**Resource Allocation Report**

**Hypotheses:**

1. There is wide variation in both the resources allocated to polling places and the types of regulations governing polling place resource allocation
2. Polling place resourcing has not bounced back from Recession-era cuts, and the most significant continuing effects of these cuts are geographically concentrated, probably in areas formerly covered under Section V of the VRA.
3. The differences in polling place resourcing are not randomly distributed
   * Low-income and minority neighborhoods are less likely to have well-resourced polling places.
   * Partisan politics play a role in under-resourcing of polling places and variation in resourcing across counties? (E.g. purple states (like WI) may under-resource areas where the opposition party is concentrated (like Madison and Milwaukee).)
4. These disparities in polling place resourcing show up on election day
   * Certain policy regimes result in better experiences at the polls on election day
     + Places with less regulation see greater variation in election day experience, with lower-income areas in states with less regulation bearing the brunt
   * Voters with less-well-resourced polling places wait longer in line and report a worse experience voting

**Tasks**

* Initial set of interviews with friendly election administrators
  + “If you had a team at the Brennan Center digging into resource allocation, where would you want them to focus?”
* Fifty-state survey of polling place resourcing requirements
  + How are elections funded?
    - How much money comes from the state?
    - Do counties have to fund their own elections using money raised by providing other services?
    - Is parity between counties mandated? Incentivized?
    - How has the funding landscape changed after the Recession-era cuts?
  + What rules govern machines available?
    - Are there requirements about additional machines, planned replacements, etc?
    - We have type / age of machine in each county from Verified Voting already
  + When can jurisdictions close / move polling places? What requirements / restrictions are in place?
* Research regarding past elections (largely though public records requests)
  + How did actual spending compare to expected spending?
  + How much money was set aside for emergencies (such as moving a polling place due to a storm)? How much was actually spent?
  + How many polling places did each county have?
  + How many poll workers and machine did each polling place have?
  + How many polling places were moved / closed? How was that information communicated?
  + When did each polling place transfer their results to the central agency?
  + How many registered voters were assigned to each polling place?
  + How many ballots were cast at each polling place?
  + What was the street address of each polling place? (To get neighborhood demographics)
* Analysis of National Surveys
  + From CCES:
    - Where did people wait in the longest lines?
    - What were the demographics of voters who waited in the longest lines?
    - Where did voters report having the worst experiences on election day?
* Combining National Survey Data, Policy Research, and Public Records Requests
  + - Did funding / wait times / election performance / etc change post-*Shelby County* in covered jurisdictions?
    - In big counties – do differences in wait times seem to be explained by variation *between* counties (county X had $Y per voter, but county Z had $A per voter) or *within* counties (voters in the same county reported very different wait times)
    - Did purge rates seem to have any impact on election performance?
    - Is there evidence of turnout effects over time? If a polling place was poorly funded in 2016, was there lower turnout in 2018?

**Timeline**

* June
  + All public records requests out
  + Interviews with friendly election administrators done
  + Begin 50-state surveys
* July
  + Begin to analyze public records data
  + Negotiate public records requests, where necessary
  + Continue/complete 50-state surveys
  + Begin analysis of national survey data (including EAVS data released on June 30)
* August
  + Bulk of public records requests returned
  + All 50-state surveys completed
    - All states categorized by funding type
    - Preliminary conclusion regarding which systems are the best and which are the worst
  + Analysis of national data / surveys
    - CCES model up and running
      * Ready to incorporate state-level findings and public records request information as covariates in models
    - EAVS data incorporated
* September
  + Continue deep-dive analysis of public records requests and finalize/litigate any straggling requests
  + Refine data analysis, incorporating data from public records requests
  + Begin drafting report narrative with respect to legal regulation of polling places
* October
  + Complete analysis of public records request responses
  + Complete incorporation of public records requests and state-specific indicators into statistical analyses
  + Finalize results of statistical analysis
  + Complete draft of report narrative with respect to legal regulation of polling places
* November/December
  + Draft full report and iterate
  + Cite-check
* January/February
  + Communications revises/processes draft
* March
  + Publication