LINES ARE BAD
DATA IS GOOD
QUESTIONS?
ELECTIONS PERFORMANCE INDEX MIGRATES TO THE MIT ELECTION DATA AND SCIENCE LAB

Charles Stewart III
February 19, 2018
National Association of State Election Directors
ELECTIONS PERFORMANCE INDEX MIGRATES TO MEDSL

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REMINDER ABOUT MEDSL

+ Conduct research into emerging issues in election science
+ Facilitate sharing of research and election data
+ Encourage networks of scholars and research institutes
+ Encourage collaboration between academics and practitioners
ADVISORY BOARD

• Election officials
  • Lori Edwards, Polk County, FL
  • Kevin Kennedy, WI (ret.)
  • Dean Logan, LA County, CA
  • Amber McReynolds, Denver, CO
  • Don Palmer, FL & VA (former)
  • Tammy Patrick, AZ (former)
  • Peggy Reeves, CT
  • Christopher Thomas, MI (ret.)

• Academics
  • Lonna Rae Atkeson, N.M.
  • Barry Burden, Wisc.
  • Heather Gerken, Yale
  • Paul Gronke, Reed
  • Kathleen Hale, Auburn
  • Jan Leighley, American
  • Christopher Mann, Skidmore
  • Daron Shaw, Texas
Our goal is to demonstrate what is possible with such tools. The Election Management Toolkit is an open access place where technologies can be shared and improved. We launch this site with three key tools developed. We encourage you to use these tools and give us (and the developers) feedback on them.

Calculators

**Line Optimization and Poll Worker Management**
Developer: Stephen Graves and Rong Yuan
This tool uses queuing theory to calculate the minimal number of service stations at a process step in a polling place so as to satisfy a service target on maximum waiting times.

**Poll Worker and Machine Optimization**
Developer: Aaron Strauss
An easy-to-use calculator that takes basic information about a precinct and reports the number of check-in poll books and voting machines needed to keep lines short during a presidential election.

**Line Optimization**
Developer: Mark Pelczarski
This simulation gives an idea of potential voter wait times for if you have estimates of projected turnout, average time to vote with your ballot and equipment, and average time required to check-in each voter.
ACTIVITIES FOR 2018

+ Launch new website
+ Add to polling place resource toolkit
+ Election Science Summer Conference in Madison, WI
+ Host a national convening on election auditing
+ Updating the EPI with 2016 data
REMINDER ABOUT EPI

+ Originally developed by Pew Charitable Trusts
+ Goal: To assess the convenience and security of elections at the state level
+ Process
  • Developed in consultation with election administrator/academic advisory committee
  • Lots of data checking and consultation with states
+ Measurement strategy
  • Select indicators that provide a broad view of elections
  • Select indicators based on high quality data
INDICATORS

• EAVS
  • Data completeness
  • Mail ballots rejected
  • Mail ballots unreturned
  • UOCAVA ballots rejected
  • UOCAVA ballots unreturned
  • Provisional ballots cast
  • Provisional ballots rejected
  • Registrations rejected

• SPAE
  • Voting wait times

• Current Population Survey
  • Disability voting problems
  • Registration problems
  • Voter registration rate

• Coding of laws/regs
  • OVR available
  • Post-election audit required
  • Voting info lookup tools

• State election data
  • Residual vote rate
  • Turnout
Google “elections performance index”
(LIKELY) TIMELINE

+ January: Handover from Pew complete
+ Now to July: Data gathering and QA
+ March: MEDSL Advisory Committee will review EPI progress
+ April-May: Web migration to MIT
+ June-July: Data loading and QA
  • Independent review
  • Webinars for state officials
  • Counseling sessions
+ July/August: Launch
WHAT WE’RE SEEING

+ Very high correlations with the past persist
+ EAVS data: some measure missing statewide that used to be provided 100%
+ Residual vote rate rose in 2016, due to a spike in abstentions
NEW INDICATOR DEVELOPMENT

+ New indicators?
  - List maintenance

+ Update existing indicators
  - Residual vote (2016)
  - Disability voting
  - Demographic correction for registration/turnout

+ Assess how VBM states are treated
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