

Automatic Voter Registration: Why It's Time for MA to Take Action



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Recent Progress in Election Modernization in MA



- Online Voter Registration
- Early Voting
- Post-Election Audits
- Pre-Registration



MASSACHUSETTS
REGISTER
TO VOTE
ONLINE

Online
Voter Registration
System

What is AVR?

Step 1: Eligible citizens who interface with government agencies are registered to vote unless they decline.



Step 2: Agencies then transfer voter registration information electronically to election officials.

Why AVR?

- Expands the electorate and makes it more representative of the population
- Saves states and localities money
- Makes voter registration lists more accurate and up-to-date
- Increases the security of the voting system



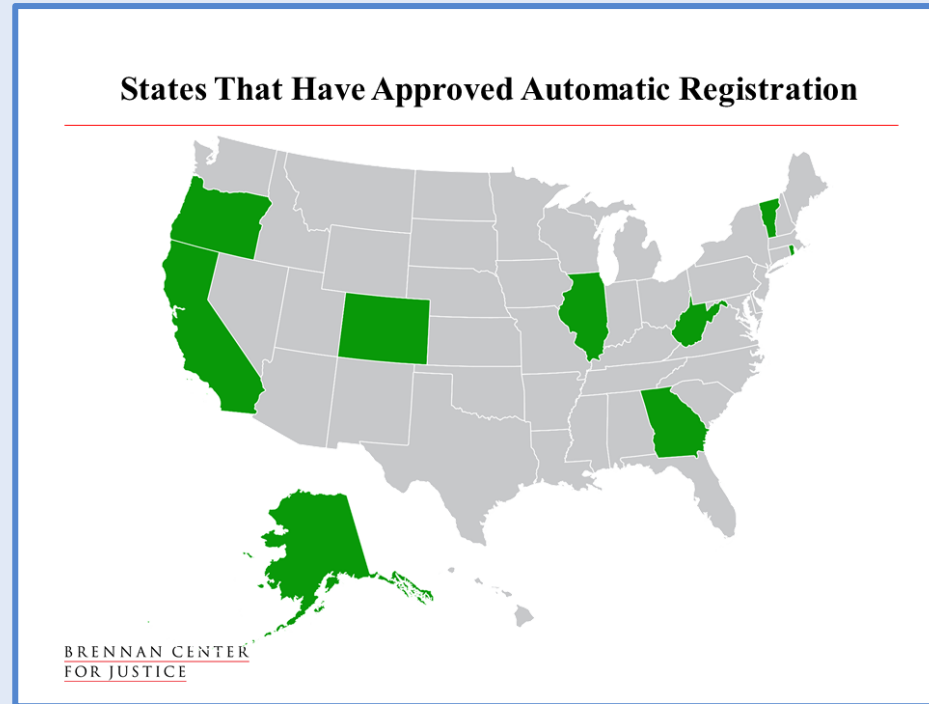
States with AVR

2015

- Oregon
- California

2016

- Alaska
- Connecticut
- District of Columbia
- Vermont
- West Virginia



2017

- Colorado
- Georgia
- Illinois
- Rhode Island

2018

- Massachusetts??
- Nevada??
- New Jersey??
- Washington??

AVR Case Study: Oregon

- 272,000+ new people added to the voter rolls, 116,000+ of whom were unlikely to have registered otherwise
- 98,000+ new voters in 2016



AVR Case Study: Oregon

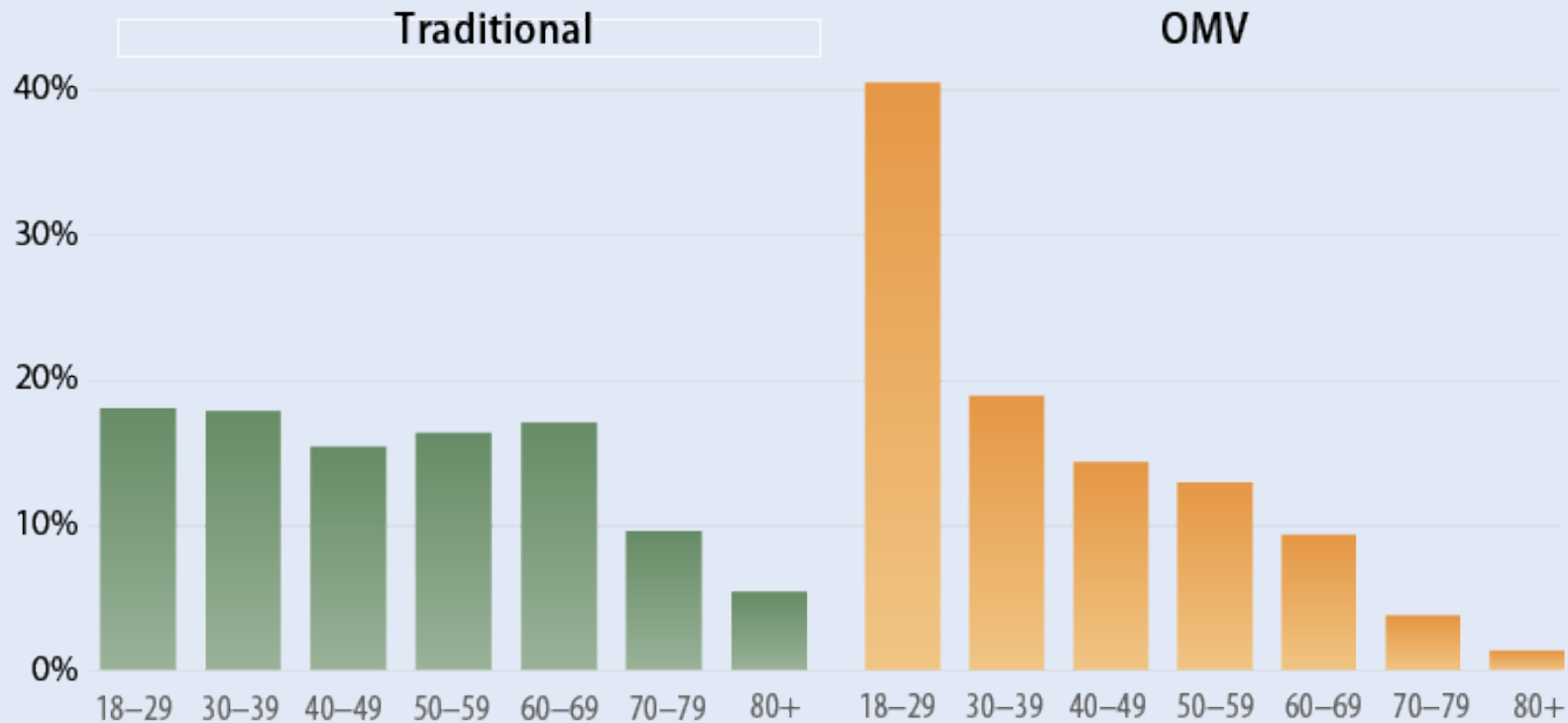
- Younger than traditional registrants
- More likely to live in low- and middle-income areas
- More likely to live in racially diverse areas



AVR Case Study: Oregon & Millennials

FIGURE 1

Age composition of traditional and OMV registrants



Source: Authors' analysis of Oregon voter list, obtained from Oregon Secretary of State Dennis Richardson, "Request for Voter List," available at <http://sos.oregon.gov/elections/Pages/request-for-voter-list.aspx> (last accessed January 2017).

AVR in MA

- H.2091 / S.373 – Lead sponsors Rep. Pete Kocot and Sen. Cindy Creem
- Focuses on Registry of Motor Vehicles & Mass Health, with possibility of other social service and disability agencies
- Adds Massachusetts to the Electronic Registration Information Center consortium

Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC)

- Voluntary consortium of states that digitally share information from voter registration rolls and databases (e.g., SSA, Postal Service)
- Helps maintain accuracy and completeness, while ensuring privacy
- 23 states & counting, including CT, RI, MD, and PA
- Recommended by Presidential Commission on Election Administration (2014)



AVR's Impact in MA

- ~ 700,000 eligible voters not registered to vote
- Projected AVR registrants: ~450,000, with ~200,000 unlikely to have registered otherwise

That's a lot of potential voters!



Every VOTE COUNTS!

What Can You Do?

- Join us for Lobby Day next Wednesday!
- Call/write to your legislators!
(Don't forget to fill out a postcard before you leave!)
- Write a letter to the editor!
- Amplify the discussion on social media!
(#AVRinMA)



Sources

- Robert Griffin, Paul Gronke, Tova Wang, and Liz Kennedy, *Who Votes with Automatic Voter Registration?* (Washington, DC: Center for American Progress, 2017).
- Liz Kennedy and Rob Griffin, *Close Elections, Missing Voices, and Automatic Voter Registration Projected Impact in 50 States* (Washington, DC: Center for American Progress, 2017).
- Henry Kraemer, Liz Kennedy, Maggie Thompson, Danielle Root, and Kyle Epstein, *Millennial Voters Win With Automatic Voter Registration* (Washington, DC: Center for American Progress, 2017).

Questions

