

The background of the entire page is a blurred American flag, showing the stars and stripes. The stars are on the left side, and the stripes run horizontally across the rest of the page.

# **Failure of UOCAVA**

Potential for  
Noncitizen Voting  
in Our Elections

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Frederick Woodward

MICHIGAN FAIR ELECTIONS INSTITUTE

**DECEMBER 2024**

# Failure of UOCAVA: *Potential for Noncitizen Voting in Our Elections*

An examination of policy and summary of recommended actions

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December 2024

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# Table of Contents

Foreword..... 3

Executive Summary ..... 4

Section 1.1: The current situation ..... 6

Section 1.2: UOCAVA background and scrutiny..... 7

Section 2.1: Points of system failure in the federal status quo ..... 12

Section 2.2: Points of system failure in the Michigan status quo..... 15

Section 3.1: Federal policy recommendations..... 18

Section 3.2: Michigan policy recommendations..... 20

Section 3.3: Conclusion ..... 22

## Foreword

Michigan Fair Elections Institute has made election administrative reports great again! MFEI's report on overseas and noncitizen voting reflects solid investigation, great analysis, and easy-to-follow recommendations.

This report is necessary because the State of Michigan is far behind the other states in stopping election abuses by overseas voters and noncitizens. The Michigan Secretary of State and other election officials should follow MFEI's recommendations to improve Michigan's elections.

Let's move forward together to stop election abuses by overseas voters and non-citizens.

Erick G. Kaardal, Partner  
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December 2024

## Executive Summary

The Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, UOCAVA, came under scrutiny recently as a potentially decisive source of ballots in key swing states, including Michigan.

This report examines the UOCAVA system in its current form and compares the implementation of the law with the original intent of its authorizing statutes. It highlights specific points of system failure: four at the federal level, and five at the State of Michigan level.

### **For the federal level, this report identifies the following inherent weaknesses:**

1. The original legislative aim of UOCAVA has been diluted, grown overly broad, and become ambiguous. UOCAVA errs in treating active military service members and overseas civilians in the same way.
2. Current federal eligibility requirements are lacking.
3. UOCAVA registration applications lack critical points for information verification.
4. Current wording of FPCA allows for unvetted overseas UOCAVA registrants to be placed on the voter rolls and remain there after their UOCAVA designation expires in 12 months.

### **For the Michigan state level, this report identifies the following weaknesses:**

1. Current SOS directives tell clerks to afford overseas civilians "protected status" and register UOCAVA applicants without checking identity or eligibility.
2. Current SOS directives tell clerks to send UOCAVA registrants an absentee ballot without verifying identity or eligibility.

3. Current Michigan law allows for unverified overseas voters to become active non-UOCAVA voters and permanent absentee voters, receiving absentee ballots for up to 10 years.
4. UOCAVA allows registrants to receive ballots from states in which they have never resided.
5. No definitive citizenship match is required for clerks to register UOCAVA applicants or count their ballots.

In conclusion, this report offers recommendations for both the Michigan government and federal branch to implement. The objective? To shore up weaknesses and ensure the continuance of free and fair elections for all Americans.

## Section 1.1: Current situation

During the second half of 2024, the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, UOCAVA, became a center of focus. Much of the attention arise from Democratic pundits and lawmakers, and it quickly picked up steam. In August, the Democratic National Committee (DNC) [announced](#) it was investing \$300 million to register up to 9 million overseas voters. The DNC's press release read in part:

*With under 100 days until Election Day and ahead of the Democratic National Convention, the DNC announced a significant six-figure investment in Democrats Abroad, for the first time ever in a Presidential cycle, helping fund their efforts to win the votes of approximately **9,000,000 Americans** – of which only about **8% are registered voters from 2020** – who are living or serving outside of the United States. (Emphasis added.)*

Almost at once, conservative organizations began to sound the alarm. As MFEI's Kristine Christlieb [reported](#) for The Federalist, the DNC's math in targeting 9 million voters did not add up:

*That's a huge number of voters, and it contradicts a 2022 [analysis](#) from the Defense Department's Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP), which claims that "of the estimated 4.4 million" U.S. citizens living overseas, only about 2.8 million of them are of voting age.*

The Gateway Pundit's Patty McMurray also took note and [reported](#),

*Curiously, the DNC memo claims that "**over 1.6 million Americans** from the battleground states of Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin" live overseas, adding that they plan to "fight for every vote."*

Christlieb's and McMurray's analysis proved on point, and concerns about the DNC's newest tactic began to mount. Further analysis of the current UOCAVA situation showed that, in the federal government's own words, "there is no registry of overseas citizens that records where each of these individuals resides overseas."<sup>3</sup>

Holes like these in the UOCAVA system left many citizens and lawmakers concerned. What was UOCAVA anyway, and why was apparent ineptness structured into the overall federal voting process? Where were the controls to eliminate the possibility of fraud?

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<sup>3</sup> [2022 Overseas Citizen Population Analysis](#) (OCPA), *Technical Report* 2023, Federal Voting Assistance Program, [FVAP.gov](#), page 188.

## Section 1.2: UOCAVA background and scrutiny

The Federal Voting Assistance Act of 1955 and the Overseas Citizens Voting Rights Act of 1975 preceded the UOCAVA of 1986. Their [purpose](#), as passed by Congress, was essentially to require states, via a federal statute, to allow overseas citizens who met certain criteria to register and vote absentee in their elections. In 1986 UOCAVA was enacted into federal law and both the 1955 and 1975 laws were repealed.

UOCAVA provisions cover U.S. military personnel, their family members, and any U.S. citizens residing outside the United States. Specific UOCAVA provisions also include the establishment of a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA), requiring the opportunity to send and receive ballots electronically in certain circumstances. UOCAVA provisions also create and enforce new voter registration and absentee ballot procedures for states to follow in all elections.

With vote margins tightening in key swing states, UOCAVA came under increasing scrutiny as a source of potentially decisive votes for either side. For example, the DNC [wrote](#) in August 2024:

*In the battleground states of **Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin**, there are approximately **1,625,136** people living abroad including service members. In 2020, just 44,000 votes across Arizona, Georgia, and Wisconsin votes won Joe Biden the presidency. In fact, abroad voters made a notable difference in Georgia and Arizona during the 2020 presidential election and made the difference in close races in Connecticut, New Hampshire, and North Carolina during the 2022 midterms. That's why the DNC is doing the work to win this election by reaching out to voters regardless of where they live.<sup>4</sup>*

Empirical data shows that UOCAVA votes from non-military voters spike during presidential election years. During the 2024, 2020, and 2016 presidential elections, the percentage of overseas ballots rose above 9%, marking an increase from the range of 3.4% to 5.6% during the non-presidential 2014, 2018, and 2022 elections.

The most dramatic rise in the 2020 participation rates came from Europe, Oceania, and Southeast Asia at 12.2%, 11.2%, and 10.5%, respectively. (See Figure 1-1, below.)

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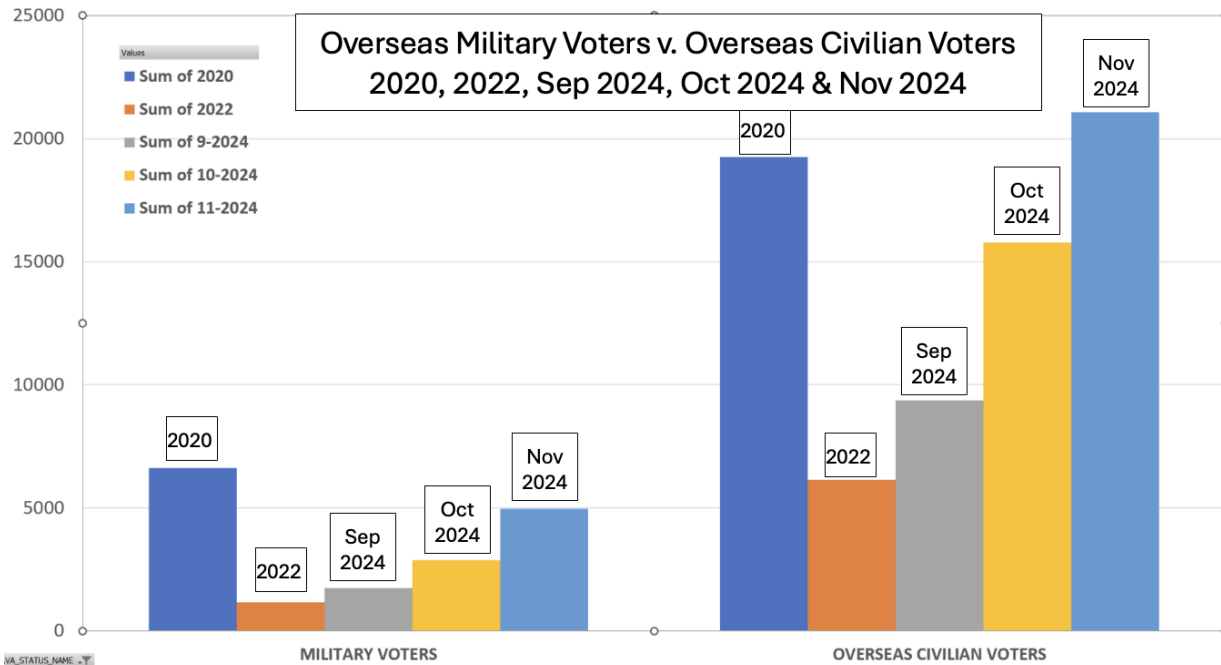
<sup>4</sup> From [DNC Announces six figure investment in Democrats Abroad](#), August, 2024.



Table 3. OCVAP Participation Rate by Region <sup>4</sup>					
Region	2014	2016	2018	2020	2022
North America	3.0%	6.5%	4.3%	7.4%	2.9%
South/Central America/Caribbean	2.9%	6.1%	3.3%	6.0%	2.3%
Europe	6.2%	13.3%	8.4%	12.2%	4.7%
Sub-Saharan Africa	3.4%	8.1%	4.0%	5.9%	3.3%
Middle East/North Africa	3.2%	7.0%	2.8%	6.7%	2.8%
North/Central/South Asia	2.9%	7.0%	2.9%	6.2%	4.5%
East Asia	2.7%	6.0%	3.5%	5.7%	1.6%
Southeast Asia	6.4%	11.5%	6.4%	10.5%	3.2%
Oceania	5.3%	12.3%	7.0%	11.2%	3.3%
<b>Global</b>	4.3%	9.2%	5.6%	9.0%	3.4%

Figure 1-1 source: [Federal Voting Assistance Program](#), *2022 Overseas Citizen Population Analysis (OCA), TECHNICAL REPORT 2023*, Section 1.2 // 2022 Overseas Citizen Ballot Request and Voting Rates, p. 14.

This trend remained true for the 2024 election as well. Michigan's [November QVF data](#), as tabulated by MFEI analyst Alan Dunst, indicates that the number of UOCAVA voters climbed to a higher level than in 2020. (See Figure 1-2)



Within this dataset, overseas military voters compared to overseas civilian voter decreased 25% from 2020. Meanwhile civilian overseas voters increased 9.4%. This trend of increasing civilian ballots compared to military ballots has existed for some time. In fact, the number of civilian ballots crossed beyond the half-million mark in 2020, marking a 48% increase from the 2016 election. See Figure 1-3 below. The implications of this change are discussed further in Section 2.1.

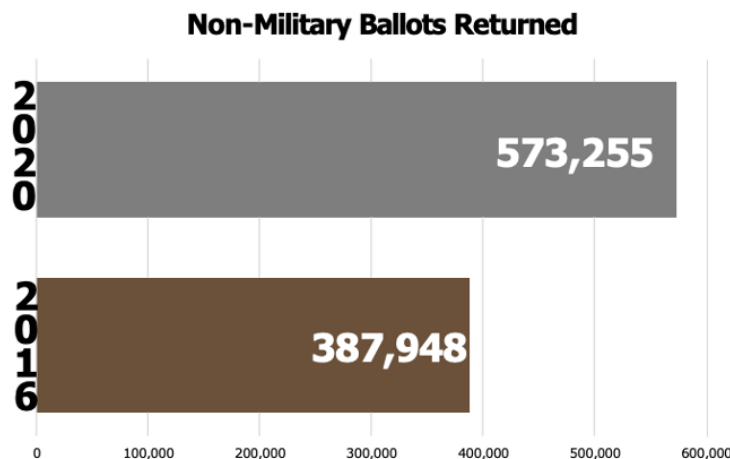


Fig 1-3, [Election Administration and Voting Survey 2022](#) (A report to the 118th congress,) P. 201

These national statistics are borne out in Michigan as well, with uniformed service voters declining to 16.7% of overseas voters in 2022 (Fig 1-4) and 19% in 2024 (Fig 1-5.)

**UOCAVA Table 1: Registered and Eligible UOCAVA Voters**

State	Registered UOCAVA Voters						
	All UOCAVA Voters	Uniformed Services Members		Overseas Citizens		Not Categorized by Voter Type	
		Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Michigan	7,777	1,297	16.7%	6,480	83.3%	0	0.0%

Figure 1-4, [Election Administration and Voting Survey 2022](#) (A report to the 118th Congress), page 211.

**UOCAVA Table 2: Registered and Eligible UOCAVA Voters**

State	Registered UOCAVA Voters						
	All UOCAVA Voters	Uniformed Services Members		Overseas Citizens		Not Categorized by Voter Type	
		Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Michigan	26,037	4,957	19.0%	21,080	81.0%	0	0.0%

Figure 1-5, Michigan Qualified Voter File, November 2024, [Checkmyvote.org](#).

The chart below (Figure 1-6) shows the rising tide of non-military, civilian overseas ballots, compared to the steady decrease of military ballots in light blue over the eight-year period from 2014 to 2022.

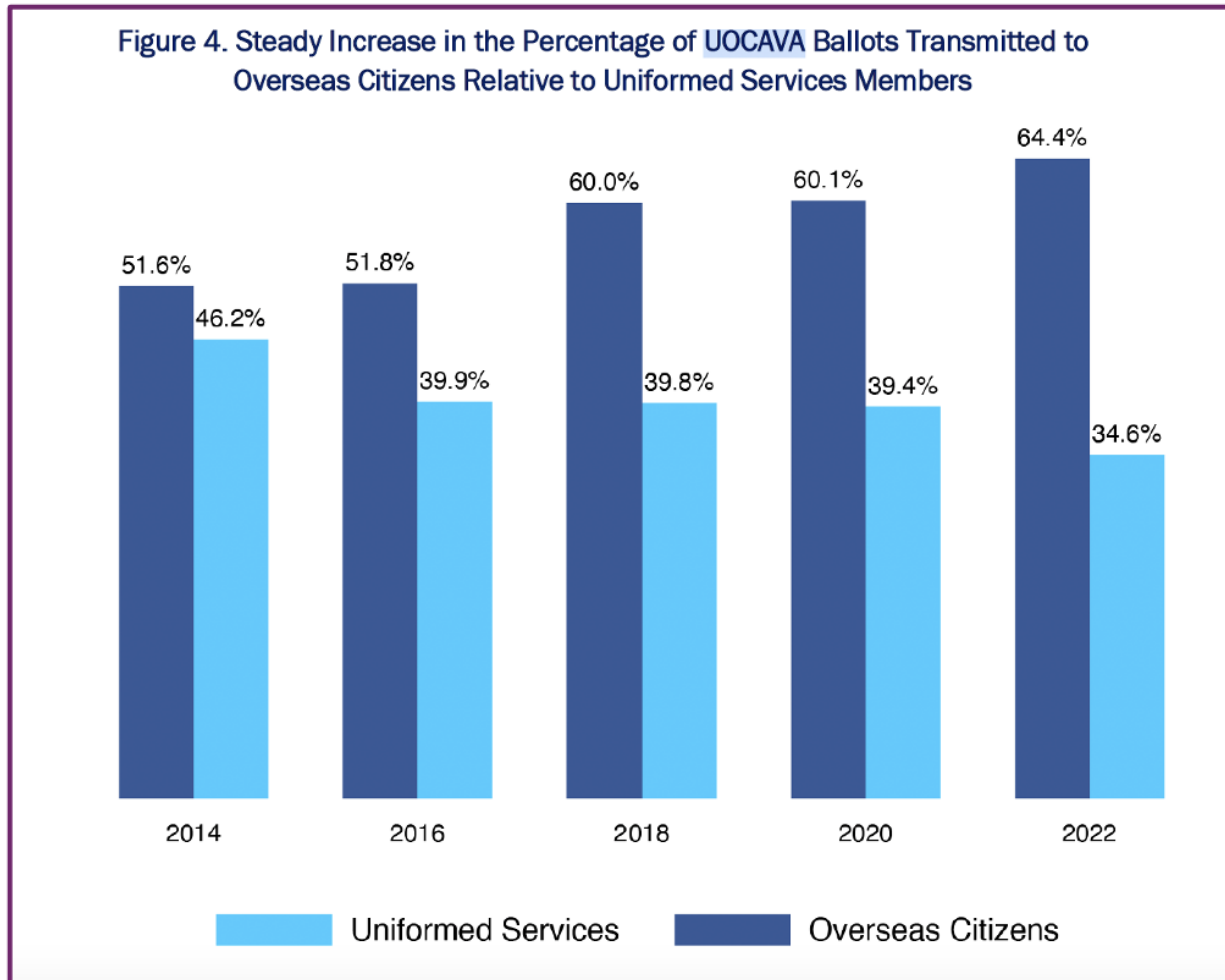


Figure 1-6, Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS), [2016](#) and [2020](#), Verity Vote.

All this information indicates a system in need of serious reform.

The next part of this report analyzes UOCAVA as administered by state and federal authorities. See Sections 2.1 and 2.2: Points of system failure in the status quo.

## Section 2.1: Points of system failure in the federal status quo

While the UOCAVA was undoubtedly crafted with noble aims in mind, objective analysis indicates that the current framework of the legislation suffers from significant and inherent issues.

### **1. UOCAVA's original legislative aim has been diluted, grown overly broad, and become ambiguous. UOCAVA errs in treating active military service members and overseas civilians in the same way.**

The first overseas voting act, called the 1955 [Federal Voting Assistance Act](#), laid out specific and narrowly tailored definitions of who was eligible to vote while overseas. The four categories included members of the armed forces, merchant marines, civilian U.S. employees, and members of religious groups or welfare agencies assisting members of the Armed Services:

- (1) Members of the Armed Forces while in active service, and their spouses and dependents.*
- (2) Members of the merchant marine of the United States, and their spouses and dependents.*
- (3) Civilian employees of the United States serving outside the territorial limits of the United States and their spouses and dependents when residing with or accompanying them.*
- (4) Members of religious groups or welfare agencies assisting members of the Armed Forces, who are officially attached to and serving with the Armed Forces, and their spouses and dependents.*

Over time, however, the narrowly tailored legal provisions and finite categories progressively expanded. They broadened and became both unmanageable and unreliable. The 1975 Overseas Citizens Voting Act and then the 1986 UOCAVA and its subsequent amendments in 2010 morphed into the veritable Potemkin village of ambiguity that UOCAVA represents today.

The net effect of these changes is that UOCAVA now disenfranchises the very demographic it was intended to serve. Instead of enabling active service members and federal employees serving their country overseas to cast their ballots, UOCAVA now runs the very real risk of diluting their votes with ballots from ineligible voters, unverified registrants, and even non-citizens.

### **2. Current federal eligibility requirements are lacking.**

The weaknesses in UOCAVA extend beyond its overly broad and ambiguous scope. The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC), which manages UOCAVA, helps military and non-military overseas citizens apply online for absentee ballots. As the law currently reads, no identification or proof of citizenship is required.

The EAC, it appears, wrongly assumes that each state will enforce its own checklist of eligibility requirements. It mistakenly thinks states will confirm their prerequisite conditions before

registering a UOCAVA applicant to vote or sending the registrant an absentee ballot. This is not the case.

Closely contested swing states including Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and others accept online UOCAVA post card registration applications with little to no further voter identity verification.

Michigan, under its chief election administrator, Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson, has adopted defective processes and omitted critical elements of election law in its implementation of UOCAVA. Under the auspices of affording UOCAVA online registrants “protected status,” the state, like others, dispenses with critical and legally required elements of its election laws, including the requirement to verify a registration applicant’s identity, state residency, and U.S. citizenship. In many ways, Michigan’s failed UOCAVA implementation is symptomatic of similar issues at other state government levels.

### 3. UOCAVA registration applications lack critical points for information verification.

The EAC manages foreign-land voting and provides an online absentee ballot application called the [Federal Post Card Application](#) (FPCA). Those who lack time to vote using the FPCA may write their ballot selections using the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot ([FWAB](#)).

Neither the FPCA nor the FWAB require applicants to verify their identities. They fail to verify citizenship. They even fail to require applicants to prove residency in the state in which they are registering to vote. See Figure 2-1.

**Voter Registration and Absentee Ballot Request**  
Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)

Print clearly in blue or black ink, please see back for instructions.

**1. Who are you? Pick one.**

I request an absentee ballot for all elections in which I am eligible to vote AND:

I am on active duty in the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine **-OR-**  I am an eligible spouse or dependent.  
 I am a U.S. citizen living outside the country, and I intend to return.  
 I am a U.S. citizen living outside the country, and my intent to return is uncertain.  
 I am a U.S. citizen living outside the country, and I have never lived in the United States.

Last name \_\_\_\_\_ Suffix (Jr., II) \_\_\_\_\_  Mr.  Miss  
 Mrs.  Ms.

**Need not have any association with the state address used to register**

**5. What are your preferences for future elections?**

A. Do you want to register and request a ballot for all elections you are eligible to vote in?  Yes  No

B. How do you want to receive voting materials from your election office?  Mail  Email or online  Fax

**Receive ballot by email**

Figure 2-1, Federal Voting Assistance Program [Federal Voting Assistance Program FPCA](#).

**4. Current wording of FPCA allows for unvetted overseas UOCAVA registrants to be placed on the voter rolls and remain there after their UOCAVA designation expires in 12 months.**

Every 12 months, UOCAVA registrants must re-submit a UOCAVA application in order to retain the UOCAVA status. However, it appears that if these potentially unvetted registrants do not re-apply for UOCAVA status, they remain on the state's voter rolls. While these registrants are no longer be considered overseas UOCAVA, their registration status appears to remain active and their address of record becomes the U.S. address they cited in their registration application.

According to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), the percentage of people who relocate to new addresses, also known as the "mover rate," is around 8.7%, and approximately 28.2 million Americans moved in 2022 alone. Multiply an estimated 28.2 million movers per year times the four years between presidential elections, and approximately 113 million Americans have likely moved.

Large quantities of absentee ballots could potentially be mailed or emailed to locations where the unverified, former UOCAVA registrant no longer resides (and perhaps never resided). These dubious registrations could determine the outcome of elections.

## Section 2.2: Points of system failure in the Michigan status quo

When it comes to the state level, much is left to the discretion of election officials, especially the Secretary of State as the chief election administrator. In Michigan, the SOS's [Military and Overseas Voters Manual for Election Administrators](#) provides directives for clerks. However, the lax and counter-intuitive instructions often run contrary to principles fundamental to election integrity.

### 1. Current SOS directives tell clerks to accord overseas civilians "protected status" and register UOCAVA applicants without checking identity or eligibility.

The standing requirement from Michigan's SOS Jocelyn Benson directs clerks to enter the applicant's information on the state's official voter rolls, the Qualified Voter File (QVF) with no actions to verify the identities and eligibility of the online applicants.

*Local Clerks must register a protected voter submitting these forms and send an absentee ballot immediately*<sup>5</sup>

In other words, SOS Benson guides clerks to register these unverified online applicants as eligible overseas voters. Upon receipt of the email application, clerks are then to "prepare a master card and send a voter identification card."<sup>6</sup> To be clear, Michigan clerks are instructed to provide these unverified applicants official [Voter Certificates](#).

### 2. Current SOS directives tell clerks to send UOCAVA registrants an absentee ballot without verifying identity or eligibility.

SOS Benson's manual continues.

*In addition to being a registration form, the FPCA/FWAB form is also an absentee ballot application. Once the registration is entered, an absentee ballot must be issued for every election in the calendar year.*<sup>7</sup>

A plain English reading of this instruction indicates that the SOS is directing clerks to send these unverified overseas voters an absentee ballot. The [Military and Overseas Voters Manual for Election Administrators](#) further bolsters this interpretation on page 15. See Figure 2-3 below:

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<sup>5</sup> [Military and Overseas Voters Manual for Election Administrators](#), March 2018, page 4.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, page 3.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, page 5.



### Issuing Absent Voter Ballots

Any absent voter request received by a protected voter must be handled immediately and honored for every election in the calendar year it was received. If received after the November election in a calendar year, the application applies to the following calendar year. While military and overseas voters tend to use the FPCA/FWAB application, they may submit any application form normally accepted of an absent voter. By Federal law, for any request received more than 45 days prior to an election, a ballot **must** be sent at least 45 days prior to the election. **Important Note:** If the voter is not registered and does not submit an FPCA/FWAB, a registration form must be sent as well as an AV ballot.

Figure 2-3 source: [Military and Overseas Voters Manual for Election Administrators](#), page 15.

### 3. Current Michigan law allows for unverified overseas voters to become active non-UOCAVA voters and permanent absentee voters, receiving absentee ballots for up to 10 years.

As discussed in item 4 regarding federal issues above, every 12 months UOCAVA registrants must re-submit FPCA requests to renew their overseas voter status. Question 5 on the Federal Post Card Application enables applicants to “request a ballot for all elections you are eligible to vote in.” Systemic flaws in the federal UOCAVA process allow registrants to be added to state rolls. Then, long after the “UOCAVA” designation is removed from a registrants’ voter file, the registrant remains on the voter rolls as an active voter.

In Michigan, the state’s [permanent absentee ballot law exacerbates the](#) risk of abuse tenfold, as applicants on the permanent absentee voter list remain there for 10 years. So, UOCAVA not only enables unvetted registrants to be added to the voter rolls and remain on them long after the applicants’ UOCAVA status expires, these voters are likely to be mailed or electronically emailed absentee ballots for the next 10 years. See Figure 2-2 above.

In addition to Census data showing an annual 8.7% civilian mover rate, the national state-to-state migration rate is 19.9% per year. Potentially decisive numbers of ballots could be sent to locations in which the original UOCAVA applicant no longer resides. For more information see U.S. Census Bureau, [State-to-State Migration](#) Flows, 2022.

### 4. UOCAVA allows registrants to receive ballots from states in which they never resided.

Current Michigan guidance from SOS Benson appears to interpret UOCAVA to mean that voters from conceivably any state could register and vote in Michigan elections. Benson writes:

*A protected [overseas] voter may use an address that they no longer live at to register to vote in your jurisdiction **even if that address no longer exists.***<sup>8</sup>

Regardless of whether online registrants anchor their Michigan connection to a park, vacant lot, or nonexistent street, the clerk is instructed to “send the voter identification card in an envelope to the mailing address provided.”<sup>9</sup> These unverified voters’ mailing addresses could potentially be in Canada, Russia, or the People’s Republic of China. No matter. Michigan clerks are directed to register the online applicant as an eligible overseas civilian or military voter on the state’s official Qualified Voter File (QVF), send them a voter card, and mail or email them an absentee ballot.

### **5. No definitive citizenship match is required for clerks to register UOCAVA applicants and count their ballots**

While some states have taken up the slack that the federal government left in the UOCAVA regulations, Michigan has yet to follow suit. As an example, regulations could be implemented to discourage non-citizen voting by simply [requiring](#) overseas civilians to submit a photocopy of their Passports with their mail-in absentee ballots. In contrast, current Michigan guidance instructs clerks as follows:

*Regular absentee ballots sent by postal mail to protected voters should be processed as usual. If the returned ballot is an electronic ballot that was either printed by the voter or the Clerk, the ballot must include the voter signature certificate. Election inspectors will need to verify that the voter signed the signature certificate and compare the signature to the application.*<sup>10</sup>

This lack of a definitive match requirement in federal guidance is ample cause for concern, and presents a unique opportunity for Michigan and other states to step in and implement appropriate requirements, as some states like Alaska have already done.

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<sup>8</sup> [Military and Overseas Voters Manual for Election Administrators](#), March 2018, page 5. Emphasis added.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, page 5.

<sup>10</sup> [Military and Overseas Voters Manual for Election Administrators](#), March 2018, page 5.

## Section 3.1: Federal policy recommendations

### 1. Scale back UOCAVA eligibility requirements

- ❖ Return eligibility primarily to those who are directly involved in serving our country or who are employed in some direct and immediate service to the military, in keeping with the intent of the original 1955 legislation.
- ❖ Permanent (retirement) overseas residents may vote in federal elections only. They shall not vote in state or local elections.
- ❖ Temporary assigned overseas residents may vote for all offices in their state.
- ❖ ID and citizenship requirements apply and must be in place.
- ❖ Eliminate affidavit or other exceptions of any kind to the ID requirement.
- ❖ No electronic voting or registration shall be allowed for nonmilitary overseas persons.

### 2. Separate UOCAVA into two parts: active military and civilian.

- ❖ Active military registrants, once confirmed, need not be subject to further identity, residency, or eligibility checks.
- ❖ Electronic voting using the military's CAC system shall be available only to active US military service members.
- ❖ Military families and civilians must meet regular eligibility requirements and return hand-signed (wet signature) paper ballots via USPS.
- ❖ Overseas citizens must first have registered in person at their last place of residency before leaving the country.
- ❖ Overseas citizens must have resided in Mich. and have proof of that residency in order cast their ballots in this state's elections.

### 3. Verify identity, citizenship, and residency before registering overseas civilians or issuing them a ballot.

- ❖ The EAC should change the Federal Post Card Application to require identity and citizenship verification. Both FPCA and FWAB applicants should verify their identities, eligibility, and citizenship.
- ❖ Require applicants to prove residency in the state in which they are registering to vote.
- ❖ Require verification of citizenship.
- ❖ Apply these checks retroactively to any previously unverified registrant.

- ❖ Absentee ballots should be available to overseas citizens only if they registered before leaving the country.
- ❖ Revoke EO 14019, which forces government workers to register voters.

**4. Remove the option to automatically register and receive ballots for future elections.**

- ❖ Remove Question 5 on the Federal Post Card Application, which allows a voter who registers and applies to receive ballots for future elections via the existing mechanism.
- ❖ When a person files for a permanent change of address with the U.S. Postal Service via the National Change of Address (NCOA), that person should automatically be able to cancel his or her voter registration in their moved-from state and indicate if he or she has an interest in applying for registration in their moved-to state.

## Section 3.2: Michigan policy recommendations

- 1. Separate military from non-military in UOCAVA application processing.**
  - ❖ Obtain a list of active military service members and compare to UOCAVA applicants.
  - ❖ Apply the following checks to overseas civilian applicants only:
- 2. Verify identity, citizenship, and residency before registering overseas civilians or issuing them a ballot.**
  - ❖ Require applicants to prove residency in the state in which they are registering to vote.
  - ❖ Require verification of citizenship.
  - ❖ Apply these checks retroactively to any previously unverified registrant.
  - ❖ To protect Michigan and the United States, officials and responsible parties should take measures to ensure that all citizenship and federal laws are followed and enforced.
  - ❖ State ID or driver's licenses should contain the designation of citizen or non-citizen.
  - ❖ Eliminate affidavit or exceptions of any kind to the ID requirement.
  - ❖ Verify citizenship and immigration eligibility of applicants via 8 USC 1373.
- 3. Remove the option to automatically register and receive ballots for future elections.**
  - ❖ Remove requirements to issue future ballots as well as automatically send voter IDs.
  - ❖ Cease registration of voters without their consent.
  - ❖ Make deregistering easy via an online form along with instructions for optional in-person or mail-in deregistration.
- 4. Ensure all UOCAVA voters are current and eligible Michigan residents**
  - ❖ Overseas citizens must first have registered in person at their last place of residency before leaving the country.
  - ❖ Overseas citizens must have resided in Mich. and have proof of that residency in order to vote here.
  - ❖ The federal post card system sets the floor, not the ceiling on registrant eligibility– States such as Alaska require overseas civilians to submit a

photocopy of their passports with the mail-in absentee ballots– Michigan should adopt this commonsense approach or something similar.

- ❖ Ensure definitive citizenship match for clerks to count UOCAVA ballots.

#### **5. Clean up Michigan's Qualified Voter File**

- ❖ Clear the voter rolls every national census and re-register the following year.
- ❖ Do an initial purge with implementation of the new laws.
- ❖ Social security numbers should be coded to indicate citizenship or non-citizenship status.
- ❖ When a person moves to another state and surrenders his or her driver's license while applying for a Driver's License in their new state of residency, the following must occur:
  - The moved-to state must notify the moved-from state of the issuance of that person's new driver's license.
  - If the process involves registering the applicant to vote, the moved-to state must notify the moved-from state that the voter has changed their state of voter registration, and the moved-from state must remove the registration.

### **Section 3.3: Conclusion**

It is our hope that this report is of use and value to you, the reader, no matter your political persuasion. At the end of the day, election integrity is not a partisan issue. It is a crucial citizen right that must be preserved and protected.

The debate doesn't end here. Rather, it begins and is fostered here. The status quo weaknesses we have identified will not go away by themselves. It is our mission at the Michigan Fair Elections Institute to evaluate as well as to educate, and we are committed to doing both.

However, thought must precede action. The integrity of our election process demands solutions that will make dubious votes harder to cast and legitimate votes easier to verify and tabulate.

To this end we encourage every reader to become familiar with the laws that govern them and their elections, and to always be mindful of the admonition of our 40<sup>th</sup> President: "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction."

*Audemus Jura Nostra Defendere.* We dare to defend our rights.

Patrice Johnson  
Frederick Woodward