

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 28, 2018

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
S-128 U.S. Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
S-128 U.S. Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Financial Services and  
General Government  
S-128 U.S. Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Christopher Coons  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Financial Services and  
General Government  
S-128 U.S. Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran, Ranking Member Leahy, Chairman Capito and Ranking Member Coons:

As your committee considers the Financial Services and General Government Fiscal Year 2018 Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that the Election Assistance Commission's appropriated funding be increased in Title V-Independent Agencies to \$400 million, consistent with Public Law 107-252, the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA), specifically dedicated to state grants for the procurement of secure state voter registration systems.

According to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), twenty-one states were targeted by a foreign nation-state during the 2016 election, and one state even had its voter registration system breached. A highly vulnerable centerpiece of our elections, voter registration systems depend on investment to ensure the security and integrity of highly sensitive data. Alarming, almost three dozen states have voter registration systems that are at least ten years old. The age of these systems leaves them at significant risk of successful future attacks, and makes it more difficult to determine whether a cyberattack has in fact occurred. Outdated election infrastructure leaves citizens to question whether or not their votes will be counted or if their personal voter data will be stolen, thus weakening the public's trust in the election process.

At a recent hearing held by the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, there was a consensus amongst leaders in the intelligence community that they fully expect election interference to occur in the 2018 mid-terms and beyond. If left unchecked, vulnerabilities in our election system – including state voter registration systems – will erode public faith in our institutions and undermine democracy at its core.

Congress passed HAVA to address major deficiencies in voting systems and authorized \$3 billion for improvements to election systems. Although states used \$2.6 billion of these funds for a number of significant improvements, with the last of such funding provided in FY10, the vital work of replacing aging voter registration systems remains yet to be completed. You have the ability to meet this unmet need through the appropriation of the remaining \$400 million under the existing HAVA authorization directed through state grants to acquire secure voter registration systems.

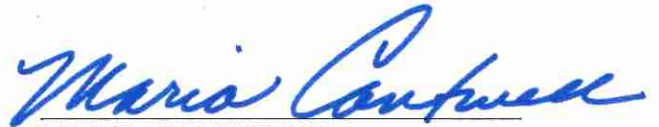
Free and fair elections are a cornerstone of democracy, and such elections start with ensuring the safety and security of voter registration systems. We urge you to appropriate the remaining \$400 million authorized funding under HAVA that has not yet been appropriated, and to dedicate these funds to helping improve state voter registration systems.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your considerable efforts on the FY18 Appropriations bill.

Sincerely,



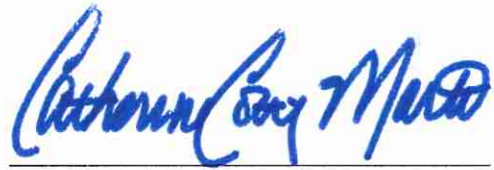
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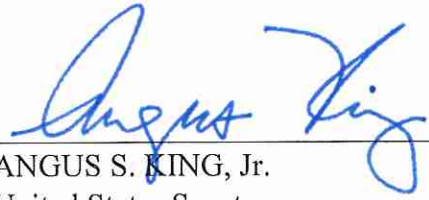
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KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND  
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United States Senate



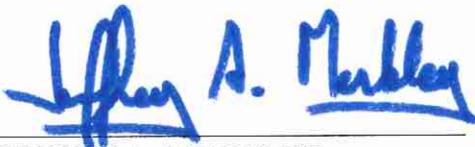
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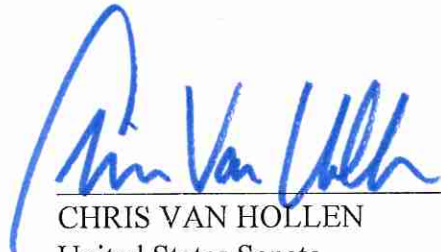
BERNARD SANDERS  
United States Senate



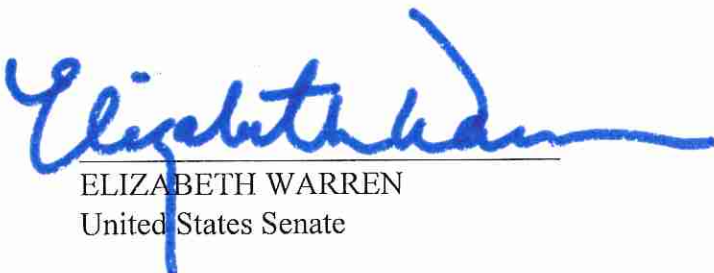
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