



December 8, 2022

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
Chairman
Senate Subcommittee on
Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Quigley
Chairman
House Subcommittee on
Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Cindy Hyde-Smith
Ranking Member
Senate Subcommittee on
Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Steve Womack
Ranking Member
House Subcommittee on
Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Van Hollen, Ranking Member Hyde-Smith, Chairman Quigley, and Ranking Member Womack:

One of the most significant needs in election administration is [robust and consistent funding](#). Election administration is foundational to our democracy, yet public spending on elections often ranks near the bottom of spending priorities. The \$400 million appropriation being considered for state and local election departments is critical to building resilience ahead the 2024 presidential election.

The FY23 FSGG bill and report approved by House Appropriations Committee includes the following provision for election funding that merits consideration and support:

Election Security – While Congress has made significant investments in election security, the funding has been inconsistent, unpredictable, and insufficient to meet the vast need across all the States and territories. Congress must provide a consistent, steady source of Federal funds to support State and local election officials on the frontlines of protecting U.S. elections. The Committee recommends \$400,000,000 for Election Security Grants and reaffirms the commitment to providing a consistent, steady source of Federal funds to support State and local election officials on the frontlines of protecting U.S. elections. In addition to providing support to State and local election officials, the Committee has supported efforts to rebuild the Election Assistance Commission (EAC), more than doubling funding for the agency's operating expenses from fiscal year 2019 to fiscal year 2022. (H.R. Rep. No. 117-393, p. 4)

Despite being designated critical infrastructure in 2017, federal investment in elections is [irregular, unpredictable, and insufficient](#). Elections are one of America's most locally run tasks, administered by local officials who commit long hours to ensuring that elections are fair and

secure. Since the 2020 election, the jobs of election officials have gotten more complicated and more dangerous, with [1 in 4 local election officials](#) experiencing threats, harassment, or abuse.

This \$400 million investment would help close resource gaps and demonstrate solidarity to the thousands of election officials who have shouldered American democracy through one of its most difficult periods to date. Election officials are often required to make tough trade-offs due to resource constraints—such as consolidating polling places, limiting training, using outdated technology, or hiring fewer staff. While our elections are reliable and secure, chronic underfunding increases the risk of errors that become ripe ground for mis- and disinformation.

The 2020 and 2022 elections demonstrated firsthand how minor, technical glitches can undermine voter confidence—even when [quickly identified and addressed](#). Additional resources will mitigate local vulnerabilities that could have national implications if exploited. For maximum effectiveness, states should be required to disperse a portion of the funds to their local election offices to qualify for federal support.

This \$400 million dollar investment is the first of many crucial steps we must take to ensure our local election officials have the resources they need to administer trusted and trustworthy elections.

Sincerely,

Bipartisan Policy Center
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R Street Institute

CC: Members of the U.S. House and Senate Subcommittees on Appropriations