ODIHR Election Observation
2018 Mid-term Congressional Elections

National Association of Secretaries of State
National Association of State Election Directors

2018 Summer Conference
Philadelphia, 14 -15 July 2018
Overview

✔ The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is the world’s largest regional security organization.

✔ **57 member states** in Europe, Central Asia and North America, including the US.

✔ Promotes security, democracy and human rights, *including by observing elections in member states.*
ODIHR and Election Observation

✓ **Assess** elections against OSCE commitments, international obligations and other standards and national legislation.

✓ **Recommend** improvements to election law and practice

✓ **Support** countries in following-up on recommendations

✓ **Observation in context**
  - **350+ missions** since 1996
  - Elections observed in in **56 countries**
  - **2018**: Cyprus, Italy, Russia, Turkmenistan, Hungary, Azerbaijan, Montenegro, Slovenia, Turkey, Sweden, Latvia, United States, and others
Election Observation in the US

Seven previous elections observed in the US since 2002 – *always by invitation from the US government*.

*Needs Assessment Mission* from 21-25 May to assess the pre-election environment and technical preparations.

Meetings held with federal and state authorities, both main political parties, media and civil society.

Mission recommended to send a *limited election observation mission* (LEOM) to observe the upcoming elections.
The Value of Election Observation

✓ **Showcase** good practice at state and federal level

✓ Support, refine and **enhance successful initiatives**

✓ **Identify areas** that could merit **further improvements**

✓ **Inspire other countries** in the OSCE region
Observation Mission Timeline (provisional)

3 October - mission opening:
✓ Core team of 12-15 experts based in Washington DC

9 October – visit states:
✓ Up to 100 long-term observers across the country
✓ Visit 2-3 states

Early November:
✓ Some 100 legislators from OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

7 November:
✓ Press conference of preliminary findings and conclusions

Approx. two months after the elections:
✓ Publish final report with recommendations
# What to Expect from Observers

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<tr>
<th>Observers will</th>
<th>Observers will not</th>
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<tr>
<td>Present a valid credential on arrival</td>
<td>Disrupt or interfere with electoral processes</td>
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<td>Ask questions to election officials</td>
<td>Advocate on behalf of any candidate or political party</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ask to see election documents, such as regulations, voter information materials</td>
<td>Give instructions or commands to election officials</td>
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<td>Comply with all laws and regulations and exhibit highest levels of professional behaviour</td>
<td>Make comments to the media on the substance of their observations</td>
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[OSCE Logo]
What are Observers Interested in?

✓ State election laws and regulations
✓ Composition of electoral boards, election timelines
✓ Voter eligibility, methods of voter registration and identification
✓ Candidate registration information
✓ Early voting, use of electronic voting systems
✓ Number and distribution of polling stations
✓ Registering as an observer on election day
Communications & Outreach

✓ Website: https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections

✓ Leaflet on Election Observation in the US

✓ Letter to Secretaries of State and deployment information
  - by early September

✓ Point of Contact: Radivoje Grujic
  Election Adviser / US Desk Officer
  radivoje.grujic@odihr.pl
Want to Serve as an OSCE Election Observer?

- The United States is a top provider of OSCE international election observers

- Ongoing opportunities across Europe and Eurasia

- Apply online: www.pae.com/career-react_opportunities