



COUNTY OF LEHIGH
OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER

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MARK PINSLEY
COUNTY CONTROLLER

THOMAS GROGAN
DEPUTY CONTROLLER

Dear (Head of Government)

As the newly inaugurated Controller, I'm excited to correspond with you regarding an initiative of particular importance to not only my office, but the county. As I'm sure you're aware the State of Pennsylvania has recently passed significant voting reforms that will improve and strengthen the democratic process. The most notable of these reforms is the ability of Pennsylvania residents to apply for **no-excuse** absentee ballots. The ease, convenience and simplicity of this process is expected to yield a significantly higher degree of participation, and also overtime reduce the costs borne by the county in managing elections.

As County Controller, one of my first priorities to identify potential savings for the county.

The research on the cost savings is pretty clear with three states moving towards universal vote-by-mail. Colorado's experience demonstrates that even making moderate transitions to this system can lead to increased efficiency and voter satisfaction.

The state of Colorado moved to a system of vote-by-mail in 2013. The cost savings materialized almost immediately, costs decreasing by 40% in five election administration related categories. In 2008, the average cost per vote was \$16, in the 2014 it dropped to \$9.56 per vote.

This reform resulted in increased cost savings and it strengthened voter turnout. Turnout increased by roughly 3% a year after the reform was passed. It is my opinion that this reform can both strengthen the most fundamental right of American citizens and decrease the overall cost of providing voting services.

I'm writing to ask you to consider informing your residents about this change. Please consider adding the link to your municipal website and other means you use to communicate with your residents, such as water bills, email blasts, and newsletters.

Attached to this email is a copy of the PDF file for the mail-in ballot. This is different from the traditional absentee ballot available to the elderly or those with a hardship or sickness that prevents them from getting to the polls. People that have used absentee ballots in the past, may continue to use that method if they choose.

Sincerely,
Mark Pinsley
Lehigh County Controller