

Chad Lorenz, Votebeat

Do you see Votebeat expanding to other states?

Absolutely. Our goal is to grow Votebeat into more states with pivotal debates over elections and rapidly changing rules around voting. We've long hoped to expand into North Carolina, Georgia, Nevada, New York, and the Gulf Coast. Beyond those priority states, our long-term dream list is longer.

What do you think will be the biggest stories--election administration-wise of course--in the next 2-4 years?

The next two election cycles will determine if the crisis in election trust has abated or is merely on hiatus because of this year's decisive November election. There will still be an emphasis on reinforcing voters' trust in elections with transparent and well-run elections in the 2026 midterms. It will be important to see whether that's enough to reassure voters even if the losing candidates question the results.

One big question is what effect the Trump administration and Republican Congress will have on local election administration. It's unclear if [Republicans can pass major new federal election laws](#) from Trump's agenda, like the SAVE Act, or dismantle past protections, but they will likely try. The [Trump loyalists likely to lead the U.S. Department of Justice](#) will treat voting rights cases in line with his agenda and probably act responsively to Trump's baseless accusations of fraud.

A major coming debate in election law, even at the state levels, will likely be over proof of citizenship requirements for voting, and citizenship data checks for voter rolls. The effect of these new laws on election administration could be profound. This will be a big focus for Votebeat in our states.

And there's always a good question about what's next for voter access. Watch for the states doing more to offer early in-person voting and vote by mail — both of which Republican voters used in 2024 and may be less opposed to in the future. What other steps forward will states take to ease the voting process — including adopting the successes from other states? For example, Texas is one of the few states that still does not have an online voter registration system, but voter advocates believe it would solve many of the state's pervasive registration problems.

2025 will also be a big year for voter roll maintenance, and there are big questions about the condition of the voter rolls in states that left ERIC. What alternative tools will those states use to clean up their rolls?

The media focus on elections officials was pretty intense the past few years, but I would suspect a lot of that will die down. That's good and bad of course. What advice would you give to state and local elections officials to stay engaged with the media?

Be responsive to reporters who are looking to help the public understand elections better and become aware of the challenges election officials face. That includes being willing to acknowledge mistakes and shortcomings — to help everyone take away lessons about what went wrong and how to solve it for next time.

It's always helpful to proactively reach out to reporters about what's changing in an election department, and what the public needs to know. The more that voters see that officials are working to enable voters to participate and keep voting secure, the more they'll appreciate the officials for their crucial role in democracy.