State Board of Elections

Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
May 13, 2020 - 1 pm

Overview of 2020 Election Changes

- Special General Election for the 7th Congressional District
  - Held on April 28th
  - Conducted primarily by mail with limited in-person voting opportunities
  - Results are in the process of being certified
  - *See* Governor's Proclamation dated March 17, 2020
- Presidential Primary Election
  - Moved to June 2, 2020
  - Conduct primarily by mail with limited in-person voting opportunities
  - Ballot counting can start on May 21st with results embargoed until June 2nd
  - Provide notice to voters and other voter education
  - *See* Governor's Proclamation dated April 10, 2020 and renewed May 6, 2020
- Presidential General Election
  - November 3, 2020
  - No changes to date for this election

Special General Election Facts (April 28th)

- Sent over 490,000 ballots to voters in the 7th Congressional District
- Unofficial turnout was 157,028 or 32%
  - Over 156,000 ballots were returned by mail (31.8%)
  - 1,009 voters voted in person on election day (0.2%)
- 3 in-person voting locations - 1 in each jurisdiction
- 6 ballot drop off locations - 2 in each jurisdiction
- Bought PPE
  - 4,500 of masks
  - 3,000 pairs of gloves
  - 375 12 oz containers of hand sanitizer
  - 150 of face shields,
  - 80 Plexiglass diveiders
- Over 5.5 million ads seen or heard over 6 days

Sample Ads

- WBAL RADIO –

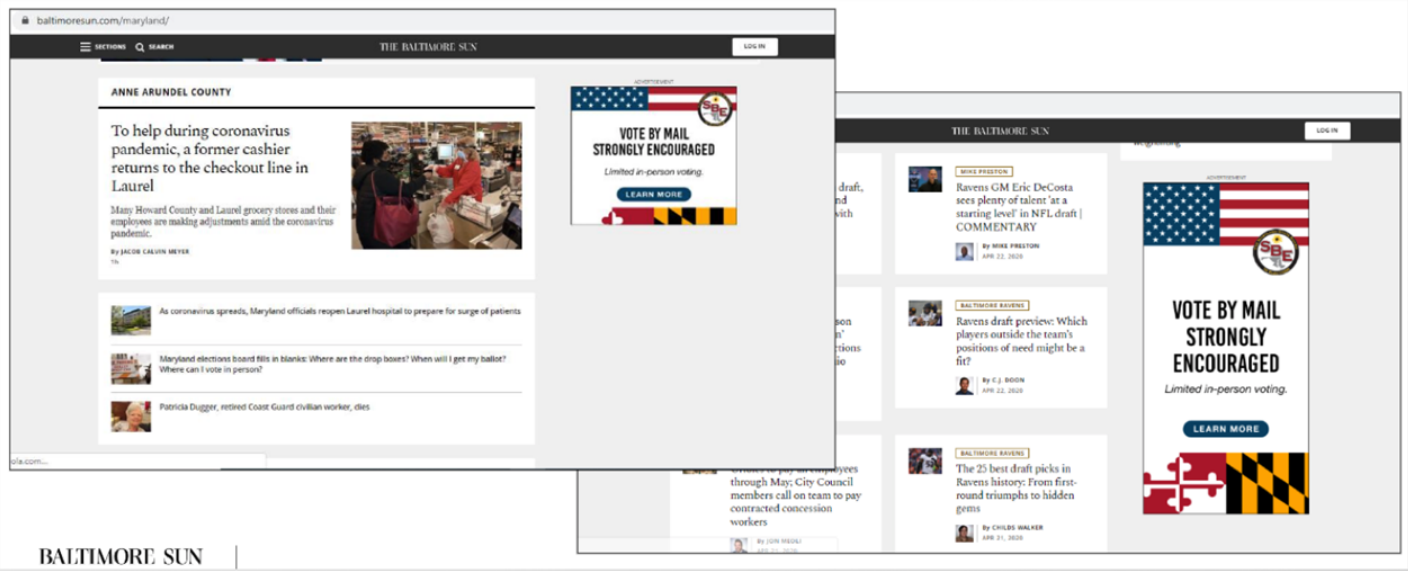
- WOLB RADIO –

DIGITAL MEDIA PERFORMANCE

FACEBOOK/INSTAGRAM ADS

GOOGLE DISPLAY ADS

BALTIMORESUN.COM ADS



What did we learn?

- Mature absentee voting process can be expanded to a vote-by-mail process
- Local election officials quickly transitioned to vote-by-mail
- Work with USPS to understand differences in delivery rate data
- Enhance audits to verify that all eligible voters receive a ballot
- Expand voter education efforts
- Voters liked the ballot drop off containers

STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICIAL BALLOT
DROP BOX
Insert Ballot Here
Any tampering with the ballots
or drop box is a crime

STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICIAL BALLOT
DROP BOX
Insert ballot at the
front of the box

Presidential Primary Election - Getting Ready

- Sent almost 3.5 million ballots over a 2-week period
- Deadline to register to vote or change party is May 27th
- 42 vote centers will be open on June 2nd from 7 am - 8 pm
  - At least 1 and up to 4 centers in each jurisdiction
- 66 ballot drop off locations
  - Open 24/7 from May 21st through 8 pm on June 2nd
  - 1 at each vote center
  - Additional locations in many jurisdictions
- Planning vote centers to comply with social distancing and safety guidelines
- Receiving PPE
- Helping local boards provide remote access to canvasses

Presidential Primary Election - Getting Ready (cont'd)

- Preparing statewide media campaign, including digital, print, radio, TV, targeted outreach and earned media
- Stakeholder outreach and earned media underway
- Digital campaign launched May 8 and expand as June 2 approaches
- Radio and TV will begin airing this week (by May 14 or May 15)

What we've heard so far.....

- It's new for most voters, Voter education effort will help with this.
  - How do we make sure voters only vote once?
  - What do I do if I don't get my ballot?
  - What's the safest way to vote?
- Why is "April 28, 2020" printed in the ballot header?
- 90,000 voters in Prince George's County didn't receive the English version of the instructions. They received only the Spanish version.
  - English versions are en route to affected voters.
  - No other counties have encountered this issue.
- Will precinct-level results be available?

Timeline for Creating Ballots

- Started creating ballots: February 3
- Deadline to certify the ballot: February 24
- By March 17:
  - Ballot databases were finalized and all ballot proofing was complete
  - Ballots had been sent to military and overseas votes and delivered to nursing homes
  - Ballots for in-person voting were already printed
  - The post-election audit software was being customized for the ballots
  - All versions of the ballots were sent to various vendors
- On March 17, the presidential primary election was moved to June 2

Impact of Updating the Date

- Building and testing ballots is a deliberate process. Rushing introduces great risk, and there was not enough time to safely make this change.
- Option #1: Restart the ballot process
  - Ballots had already been sent
  - Must perform another set of testing after changing the date in the database
  - The local boards in the 7th Congressional District did not have time to reproof their ballots
  - Already issued ballots may not be scanned by the voting equipment
  - Making changes to the online delivery system when voters are using is risky
- Option #2: Manually edit each version of each ballot style
  - This would have required manually editing over 1,300 PDF documents and verifying formats
  - Must perform another set of testing after manually changing the dates on the PDF documents
  - The local boards in the 7th Congressional District did not have time to reproof their ballots

Presidential General Election

- As of now, it will be conducted as a “normal” election.
- Our mailhouse can support a vote-by-mail election.
- Our ballot printer has ordered enough paper for a “normal” election.
- We are planning to produce precinct-level results for this election, regardless of how it is conducted.
- Decision about how to conduct this election needs to be made in June 2020.

Questions?