

# PUBLIC SUBMISSION

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RFI: Promoting Access to Voting

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## Submitter Information

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## General Comment

My name is Bryan Finney, CEO and Founder of Democracy Live, the largest accessible vote by mail/absentee voting technology provider in the U.S. Democracy Live provided accessible VBM/absentee in over 2,500 elections jurisdictions, across 21 states in the 2020 Presidential election. In total, Democracy Live has supported over 4,000 elections, offering accessible balloting technologies to over 10 million voters since 2008. Absentee/vote by mail is the fastest growing method of voting in the U.S. Yet, per a recent Rutgers University report, there are 38 million voters with disabilities in the U.S. (16% of all voters). Many of these voters cannot see, hold or mark a paper postal absentee ballot. While every other eligible absentee voter can vote privately and independently, voters with disabilities must ask someone to vote for them, or not vote at all. Similar to the ramps, rails and accessible machines in the polling place, accessible absentee/VBM is an equal access issue. Proven technologies now exist that allow all voters, including voters with disabilities, to independently access, mark and return their ballot electronically. Technology from Democracy Live, in partnership with Amazon (AWS), now offer an accessible balloting portal that enables voters with disabilities the same right to vote privately and independently as non-disabled voters, while also maintaining a voter verified paper trail. Technologically, leveraging a federally approved cloud infrastructure to host and secure a document (ballot) is far more secure than the millions of ballots that have been transmitted by fax machines and email attachments since 2010, as part of the MOVE Act. We highly encourage more research and review into accessible electronic transmission of ballots for voters who cannot vote at a polling place, or on a postal paper ballot. Disabilities, geography, global pandemics, wildfires, hurricanes and other future unknown emergencies may prevent voters from casting a paper ballot. Accessible, electronic ballot transmission may be the only way for voters to be access and return their ballot. We encourage NIST to reach out to the technology providers that are delivering these electronic ballot transmission solutions in actual elections to collaborate on best practices and security protocols. Equal access to voting need not stop at the polling place, it can and should be extended into the home.

Bryan Finney,  
CEO, Democracy Live

