississippi, Missouri, New York, Rhode Island, Virginia, and Kentucky) saw voters employ a mix of early in-person and mail ballots in 2020, while the other eight (Alabama, Delaware, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Oklahoma, Minnesota, and New Jersey) saw an almost exclusive shift to voting by mail.

(Note that Pennsylvania traveled parallel to the left side of the triangle, close to where the region "Election Day predominates" meets "Mail predominates."[6])

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[6] Because this graph is based on voters reporting how they voted, rather than administrative records from the states, there will be some difference between respondent reports and the statistics reflected in administrative records. In the case of Pennsylvania, it appears that 62 percent of voters cast ballots on Election Day, and 38 percent voted by mail. Thus, the actual position of Pennsylvania in the triangle plot is closer to New Hampshire. Also, because Pennsylvania does not have a formal early voting statute, the small number of Pennsylvania respondents who reported voting in-person before Election Day either voted absentee, but in person, or made an error in responding.

Post-election responses to the SPAE describe the reasons behind the shift to mail balloting. Overall, 59 percent of respondents who stated they were very worried about family members catching COVID also reported they voted by mail, compared to 28 percent who said they were not worried at all. Among Pennsylvania respondents, these figures were 64 percent and 17 percent, respectively.

Certainly, even without changes to mail-ballot policy, concerns about gathering in crowded places would have resulted in more people voting by mail, even without a change in law or administrative directives.[7] Nonetheless, a state's legal regime—both reflected in its regular laws and measures taken to respond particularly to voting during the pandemic—dramatically affected its rate of absentee balloting in 2020.

In 2020, voters in states with no-excuse absentee ballot laws used mail ballots at a higher rate (55 percent) than voters in other states (35 percent); voters in states that mailed ballots to all registered voters likewise voted by mail at a greater rate (81 percent) than elsewhere (40 percent). The only common policy that did not appear to affect usage rates was mailing an absentee ballot application to all voters.[8] Based on statistical analysis I have performed, the biggest increases in mail-ballot usage from 2016 to 2020 occurred in states that mailed ballots to all registered voters (19-point increase) and had a high rate of Democratic-party identification.

The experience of Pennsylvania voters casting ballots by mail in 2020

Starting in 2008, I began conducting the Survey of the Performance of American Elections following every presidential election. This survey, supported by a grant by the Pew Charitable Trusts, interviews a large number of voters immediately after the election to ascertain what the process looked like to voters as they cast their ballots. The survey typically receives responses from 200 registered voters from every state and the District of Columbia. In 2020, because of the interest in how voters fared with all the significant changes in voting, I expanded the number of responses to 1,000 in twelve states, Pennsylvania being one. Therefore, I can provide fairly precise evidence about Pennsylvanians' experiences as they cast mail ballots and compare that experience to the rest of the nation.

Attached to this testimony is a summary document that compares the answers about voting absentee and voter confidence given by Pennsylvanians to those provided by all respondents. I summarize those findings and differences here.

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[7] It is instructive on this point that among the four states that did not expand access to absentee balloting in 2020 in response to COVID-19 (Indiana, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Texas), the percentage of voters who cast ballots by mail went up by a total 4.8 points, from 9.0 percent in 2016 to 13.8 percent in 2020. In addition, the percentage of voters who cast ballots at early voting site rose by 8.3 points, from 53.9 percent to 62.2 percent.

[8] The rate of mail ballot usage among voters in states that mailed an application to all registered voters was virtually identical (48.8 percent) to voters in states that did not (47.6 percent).

Voting absentee

- Nearly half of Pennsylvanians (49 percent) stated that they voted by mail because they were worried about the COVID-19 virus, compared to less than one-third (31 percent) of mail voters overall.
- Very low percentages of mail voters in Pennsylvania reported problems when they voted by mail—receiving their ballot, marking the ballot, or following the instructions.
- More Pennsylvanians (4 percent) reported problems getting a mail ballot than nationwide (2 percent); Pennsylvanians with these problems tending to remark that they experienced delays after requesting the ballot.
- In Pennsylvania, most mail ballots were returned by mail (61 percent), compared to 47 percent nationwide.
- Among those who returned their ballots personally, roughly half (48 percent) returned it to a dropbox, close to the national average (52 percent).
- When Pennsylvanians dropped off their ballots, nearly all waited no more than ten minutes, and most waited not at all. However, fewer Pennsylvanians reported waiting not at all (66 percent) than voters nationwide (82 percent).
- Pennsylvanians generally found it easy to find their drop-off location; the staff they encountered performed their job excellently.
- Pennsylvanians who dropped off their ballots tended to encounter more poll workers wearing masks, plastic barriers between them and workers, six-foot ground markers, and hand sanitizer than voters nationwide.
- More than two-thirds of mail voters (77 percent) returned their ballot more than a week before Election Day, which is more than mail voters nationwide (68 percent).
- A high proportion of Pennsylvania voters reported, based on their experience, that they were very (71 percent) or somewhat (16 percent) confident that there were sufficient safeguards in place to keep fraud using mail ballots to a minimum. These are similar to responses given in the national sample (64 percent and 19 percent, respectively).

Voter confidence

- Pennsylvania voters expressed a high degree of confidence that their votes were counted as intended. Sixty-one percent stated they were "very confident," and 23 percent stated they were "somewhat confident." These are similar to the nationwide results.
- Those who voted by mail in Pennsylvania were the most confident their votes were counted as intended, compared to those who voted on Election Day. The difference in confidence between mail and Election Day voters was greater in Pennsylvania than nationwide.
- When asked if they were confident that votes in their county, the state, and the nation were counted as intended, respondents expressed less confidence at each succeeding level.

Mail ballot policy and reform

I conclude my testimony with thoughts about changes to Pennsylvania mail ballot policy in light of the 2020 election. I am an expert in election administration, not election law, and especially not Pennsylvania election law. Therefore, my thoughts on the subject are based on my knowledge of states' nationwide experience with mail balloting.

First, Pennsylvania has some features of its absentee ballot law and administration that reflect national best practices. This is probably a consequence of Pennsylvania only recently adopting its no-excuse mail ballot statute. Among these practices are the deadline of one week before Election Day to request a mail ballot and an online portal to request an absentee ballot and track its status.

Second, the Pennsylvania restriction on processing absentee ballots until Election Day is outside the national norm. Most states allow processing—i.e., identity verification and preparing ballots for scanning—before Election Day. Research I have conducted, which will be publishing soon, indicates that the few states that prohibited early processing of ballots were behind the pace of other states in reporting election returns for the first 24 hours following the close of polls. Because most states allow for processing before Election Day, Pennsylvania can learn from the laws of many states about how to structure the early processing of ballots that maintain the process's integrity.

Third, signature matching of returned ballots is an essential issue about which there is much intuition but little hard knowledge. There is no doubt that ensuring that the application for an absentee ballot and the returned absentee ballot originate from the voter should be a top goal of absentee ballot policy. States, and counties within states, employ a wide variety of practices associated with signature matching of absentee ballots. Reports issued by the Stanford/MIT Healthy Elections Project and the Stanford Law School over the past year review these practices.[9] Although subjecting ballot applications and returned ballots to a signature match carries a certain intuitive appeal to it, there are reasonable questions about the humans' ability to conduct it reliably. Some states, such as Minnesota, have begun to rely on other identification schemes, such as requiring the voter to print their driver's license number or voter identification number on the inside return certificate. These methods should be considered as a possible alternative to signature matching.

Finally, it must be said that despite the controversy that arose in Pennsylvania during the post-election-day period, Pennsylvania has one advantage over most other states when it considers the way forward from 2020. Half of the states responded to the pandemic by providing robust options across all three voting modes—Election Day, early, and mail. Other than Florida, no state has ever chosen this policy path in regular times. It is no mistake why almost every state has chosen one voting mode to predominate and one to supplement—adding a third mode at high volume multiplies administrative complexity. Pennsylvania did not attempt to expand its early in-person voting options as a matter of policy in 2020, simplifying policy decisions the Commonwealth must make moving forward.

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[9] Stanford-MIT Healthy Elections Project, "Behind the Scenes of Mail Voting: The Rules and Procedures for Signature Verification in the 2020 General Elections," October 28, 2020,

https://healthyelections.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/Signature_Verification_0.pdf; Stanford Law School, Law and Policy Lab, "Signature Verification and Mail Ballots: Guaranteeing Access while Preserving Integrity: A Case Study of California's Every Vote Count Act," May 15, 2019, https://www-cdn.law.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SLS_Signature_Verification_Report-5-15-20-FINAL.pdf.

APPENDIX

This appendix reports results from the 2020 Survey of the Performance of American Elections that pertain to absentee balloting and voter confidence from Pennsylvania, with comparisons to the nationwide results.

Absentee ballot

Note: Results in this section are confined to respondents are confined to respondents who reported they voted by mail. The number of respondents responding they voted by mail was 442 in the Pennsylvania sample and 8,256 in the nationwide sample. Items marked with an asterisk (*) are those in which the difference in responses between Pennsylvania and the rest of the U.S. statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. In general, for proportions around 50%, the 95% confidence interval (i.e., the "margin of error") is $\pm$ 2.3 points for the Pennsylvania sample and $\pm$ 0.5 points for the U.S. sample.

*Q24. Which of the following statements most closely describes why you voted by mail or absentee?

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
My state or locality only has vote-by-mail.	0.7%	10.9%
I have signed up to receive a mail or absentee ballot automatically in each election.	10.4%	21.4%
Voting by mail or absentee was just more convenient for me this election	22.1%	20.9%
I was out of town for this election	3.1%	2.9%
I have a physical disability that makes it difficult for me to get to the polls	9.0%	6.7%
I could not get to the polls on Election Day because of my work or school schedule	2.5%	1.9%
I am in the armed forces	0.3%	0.2%
I was an election official or poll worker	0.7%	0.9%
Religious observances would have interfered with my going to the polls	0.0%	0.0%
I was worried about the COVID-19 virus	49.1%	30.5%
Other	2.1%	3.5%
N	440	8,199

*Q25.

Were there any problems getting your absentee or mail-in ballot sent to you?

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
Yes	4.2%	2.1%
No	95.8%	97.9%
N	434	8,146

Note: Most respondents who answered "yes" and provided a description of their problem mentioned delays in receiving a requested ballot.

Q26. Did you encounter any problems marking or completing your ballot that may have interfered with your ability to cast your vote as intended?

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
Yes	0.8%	1.6%
No	99.2%	98.4%
N	437	8,144

Q27. To the best of your memory, how was your ballot returned?

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
Taken to an official election location (such as a polling place, early voting center, or drop box).	39.5%	52.2%
Mailed back	60.5%	47.1%
I don't remember	0.0%	0.7%
N	440	8,199

*Q28. Did you personally return or mail back your ballot, or did someone else?

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
I did, personally	93.4%	87.4%
Someone else did	6.2%	11.7%
I don't remember	0.5%	0.9%
N	440	8,199

Q29. Which of the following statements most accurately describes where your ballot was returned? (Asked of respondents who returned ballot to an official location.)

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
Post office box at a U.S. Postal Service location.	2.4%	3.7%
Official post office box not at a U.S. Postal Service location.	1.0%	1.0%
Picked up by the postal worker who delivers mail to my home.	0.5%	0.8%
Drop box used only for ballots, not located at an election office or polling place.	48.2%	52.6%
Main election office.	28.5%	23.6%
Neighborhood polling place.	6.2%	7.9%
Voting center, not a neighborhood polling place.	10.0%	5.6%
Other	3.2%	4.3%
I don't know	0.0%	0.6%
N	175	3,663

Q30. Please think back to the day when you returned your ballot. Select the statement that **best** applies to how voting fit into your schedule that day.

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
I voted while on my way to work or school.	9.2%	5.2%
I voted before work or school, but not on my way to work or school.	1.6%	3.3%
I voted during a break in my work- or school day.	13.4%	10.7%
I voted while on my way home after work or school.	5.0%	5.4%
I voted after work or school, but not on my way home.	10.9%	9.3%
I did not have work or school the day I voted.	55.0%	63.1%
I don't remember	4.8%	3.0%
N	334	3,663

Q31. Did you fit any other errands into the trip when you went to return your ballot?

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
Yes	32.1%	38.2%
No	63.8%	56.8%
I don't remember	4.1%	5.0%
N	384	6,668

*Q32. Once you got to where you dropped off your ballot, how long did you have to wait before you could deposit your ballot and leave? (Asked of respondents who returned ballot to an official location.)

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
Not at all	66.3%	82.3%
Less than 10 minutes	30.1%	14.0%
10-30 minutes	2.0%	2.5%
31 minutes – 1 hour	0.7%	0.4%
More than 1 hour	0.4%	0.3%
I don't know	0.6%	0.4%
N	175	3,663

Q33. Select the statement that best applies to why you decided to deposit your ballot where you did. (Asked of respondents who returned ballot to an official location.) **Remark on the "other" reason

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
It was convenient to my work or school.	8.4%	6.9%
It was close to my home.	38.8%	46.7%
It was close, or on my way, to where I had errands to run.	14.3%	14.5%
It was the only location available to me.	14.9%	14.5%
Other reason	23.5%	16.6%
I don't know.	0.1%	0.9%
N	174	3,662

Q34. How difficult was it to find the place where you dropped off your ballot? (Asked of respondents who returned ballot to an official location.)

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
Very difficult	0.0%	0.1%
Somewhat difficult	4.6%	1.8%
Fairly easy	13.1%	13.1%
Very easy	82.4%	84.6%
I don't know	0.0%	0.4%
N	174	3,662

Q35. How would you describe the place where you dropped off your ballot? (Asked of respondents who returned ballot to an official location.)

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
Private business	1.9%	0.4%
School building	10.5%	3.2%
Church	0.0%	1.3%
Police/Fire Station	1.1%	4.1%
A store or shopping mall	0.4%	2.4%
Senior center	0.0%	1.0%
Community center	4.9%	7.4%
Library	5.8%	15.4%
Sports arena	0.4%	0.5%
Drop box on the street or sidewalk	1.9%	7.7%
Other government office (court house, municipal building, city hall, etc.)	65.7%	47.9%
Other	7.2%	8.0%
I don't remember	0.1%	0.7%
N	174	3,662

*Q36. Please rate the job performance of the staff at the place where you dropped off your ballot. (Asked of respondents who returned ballot to an official location.)

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
Excellent	80.5%	74.0%
Good	16.0%	16.7%
Fair	1.0%	1.6%
Poor	0.5%	0.7%
I don't know	1.9%	7.1%
N	153	2,317

Q37. Did you see any of the following where you dropped off your ballot? (Check all that apply) (Asked of respondents who returned ballot to an official location.) (Percentage of respondents who check off the item.)

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
*Poll workers wearing masks	54.8%	33.6%
Poll workers wearing plastic face shields	14.5%	10.8%
*Plastic or glass barriers between poll workers and voters	16.8%	11.1%
Plastic or glass barriers between voting booths or machines	9.2%	7.1%
Voting booths placed further apart than usual	9.1%	8.4%
*Markings on the ground or floor to keep people in lines 6 feet apart	45.1%	27.6%
*Hand sanitizer	38.3%	25.0%
Ballot-marking pens that could only be used once	6.6%	5.1%
Voting booths cleaned after each voter used it	4.5%	5.3%
N	174	3,662

Q38. How confident are you that the layout of the place where you dropped off your ballot protected voters from being infected with COVID-19? (Asked of respondents who returned ballot to an official location.)

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
Very confident	57.0%	65.6%
Somewhat confident	36.3%	24.8%
Not too confident	2.1%	1.7%
Not at all confident	1.5%	1.4%
I don't know	3.2%	6.7%
N	164	2,317

*Q39. To the best of your memory, when was your ballot returned?

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
On Election Day	1.6%	3.1%
A few days before Election Day	6.8%	11.3%
The week before Election Day	12.1%	15.0%
More than a week before Election Day	77.4%	68.2%
I don't remember	2.1%	2.5%
N	440	2,317

Q40. Overall, how easy was it to follow all the instructions necessary to cast your ballot and return it to be counted?

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
Very easy	82.3%	80.0%
Somewhat easy	17.1%	17.9%
Somewhat hard	0.3%	1.4%
Very hard	0.3%	0.1%
I don't remember	0.1%	0.6%
N	440	8,199

*Q41. Do you vote by mail in most elections?

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
Yes	21.6%	51.3%
No	78.4%	48.3%
N	440	8,199

Q42. How likely is it that you will vote by mail in most future elections?

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
Very likely	46.6%	59.7%
Somewhat likely	33.2%	20.3%
Somewhat unlikely	6.7%	5.9%
Very unlikely	4.0%	5.8%
I don't know	9.5%	8.3%
N	440	8,199

Q43. Based on your experience voting by mail in this election, how confident are you that there are sufficient safeguards in place to keep fraud using mail ballots to a minimum?

	Pennsylvania	U.S.
Very confident	71.3%	63.8%
Somewhat confident	16.3%	18.5%
Not too confident	3.2%	5.5%
Not at all confident	6.2%	9.3%
I don't know	3.0%	2.9%
N	440	8,199

Voter Confidence

Q44. How confident are you that **your vote** in the General Election was counted as you intended?

	Pennsylvania					U.S.			
	Election Day	Early	Mail	Total		Election Day	Early	Mail	Total
Very confident	49.3%	51.9%	75.5%	61.2%		59.1%	63.9%	70.6%	65.6%
Somewhat confident	29.6%	25.0%	15.1%	22.9%		26.5%	25.0%	18.8%	22.5%
Not too confident	9.5%	19.5%	8.9%	7.3%		6.5%	4.8%	4.1%	5.0%
Not at all confident	5.9%	0.0%	3.2%	4.5%		4.8%	3.3%	3.8%	4.0%
I don't know	5.7%	3.7%	2.3%	4.1%		3.2%	3.1%	2.7%	2.9%
N	492	32	431	956		5,000	4,014	7,978	16,992

Q45. Think about vote counting throughout **your county or city,** and not just your own personal situation. How confident are you that votes in your county or city were counted as voters intended?

	Pennsylvania					U.S.			
	Election Day	Early	Mail	Total		Election Day	Early	Mail	Total
Very confident	35.9%	50.5%	69.4%	51.5%		49.0%	53.7%	65.1%	57.7%
Somewhat confident	31.3%	42.3%	20.7%	26.9%		30.6%	29.8%	22.2%	26.5%
Not too confident	17.9%	3.7%	3.7%	11.0%		10.0%	7.0%	5.0%	6.9%
Not at all confident	10.4%	3.4%	3.4%	7.0%		6.7%	6.1%	4.7%	5.6%
I don't know	4.3%	0.0%	2.9%	3.6%		3.6%	3.5%	3.0%	3.3%
N	497	32	433	962		5,073	4,044	8,034	17,151

Q46. Now, think about vote counting throughout **[your state]**. How confident are you that votes in [your state] were counted as voters intended?

	Pennsylvania					U.S.			
	Election Day	Early	Mail	Total		Election Day	Early	Mail	Total
Very confident	25.8%	49.0%	67.9%	45.6%		40.9%	44.7%	60.1%	50.8%
Somewhat confident	11.6%	24.4%	16.8%	14.4%		28.4%	30.2%	23.8%	26.7%
Not too confident	16.8%	12.6%	5.9%	11.8%		12.7%	11.5%	6.7%	9.6%
Not at all confident	43.9%	14.0%	6.5%	26.1%		14.5%	10.0%	6.5%	9.7%
I don't know	1.8%	0.0%	2.8%	2.2%		3.5%	3.6%	2.9%	3.3%
N	496	32	433	961		5,069	4,040	8,019	17,129

Q47. Finally, think about vote counting throughout the country. How confident are you that votes **nationwide** were counted as voters intended?

	Pennsylvania					U.S.			
	Election Day	Early	Mail	Total		Election Day	Early	Mail	Total
Very confident	23.9%	32.7%	58.2%	39.7%		24.9%	33.2%	49.0%	38.2%
Somewhat confident	12.2%	42.3%	24.7%	18.8%		17.3%	19.0%	23.6%	20.7%
Not too confident	19.6%	4.5%	6.4%	13.2%		16.7%	13.5%	9.3%	12.5%
Not at all confident	42.5%	16.9%	6.4%	25.4%		38.4%	31.7%	15.1%	25.9%
I don't know	1.7%	3.7%	4.3%	3.0%		2.7%	2.6%	3.0%	2.8%
N	497	32	433	962		5,070	4,045	8,033	17,148