

**Statement of Reverend Sandra K. James
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Forum: Lessons from Election Day 2012: Examining the Need for Election Reform

**Woodbridge Virginia
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My daughter who was a **first time voter** and I went to vote on November 6, 2012 in the presidential elections at the River Oaks Precinct, Potomac Middle School. It was my intent to vote early and then go to work. I told her to dress comfortably and warm in case we had to wait outside. We arrived at around **7:00 a.m.** and the line was already out the door and down the sidewalk. I told my daughter we would time how long it takes us to complete the voting process. We enter the door of the building at 7:55 (**55 minutes in the cold outside**). It was chaotic trying to enter the building because this was the intersecting point for the line entering the building and the line crossing the hall to get to the voting machines. It was confusing and frustrating as we met with the surprise that the line we were in now snaked down one corridor, up the other side, down another corridor and then up the other side and finally back up to the front door. The "good news" now was the intersection was clear and there was a distinct break in the two lines. We finally entered the voting room casted our votes and left. When we departed the building it was **10:27 a.m (3 hours and 27 minutes of standing)** but it was worth it! I was also surprised that there seem to be no provision for people with health issues or the elderly as there were pregnant women, people with small children and people on scooters in the same long line as me. My son voted later after work and he was in line even longer than me. It is my hope that this information is helpful in correcting this process to ensure that this will never happen again.