

Create a Sustainable Funding Source for the Arizona Voter Information Database (AVID)

Description of issue and how recommending the agency's request furthers the agency's mandates

The Arizona Voter Information Database (AVID) is Arizona's statewide voter registration system and serves as the official system of record for voter registration information throughout the state as required by the federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA). AVID functions as the primary voter registration system for 13 of Arizona's 15 counties, while the remaining two counties rely upon AVID for critical statewide data exchanges, voter registration verification, election administration, list maintenance, reporting, and statutory compliance. Every voter registration transaction occurring in Arizona ultimately depends upon AVID.

AVID is one of Arizona's most critical election systems. It supports voter registration, voter list maintenance, statewide voter history, election administration, candidate qualification, statewide reporting, the legislature's RTS system and numerous integrations with federal, state, and county agencies. The system is essential to Arizona's compliance with not only the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), but also the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA), and numerous provisions of Arizona election law.

Since its implementation, AVID's responsibilities have expanded significantly. Legislative changes, court decisions, federal reporting requirements, cybersecurity standards, and requests from Arizona's counties have substantially increased the system's functionality, operational complexity, and support requirements. At the same time, county election officials increasingly rely upon the Secretary of State's Office for technical support, testing, cybersecurity coordination, training, system administration, and operational assistance related to AVID.

Historically, AVID maintenance and operations have been financed through a combination of county contributions, federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funding, and periodic legislative appropriations. While this funding model was sufficient during initial implementation, it no longer provides the stable, predictable funding necessary to operate Arizona's statewide voter registration system.

Recognizing the importance of maintaining AVID, the FY2027-enacted budget appropriated \$2.0 million of remaining HAVA funding to support AVID maintenance and operations during FY2027. The Office greatly appreciates this investment, which ensured

uninterrupted operation of Arizona's statewide voter registration system during the 2026 election cycle.

However, that appropriation relied upon a one-time source of federal funding. Following the FY2027 appropriation, **no unappropriated state HAVA funds will remain available to support AVID operations in FY2028 or future fiscal years.** Consequently, Arizona has no option other than to use the State general fund for the ongoing operation of its statewide voter registration system.

At the same time, the annual cost of operating AVID continues to increase. Since implementation, the legislature has enacted numerous changes to Arizona election law requiring new AVID functionality, expanded system capabilities, additional programming, testing, maintenance, and long-term software support. Beginning in FY2028, these legislatively mandated enhancements are projected to increase annual software licensing costs by approximately \$215,000.

In addition, AVID's transition to a modern cloud-hosted environment has significantly improved system security, resilience, disaster recovery, and scalability. However, these improvements also result in recurring cloud-hosting costs that are projected to total approximately \$410,000 annually beginning in FY2028. Combined with personnel costs, vendor licensing, cybersecurity, and ongoing maintenance, the estimated annual cost of operating AVID has increased to approximately \$2.2 million.

Like other enterprise information systems, AVID is not a one-time technology investment. Maintaining a secure, reliable, and compliant statewide voter registration system requires continuous funding for software licensing, cloud hosting, cybersecurity monitoring, vendor maintenance, disaster recovery, system enhancements, quality assurance testing, technical support, and personnel responsible for administering the system.

Providing a permanent, ongoing funding source will ensure Arizona continues operating a secure, resilient, and fully compliant statewide voter registration system while allowing counties to confidently administer elections using reliable, modern technology.

Proposal

Appropriate \$2,200,000 from the state General Fund in FY2028 and each fiscal year thereafter to establish a permanent funding source for the ongoing maintenance and operation of AVID.

The appropriation will support:

Component	Annual Cost
AVID Base Licensing	\$825,000
Personnel (Salary and ERE)	\$750,000
Legislatively Mandated AVID Functionality	\$215,000
Cloud Hosting	\$410,000

Total Annual AVID Maintenance & Operations \$2,200,000

The appropriation will provide a sustainable funding source for:

- Personnel required to administer and support AVID.
- Software licensing and vendor maintenance.
- Legislatively mandated system enhancements.
- Cloud hosting and disaster recovery.
- Cybersecurity monitoring and operational support.
- Technical assistance and training for Arizona counties.
- Ongoing system maintenance, testing, and quality assurance.

Alternatives considered and reasons for rejection

The Office considered continuing to finance AVID through remaining federal HAVA funding and periodic one-time appropriations. This alternative is no longer viable because the FY2027 budget utilized the remaining unappropriated state HAVA funding available for AVID maintenance and operations. Beginning in FY2028, no remaining HAVA funding will be available to support ongoing operations, making continued reliance on temporary funding sources unsustainable.

The Office also considered increasing county cost participation. This alternative was rejected because AVID serves as Arizona's statewide voter registration system and fulfills numerous state and federal statutory responsibilities. Shifting additional costs to counties would create inequities among jurisdictions and impose additional financial burdens on county election offices already managing increasing election administration costs.

Impact of not funding this fiscal year

Failure to establish a sustainable funding source for AVID would significantly increase operational and cybersecurity risks associated with Arizona's statewide voter registration system.

Without recurring funding, the Office would be required to defer software licensing, suspend implementation of legislatively mandated system enhancements, delay security improvements, reduce technical support provided to counties, or seek temporary funding sources that do not provide the stability necessary to operate a mission-critical statewide election system.

Because no unappropriated HAVA funding will remain after FY2027, the Office will no longer have a federal funding source available to offset AVID operating costs. Continued reliance upon one-time funding would create uncertainty in annual budgeting, hinder long-term planning, and increase the risk of deferred maintenance and higher future operating costs.

Ultimately, failure to provide sustainable funding could reduce system reliability, suspend implementation of state statutory requirements, increase cybersecurity risk, and diminish Arizona's ability to fulfill its federal mandate to maintain a statewide voter registration database and provide secure, accurate, and efficient voter registration services to counties and the public.

Statutory reference

ARS § 16-168

Equipment to be purchased

None.

Classification of new positions

None.

Annualization

\$2,200,000 in FY2029 and thereafter.