Election Officials Call on Congressional Appropriators to Meaningfully Invest in Election Security

Dear Chair Joyce, Ranking Member Hoyer, Chair Van Hollen, and Ranking Member Hagerty,

We, election officials from across the country, are writing to request the appropriation of at least $400 million in Election Security Grants in FY2025. We are secretaries of state, poll workers, and county and city commissioners, recorders, and clerks. All of us are united in a call for Congress to meet the moment and provide funding that will improve the security of our election systems in the face of growing threats.

Last year, 19 of us wrote to Congress calling for a robust investment in election infrastructure. Sadly, Congress appropriated just $55 million in election funding, an appropriation insufficient to meet the rising costs of election administration, counter growing threats, and fulfill the unfunded federal mandates with which we have been charged.

Congress provides essential funding to states to help run federal elections through Election Security Grants. These grants are administered by the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) and managed by each state’s secretary of state or chief election officer. They are then sub-granted to local officials.

Our roles and what is expected of us to administer safe and secure elections have increased exponentially, but the resources have not kept pace. Election officials now must counter mis- and disinformation about election processes on a bewildering array of news (including AI-generated sites) and social media platforms. We must adapt to changing state laws, implement federal mandates, and react to disruptive weather conditions. We must prepare for cyber attacks using outdated hardware and software and harden our buildings and, sometimes, our homes against threats of violence. We respond to endless streams of information requests, and increasingly to subpoenas and escalating litigation. We must also carry out our core responsibilities of registering voters, hiring poll workers, setting up and running polling places, processing and counting ballots, and certifying and auditing results.
While states and localities fund the majority of election processes, the responsibilities involved in running an election in the 21st century require federal support. Responding to cybersecurity attacks from foreign adversaries, countering threats, abuse and harassment of election officials (80% of whom are women) that cross state lines, and administering federal mandates on voter registration and ballot access all involve federal action. Additionally, federal races — including for your congressional seats — occupy prime “ballot real estate.” By law, your race is placed ahead of races for state and local office, even though those levels of government provide the vast majority of funding to administer these elections while Congress has repeatedly fallen short in meeting its responsibilities.

Federal election security grants, though only intermittently appropriated, have proven essential for state and local election officials to be able to respond to shifting threat environments during the last 20 years. Election officials across the country have used these grants to improve voter registration systems, replace paperless voting machines, purchase high-speed tabulators, implement post-election audits, install security and live-streaming cameras in ballot warehouses, and for many other essential improvements in election security.

We urge Congress to heed our call and that of U.S. election officials across the nation and responsibly invest in our critical election infrastructure. Appropriating $400 million in Election Security Grants for FY2025 — with at least 50% going to local election offices — will help ensure our elections remain secure, free, and fair.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this urgent request.

Sincerely,

Natalie Adona
Clerk-Recorder/Registrar of Voters, Nevada County (CA)

The Hon. Francisco V. Aguilar
Secretary of State (NV)

The Hon. Gregg M. Amore
Rhode Island Secretary of State (RI)

The Hon. Shenna Bellows
Secretary of State (ME)

The Hon. Jocelyn Benson
Secretary of State (MI)

David B. Bjerke
Director of Elections & General Registrar, Falls Church (VA)

Bruce A. Brown
Secretary, Electoral Board, Alexandria (VA)

The Hon. Jim Condos
Former Secretary of State (VT)

Kristin B. Connelly
Clerk-Recorder, Contra Costa County (CA)

Isaac Cramer
Executive Director, Charleston County Board of Elections (SC)

Dustin Czarny
Board of Elections Commissioner, Onondaga County (NY)

Lisa Deeley
City Commissioner, Philadelphia (PA)

Tate Fall
Director of Elections, Cobb County (GA)

The Hon. Adrian P. Fontes
Secretary of State (AZ)
Ken Hamm  
Poll Worker, Clark County (NV)

Carly Koppes  
Clerk and Recorder, Weld County (CO)

Brianna Lennon  
County Clerk, Boone County (MO)

The Hon. Amber McReynolds  
Presidential Appointee & former Director of Elections, Denver (CO)

Omar Sabir  
Chairman and City Commissioner, Philadelphia (PA)

Tonya Wichman  
Director, Defiance County Board of Elections (OH)

Julie Wise  
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