

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 9, 2023

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE  
Washington, DC 20032

The Honorable Deanne Criswell  
Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C St SW  
Washington, DC 20024

The Honorable Jen Easterly  
Director  
Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency  
245 Murray Lane  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas, Administrator Criswell, and Director Easterly:

We write to request that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) prioritize funding for election security and support for election officials through existing grant programs. As we work to keep our elections secure and strengthen our democracy's resilience, these resources will help state and local governments ensure that our elections proceed smoothly in the face of evolving challenges including the rise in threats to election workers and the need to maintain our country's election infrastructure, which is a matter of national security.

In particular we urge DHS to issue guidance that makes clear that election security is a national priority for the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) and the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program. Specifically, we urge you to designate election security as its own unique national priority and not combine it with other priority areas.

Importantly there is recent precedent for this type of guidance. In Fiscal Year 2020, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) cited election security in two of its four national priorities for HSGP – “enhancing cybersecurity” and “enhancing the protection of soft targets/crowded places.”<sup>1</sup> That year FEMA also required HSGP grant recipients to spend a fixed percentage of their funds on each priority. We were pleased to see that FEMA included “enhancing election security” in its 2022 national priorities, and we urge you to do this again in 2023.<sup>2</sup>

Just as FEMA has done with the HSGP grants, we request that the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency issue guidance to guarantee that a portion of funds from the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program is spent on election security. This four-year program was created in the 2021 *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* to ensure that state and local

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<sup>1</sup> *Fiscal Year 2020 Homeland Security Grant Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Key Changes*. FEMA, [https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fy\\_2020\\_hsgp\\_key\\_changes.pdf](https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fy_2020_hsgp_key_changes.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> *Fiscal Year 2022 Homeland Security Grant Program Key Changes*. FEMA, <https://www.fema.gov/fact-sheet/fiscal-year-2022-homeland-security-grant-program-key-changes>

governments have resources to improve and maintain their cybersecurity, and it has the potential to play a critical role as states are preparing for the 2024 election cycle.

Election officials work year-round to prepare to administer our free and fair elections, and they bring important expertise to their jobs. We encourage you to include guidance that grant recipients should consult with election officials, which will help ensure that those on the frontlines of our democracy are informed about how these funds can be used and have the opportunity to advocate for their election-related needs.

DHS has done critical work to keep our elections safe and secure, including in the 2022 elections, but funding for election security must remain a priority. By requiring funds to be spent on election security and for election officials to have meaningful input, you will ensure that critical funds will be used to strengthen security in our democracy.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



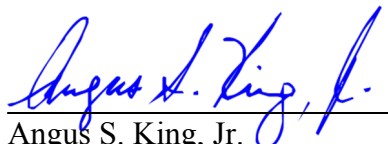
Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator



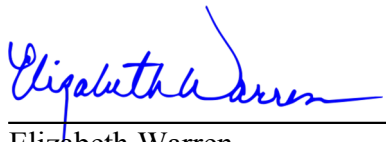
Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.  
United States Senator



Peter Welch  
United States Senator



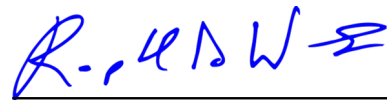
Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator



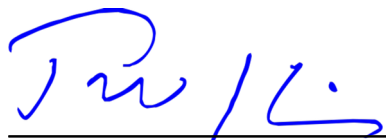
Christopher A. Coons  
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock  
United States Senator



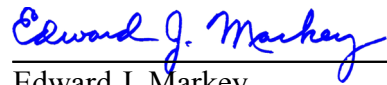
Tim Kaine  
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator



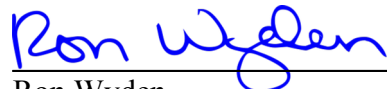
Tina Smith  
United States Senator




Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator




Mazie K. Hirono  
United States Senator



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



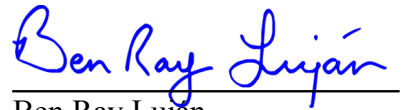
Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator



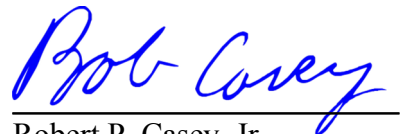
Alex Padilla  
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan  
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator



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