

MAKE ELECTION REFORM A REALITY

SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION AND FULL FUNDING FOR HAVA

June 19, 2007

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd
Chairman, Senate Appropriations
S-131 Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations
S-146A Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Chairman, Senate Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
309 Hart
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sam Brownback
Ranking Member, Senate Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
303 Hart
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Byrd, Ranking Member Cochran, Chairman Durbin, and Ranking Member Brownback:

We, the undersigned organizations, urge you to support full funding for the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) and include the remaining \$798 million of authorized funding in the FY 08 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations legislation. Of this amount, \$724 million is for the federally-mandated processes and equipment that state and local governments were required to have in place for federal elections in 2006 and \$74 million is for assisting state and local governments in making all polling places accessible. It is imperative that states and local governments receive all of the funding they were promised to fully implement statewide voter registration databases, keep up with the spiraling costs of purchasing and maintaining voting equipment and ensure proper poll worker training and voter education in this environment of continual change in voting equipment and procedures.

Lack of federal funding for HAVA has led many states and local governments to scale back on their intended purchase of voting equipment, contributing to wait times and lines at the polls, and has constrained their efforts to ensure polling place accessibility, to train poll workers and to conduct voter education and outreach. Most devastatingly, Congressional delay in providing proper funding for the Election Assistance Commission and the National Institute of Standards and Technology to develop standards for voting equipment prevented these standards from being issued in time for states to comply by the deadline prescribed in HAVA. This led to dramatic cost

increases and resulted in many jurisdictions replacing voting equipment more than once in an effort to comply with evolving guidance on ensuring both accessibility and security. While the efforts of the EAC and NIST have since been funded, delay in their funding has contributed significantly to cost increases for state and local governments.

Full funding is necessary to fulfill the promise of HAVA and provide resources to state and local governments to meet the new and changing expectations for voting equipment and procedures. Should you have any questions, please contact the organizations listed below.

Sincerely,

Organizations Representing State and Local Election Officials

International Association of Clerks, Records, Election Officials and Treasurers
National Association of Counties
National Association of Election Officials
National Association of Secretaries of State
National Conference of State Legislatures

Organizations Representing Civil Rights and Disability Groups

American Association of People with Disabilities
American Federation of Labor & Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)
Asian American Justice Center
Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN)
Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law
Common Cause
FairVote
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
Leadership Conference on Civil Rights
League of Women Voters of the United States
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)
NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
National Disability Rights Network
Paralyzed Veterans of America
People For the American Way
Project Vote
The Arc of the United States
United Auto Workers (UAW)
United Cerebral Palsy