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Comment from Maryland Department of Legislative Services

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General Comment

It would be helpful to researchers and policymakers to know more about the prevalence of electronic ballot return in the United States, which is a topic of increasing interest. Specifically, it would be helpful if the EAVS 1) asked about the number of ballots returned by all methods of electronic return separately, instead of just asking about email and "other methods" of return. Separate reporting of the number of ballots returned by fax, email, and web portal would be helpful. Also, the EAVS only provides data on the number of electronic ballot returns by UOCAVA voters. It would be helpful to know the number of ballots returned electronically by voters other than UOCAVA voters, especially the number of ballots returned electronically by voters with disabilities. Also, it would be helpful to know the number of ballots returned electronically by any other category of voters who are authorized to return ballots electronically in a state, such as first responders. The policy survey should also ask about whether electronic return is permitted for any group of voters other than UOCAVA voters, what those categories of voters are, and how eligibility is defined. Finally, the policy survey should ask whether a state requires a voter returning a ballot electronically to sign a waiver of their right to a secret ballot.