



# **ARIZONA SOS**

## ***Lessons learned from DPOC implementation in Arizona: 2004-present***

**Adrian Fontes**

**Arizona Secretary of State**

# Background

- 1993: Passage of federal National Voter Registration “Motor Voter” Act
- 1996: Arizona voters required “authorized presence” to get a drivers license and MVD began to document authorized presence (including DPOC) in their database
- 2002: Arizona implemented online voter registration utilizing the MVD portal
- 2004: Arizona voters required DPOC to register to vote; state created DPOC data transfer from MVD to SOS/counties if voter registered online



# Background, cont.

- 2013: Inter Tribal Council of Arizona sued the state over DPOC requirement for voter registration and SCOTUS ruling resulted in creation of the state's bifurcated voter registration system with "state" voters and "Fed-only" voters
- 2018: LULAC and Arizona's state and counties entered into a federal District Court consent agreement requiring Arizona counties to proactively run "HAVA" checks against MVD database to acquire DPOC for voters if it exists in MVD system
- 2024: Discovery that 200,000 registered voters lacked DPOC in voter registration system due to MVD data issues



# Arizona: A cautionary tale

- **Data integrity**

- Systems must interface
- Data fields must match and line-up

- **Infrastructure**

- Existing systems are antiquated – security issues
- Travel ID had long delay in implementation
- Huge cost to replace these systems and/or achieve interfaces

- **Collaboration**

- Ongoing – never ends
- MVD does not define policy or data fields in the same way
- Political differences – MVD run by Governor and voter reg run by SOS

- **Stakes are high**

- Voter registration is a constitutional right; accurate MVD data is not
- Accountability/responsibility mismatch

# Unanticipated consequences

- **Recently began requesting DPOC from those 200,000 individuals**
  - Persons with Hispanic surnames feel targeted
  - Long-time voters, especially veterans, feel insulted at the inference they are not citizens
  - Elderly and people living in rural areas don't have easy access to their documentation (birth certificates, passports); cost for those documents
- **Be ready for extensive litigation - equal treatment issues**
  - Policy and implementation issues resulting from state statute and various court cases conflict
  - Different rules and processes for different types of VR form submittals