



February 6, 2024

The Honorable Bryan Steil  
Chairman  
Committee on House Administration  
1309 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Joe Morelle  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Modernization  
1216 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Steil and Ranking Member Morelle,

Election officials across the country are preparing for the 2024 general election with the expectation that Congress will act in support of their efforts to ensure a safe and accurate election. They are already confronting horrific [threats of violence](#), [artificial intelligence-generated deepfakes](#), and [enhanced cyber threats](#) from abroad. Election officials are dedicated professionals who will carry out their duties to administer free, fair, and secure elections regardless of the pressures or restrictions they face. Yet, a serious and long-standing challenge for local election officials is that our elections are [critically under-resourced](#), and Congress has consistently failed to meet its mandate to provide sufficient and sufficiently reliable funding.

As the extensive hearings conducted by the House Administration Committee during the current Congress and in previous Congress' have demonstrated, protecting American elections is a bipartisan priority. So too is ensuring adequate election funding. In a [national poll](#) commissioned by Issue One, 69% of Americans—including 74% of Democrats and 66% of Republicans—believe that the federal government should be just as, or more, responsible for election funding than local municipalities and states.

As former members of Congress from both parties, and as leaders of the bipartisan National Council on Election Integrity, we firmly believe that Congress has a responsibility to provide adequate funding for election security. We have [repeatedly called](#) on Congress to “listen to local election officials and responsibly invest in our critical election infrastructure” by appropriating \$400 million for election security grants. As two of us noted in a [joint op-ed](#), “if our elections are designated as critical infrastructure by the federal government, then it’s critical that the federal government protect that critical infrastructure.”

We call on you to embrace the federal government’s key role in ensuring our elections continue to be free, fair, and secure by providing federal grant funding to state and local election officials. Specifically, by supporting the appropriation of at least \$75 million in election security grant funding for Fiscal Year 2024, and \$400 million for Fiscal Year 2025.

Running secure elections is an inherently governmental responsibility. But while state and local officials are the principal administrators of our election system, the responsibility to keep that system secure [does not stop at the state and local level](#). Local jurisdictions administer elections for every level of government, from school board to president, and every level of government provides consistent funding to their local election offices to support their place on each ballot. The lone exception is the federal government, which

sets mandates on election policy and enjoys [prime placement](#) on all ballots but does not provide regular or consistent funding to the offices that design, print, distribute, and count those ballots.

Federal funding is all the more essential this year as election officials face new threats and challenges, including the increase of targeted threats and harassment towards [election officials](#) and the rise in [foreign cyber interference](#) threats to election processes. As the non-partisan [National Association of Counties](#) explained, as a result of these threats, “counties now must also consider safety and security measures for themselves and the election workers they employ which ultimately results in additional costs for counties.”

In each of the last two years, Congress has appropriated just \$75 million for Election Security Grants, and for FY2024 the Senate has again proposed [\\$75 million](#) while the House’s appropriations proposal zeroed out the program entirely. While the \$75 million proposal does not meet the full need that election officials have demonstrated, it is an essential down-payment on securing democracy in 2024. Appropriating election security grants in 2024 would allow state and local election officials to [bolster their election administration operations](#) in the ways that make most sense to their unique circumstances, and in accordance with state laws. These grants have helped election officials [enhance election security](#) in a variety of ways, including replacing paperless voting machines, purchasing high-speed tabulators, implementing post-election audits, and installing security and live-streaming cameras in ballot warehouses. [Election officials](#) have been able to decide how to use these federal funds to respond to the specific needs of their communities and voters.

The appropriation of election security funds in 2024 would be a major help for election officials who are under pressure today, but ensuring the [long-term consistent appropriation](#) of these funds is equally essential. Election officials across the country have repeatedly informed Congress of the dire need for more consistency in funding. Lisa Marra, a County election official in Arizona explained to [the House Oversight Committee in 2022](#): “We never know if [election assistance] funding will be put into the Federal budget. Elections and the security around them cost money. It’s important these funds are something states and counties can rely on every cycle.” Justin F. Roebuck, Clerk of Ottawa County, Michigan made a similar point in [written testimony](#) to the Senate Rules Committee in 2023, “though election infrastructure was rightfully named as critical government infrastructure by the Department of Homeland Security in 2017, we have yet to see any form of sustained, regular funding at the federal level to acknowledge this designation.” A more reliable, steady stream of [federal funding](#) for elections is needed to ensure that every jurisdiction in every state can secure its elections from an [increasingly complex](#) set of threats.

We thank you for your attention to the critical issue of election security.

Sincerely,

Fmr. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-VA)  
*National Council on Election Integrity Co-chair*

Fmr. Rep. Donna F. Edwards (D-MD)  
*National Council on Election Integrity Co-chair*

Fmr. Rep. Tim Roemer (D-IN)  
*National Council on Election Integrity Co-chair*

Fmr. Rep. Zach Wamp (R-TN)  
*National Council on Election Integrity Co-chair*

CC: The Honorable Laurel Lee

The Honorable Terri Sewell

The Honorable Barry Loudermilk

The Honorable Derek Kilmer

The Honorable Morgan Griffith

The Honorable Norma Torres

The Honorable Stephanie Bice

The Honorable Mike Carey

The Honorable Anthony D'Esposito

U.S. Senate Rules Committee

U.S. Financial Services & General Government  
Subcommittee, U.S. House Appropriations  
Committee

U.S. Financial Services & General Government  
Subcommittee, U.S. Senate Appropriations  
Committee