
NEWS RELEASE

**Louisiana
Department of State**



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INTENT TO AWARD VOTING MACHINE CONTRACT ANNOUNCED

BATON ROUGE, La. –The Office of State Procurement on behalf of Secretary of State Kyle Ardoin has issued an intent to award the RFP for Acquisition of New Voting Equipment to Dominion Voting Systems, Inc.. The State of Louisiana intends to enter into a contract with Dominion for the replacement of all early voting and Election Day voting machines.

“We are very excited about new voting technology in our state,” said Secretary of State Ardoin.

“Considering voting machines are purchased every 15-20 years, we anticipated this process would be highly scrutinized and possibly contentious. We appreciate the expert advice of the Office of State Procurement which has worked with my office to ensure the process has been fair and equitable for all bidders and we look forward to negotiating a final agreement with Dominion in the near future.”

Once a final contract is negotiated, Louisiana can begin replacing approximately 10,000 machines and replacing them with smaller, more secure, touch screen models that provide a voter verified paper receipt to enhance post-election recounts or audits when necessary. Louisiana, like many other states, purchased its voting equipment back in 2005 when federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) dollars were first sent to states. Congress released approximately \$5.889 million in additional HAVA funding to be used for technology improvements.

To date, the Secretary of State’s Office has invested approximately \$500,000 in self-generated dollars to jump-start voting technology efforts at the local level including secure laptops for vote tabulation and additional cyber-security measures at registrar of voters offices. An additional allocation of \$3.5 million has already been approved by the Legislature for this purchase. The federal HAVA dollars provided to Louisiana require a \$294,400 state match bringing the potential total dollars available for voting equipment to almost \$10 million dollars.

“We know for certain that ten million dollars won’t cover the entire cost of replacement machines,” noted Ardoin. “However it does get us started in at least five parishes as early as this spring,” said Ardoin. “We will immediately begin discussion with the legislature and others about how important this investment is for election security. As cyber-security threats become more advanced, voters are demanding safer, securer voting technology in our state and we are prepared to deliver,” Ardoin said. “I believe a vast majority of our lawmakers have heard that message loud and clear and will support us in bringing new equipment to their districts as soon as possible.”

According to estimates provided by Dominion during the request for proposals process, full replacement costs for Louisiana could be as high as \$90-95 million. The Secretary of State's Office has indicated it plans to roll out any new equipment purchased in phases over multiple fiscal years. Phase one would replace all early voting machines 5 parishes at a time, across the state starting in 2018. Phase two would include Election Day machines rolled out in the same manner, 5 parishes at a time with full implementation expected by 2020.

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