



March 15, 2018

Senator Thad Cochran
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
437 Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Shelley Moore Capito
Chairman, Financial Services and General
Government Subcommittee
172 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Christopher Coons
Ranking Member, Financial Services and
General Government Subcommittee
127A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

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

Ranking Member Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) of the Senate Rules Committee, which has jurisdiction over federal elections, recently wrote urging you to include \$400 million in grant funding for the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) in the upcoming appropriations cycle.¹ We support that request.

Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election highlighted vulnerabilities in the American election security system. According to Congressional testimony from Intelligence Community chiefs last month, we should expect that attempts to exploit these vulnerabilities were not unique, and will continue. It is therefore extremely important that we take the proper steps to prepare for these types of attacks and to preserve the integrity of our elections.

The proposed grant money would serve the critical function of helping state and local officials keep up to date on election cybersecurity best practices. This includes training for the officials as well as regular distribution of updated information on election cybersecurity to the officials, to be facilitated by the EAC and the Department of Homeland Security. Additionally, the funding would ensure the establishment of voting paper trails and post-election audits, a simple and uncontroversial safeguard against tampering with voting machines and tabulations.

Election meddling will undoubtedly be an ongoing issue; funding these commonsense practices will help protect the integrity of American elections moving forward.

¹ Senator Amy Klobuchar, Press Release, "Klobuchar Urges Appropriations Committee to Include Funding for the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to Carry Out Critical Improvements in Election Security," March 2, 2018. <https://www.klobuchar.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2018/3/klobuchar-urges-appropriations-committee-to-include-funding-for-the-election-assistance-commission-eac-to-carry-out-critical-improvements-in-election-security> (Downloaded March 15, 2018)

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue. For more information please feel free to contact Jake Laperruque of the Project On Government Oversight (jlaperruque@pogo.org or 202-347-1122).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Danielle Brian". The signature is written in a cursive style with a light blue background behind it.

Danielle Brian
Executive Director