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Different Election Protection Initiatives In Place

Written by Karen Miller
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Apr. 22, Feature - On this Pennsylvania primary day, an army of election protection volunteers have dedicated their day to make sure the Pennsylvanians have as trouble free of an election as possible.

On the 49th floor of 1650 Market Street, in the Law Offices of [DLA Piper](#), will be the first layer of the voter protection rapid response team.

"This is our Hotline Center, and we have about 30 stations, laptops and phones, for our volunteers and their materials, to be able to answer questions from voters.."

Volunteers, mostly attorneys, paralegals, and law students, will answer the calls coming into the 1-866 Our Vote hotline number.

"Your main goal is to try to help as many voters, while your on the phone, as you can."



Jackie Dungee with the [Committee of 70](#), a voter protection group in Philadelphia, is holding the final training on election eve for phone bank volunteers. The food and beverages go untouched, they're focused on the business at hand.

"The most that your going to see are simple requests for information. Requests for assistance. Where do I vote? Where's my polling place - thats the number 1 question."

But Dungee describes a variety of problems that will likely come in.

"If they're a first time voter, or are voting in their district for the first time, they just moved to that district. And in that situation, they have to show identification. We're going to have a lot of new voters, in this election, and that's probably going to be a big problem. People either not knowing that they need identification, or forgetting it, or just not having it."

Election protection efforts began in 2001, after the Florida debacle in 2000. It has grown into a full fledged, full time campaign with nearly 100 coalition partners that consist of democracy watch dog groups to civil rights groups to big name law firms. [Jonah Goldman](#), Director of the National Campaign for Fair Election for the [Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law](#), says election protection has filled a void in the system to ensure fair and smooth elections, but that the government puts few resources into.

"Making sure that we have a system that we are able to respond to on election day so when we identify problems, they don't just continue through out the whole day, we are able to actually resolve them before the polls close.

In Pennsylvania, with 250,000 new voters this primary season, and with the more than 70 counties who use a multitude of different voting machines problems will occur but election protection hopes to minimize them.

The Justice Department will also be monitoring the Pennsylvania's primary.

photo by Sugar Pond