

# SAFE VOTE

# WEST VIRGINIA

Increasing access to safe, secure and transparent elections in West Virginia.



**SAFEVOTE**  
WEST VIRGINIA

[www.SafeVoteWV.org](http://www.SafeVoteWV.org)

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WEST VIRGINIA



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## **ABOUT SAFE VOTE WEST VIRGINIA**

Safe Vote West Virginia, a project by Take Back Action Fund, champions ensuring that every West Virginian has access to safe, secure and transparent elections.

Specifically focused on serving deployed, active duty and retired military personnel; overseas citizens; and, voters with disabilities, Safe Vote West Virginia is working to guarantee that every citizen in the Mountain State has expanded access to voting.

The recent health pandemic has made one thing clear: we must implement innovative, safe solutions that protect our constitutional right to vote while also guaranteeing the continued integrity of our elections system.

**Our goal is to rise above political rhetoric to mobilize business leaders, community stakeholders, members of the armed forces and voters from every corner of West Virginia to find the best solution to safeguard everyone's voice on Election Day.**

**“** As the chief election officer for West Virginia, **I'm laser focused on protecting elections** throughout our state. **”**  
**Secretary of State Andrew 'Mac' Warner**



## **TAKE BACK ACTION FUND AND SAFE VOTE WEST VIRGINIA**

**At the core of our democracy exists an escalating problem of ballot security, integrity and accessibility.** Take Back Action Fund, a registered 501(c)(4) organization, is committed to restoring trust in our system of elections.

Safe Vote West Virginia focuses on engaging community leaders, military personnel, members of the disability community, elected officials and average voters in adopting secure technology that increases voter participation by removing barriers that may prevent a voter from casting a traditional ballot.

**As a national leader in expanding secure ballot access, West Virginia has a proven record of success in guaranteeing all voters have an opportunity to have their voice heard on Election Day.**

With your support, we can protect our right to vote by expanding West Virginia's existing mobile voting platform.



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## **A BRIEF HISTORY OF MOBILE VOTING IN WEST VIRGINIA**

2018	Restricted to overseas military service members, West Virginia becomes the first state to authorize voting by mobile devices in federal and state elections.
2020	Senate Bill 94, sponsored by Sen. Charles Trump (R-Morgan), unanimously passes the legislature allowing West Virginians with physical disabilities the ability to vote electronically.
Our Goal	To expand ballot accessibility through the adoption of an app-based platform that guarantees safe, secure and transparent elections.

## **WHO IS AFFECTED**

356,167

**PHYSICALLY DISABLED**

10,204

**ENLISTED MILITARY**





## KEY TERMS

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### BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY

Data is stored on a decentralized database, meaning there's no single owner or point of failure. Allowing for greater transparency, information is stored publicly; but, to ensure privacy, voters' personal information remains anonymous. Blockchains mitigate editing or erasing recorded data, aiding in the prevention of vote tampering.

### MOBILE APPS

Built for a specific platform, such as iOS for the Apple iPhone or Android, mobile apps are downloaded and installed via an app store and have access to system resources, such as GPS and the camera function. Mobile apps live and run on the device itself and offer increased security.

### BROWSER-BASED (WEB) APPS

Accessed via an internet browser, these apps are not native to a particular system, and don't need to be downloaded or installed often, which leads to increased vulnerability that allows an attacker to gain some level of control of the site, and possibly the hosting server. Most vulnerabilities are exploited through automated means, such as vulnerability scanners and botnets.

## **2018 ELECTRONIC VOTING PILOT PROGRAM**

West Virginia made waves in 2018 when it became the first state in the country to allow deployed members of the military and overseas citizens to participate in our democracy by using a mobile voting application to cast ballots secured by blockchain technology.

**A study released by the University of Chicago found West Virginia's mobile voting pilot program increased voter turnout by three to five percentage points.**

For the general election, the mobile voting option, Voatz, was offered to all 55 counties, with participation from 24 counties. According to the Secretary of State's office, 144 voters from 21 counties cast ballots in the 2018 general election using mobile voting.

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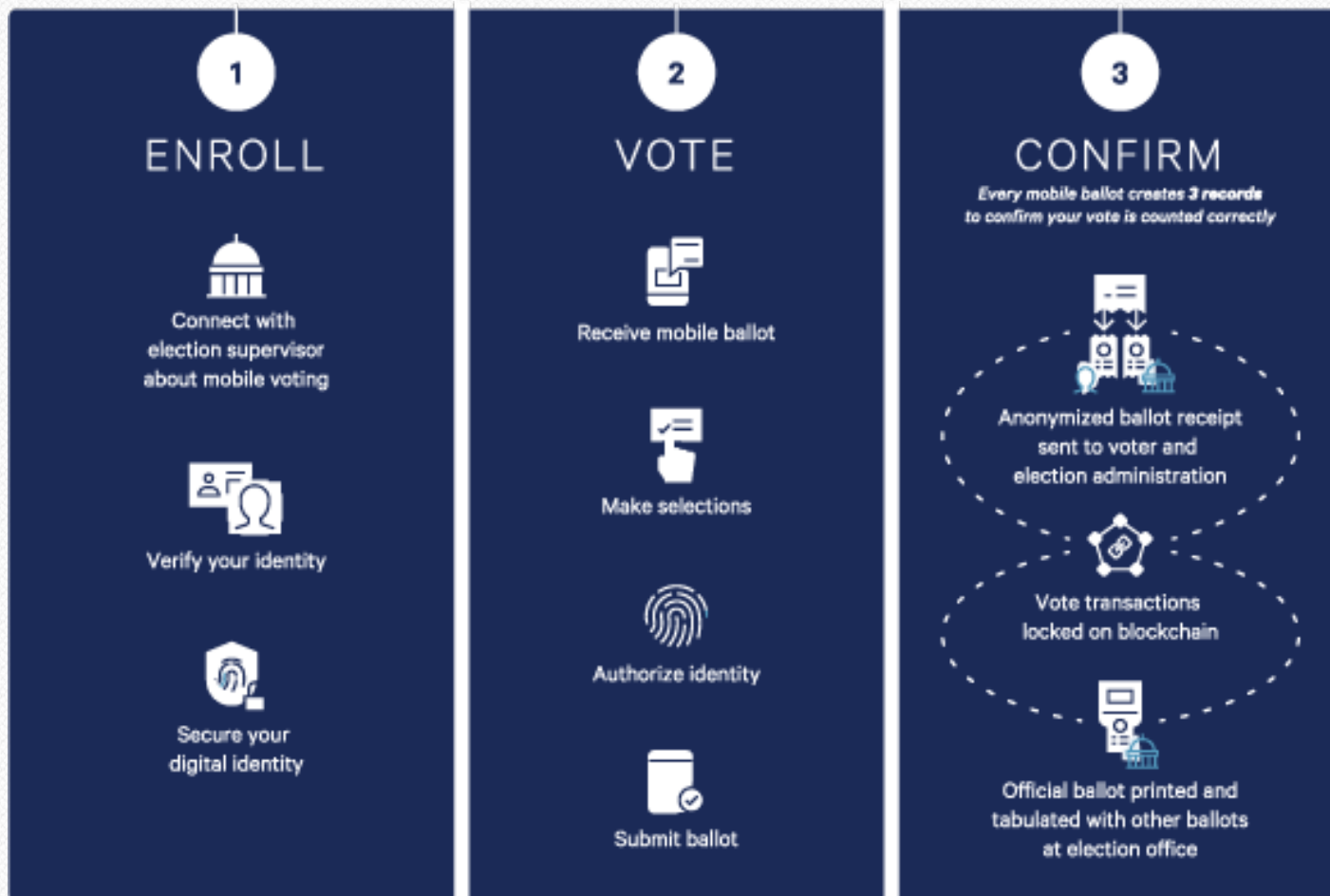
For the first time in our nation's history, military and overseas citizens were able to cast ballots in a federal election using a mobile device. If this technology were not available, many of those soldiers and citizens would not have had the opportunity to participate in our democracy.

**West Virginia Secretary of State Andrew 'Mac' Warner**

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# HOW VOATZ APP-BASED VOTING WORKS



## **VOATZ SYSTEM ENHANCES ELECTION INTEGRITY**

The Voatz system has never been compromised across any of its 67 successful live elections, which means not a single vote has been altered, lost or suppressed. Voatz continues to be the most battle-tested mobile voting system deployed in the United States and has proven to be the best option for West Virginia. **Contrary to being hacked, Voatz has successfully detected and thwarted all malicious attempts on the system.**

In 2018, when an attempt was made on the Voatz system during West Virginia's election, the threat was quickly identified, blocked and reported to the state elections team. All elections infrastructure is designated by the Department of Homeland Security as "critical infrastructure," making any tampering and interference during a live election a significant federal crime.

Embracing transparency and research, Voatz employs a bug bounty program (i.e., a community testing program that offers financial rewards to for reporting bugs, issues, or vulnerabilities), allowing researchers to access and test a fully functional replica of the live Voatz system.

This example from 2018 showcases how Voatz's layered approach to security uniquely identifies, prevents and blocks hacking attempts while allowing Voatz to promptly notify clients of questionable activity.



## **COMPARISON OF APP-BASED VOATZ AND OTHER WEB-BASED PLATFORMS**

	Smartphone App-Based Voting (Voatz)	Web-Based Voting
Secure Enclave	On compatible mobile devices to create an extra layer of security	No known system that offers this capability without connecting additional hardware
Remote Identity Verification	Supports remote identify verification to determine voter eligibility	No known system that offers this level of compliance
Device Threat Detection	Can detect device tampering, malware and other device level threats	No deployed system that offers device threat detection
Network Threat Detection	Can detect various network level threats	No deployed system that offers network threat detection
Tamper Resistant Storage	Ensures ballot data cannot be tampered with in an undetectable manner	Fails to make use of tamper resistant storage
Voter Verifiable Receipts	Provides secure voter receipts to ensure voter intent is honored	No deployed system that supports voter verifiable receipts
End-to-End Citizen Audits	Supports end-to-end citizen audits to ensure transparency and accountability	No deployed system that offers end-to-end citizen audit capabilities
ADA Compliance	Offers access for voters with disabilities allowing for private voting without the need for a proxy	Most systems unable to offer voters with a disability private voting accessibility
eFax Support	Offers ballot return via automated eFax	No known system that offers automated eFax
One Device, One Vote	Enforces one vote per smartphone device	No known system that offers this security capability

## **ABOUT SAFE VOTE WEST VIRGINIA**

Safe Vote West Virginia is quickly organizing citizens who agree with Safe Vote West Virginia's mission to provide more accessible elections powered by the country's safest and most secure app-based mobile voting technology. Specifically, Safe Vote West Virginia advocates expanded access to the app-based platform Voatz utilized in 2018.

Unlike other solutions, the app-based program implemented in 2018 utilizes biometric data combined with multiple points of validation to allow voters to upload their ballot into an encrypted blockchain system. **If you belong to any of the following groups, we need your support to reach key decision-makers.**



Veterans, active military  
and members of veterans'  
organizations



Citizens who face  
challenges voting in  
person or members of  
groups focused on  
disability issues








Civic, political and  
community leaders








## **HOW TO ENGAGE IN SAFE VOTE WEST VIRGINIA'S EFFORTS**

Safe Vote West Virginia is focused on harnessing the power of elected officials, business leaders, community stakeholders and voters to ensure all Virginians have access to a safe, secure and transparent method of voting.

## **WAYS TO JOIN THE MOVEMENT**

	Make Phone Calls
	Knock on Doors <sup>1</sup>
	Social Media Outreach
	Serve as an Ambassador
	Send Emails

	Contribute Financially
	Write Letters or Postcards
	Host an Event <sup>1</sup>
	Invite Safe Vote to Speak
	Have Other Ideas? Contact Us.

*1. Due to COVID-19, participation in these activities may be restricted until appropriate.*

# HOW TO SIGN UP TO HELP ENSURE SAFE, SECURE AND ACCESSIBLE ELECTIONS

With your help, West Virginia can lead the nation in providing voters with a convenient and secure option to ensure they have a voice in shaping the future of our nation, state and local communities.



01

Visit [www.SafeVoteWV.org](http://www.SafeVoteWV.org) to sign up to volunteer.

02

Contact State Vote West Virginia's headquarters by phone **(681) 285-7453** or email [Connect@SafeVoteWV.org](mailto:Connect@SafeVoteWV.org).

