



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 30, 2008

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National Association of Secretaries of State Lauds Senate Attempt to Improve Elections

Former NASS President Todd Rokita, Indiana Secretary of State, Urges Senators to Focus on Deadlines & Funding, State Election Official Input for Success with Bipartisan Voting Reform Act of 2008

Washington, DC - Ensuring that states are given realistic deadlines and adequate funding for election improvements are key concerns for secretaries of state and other chief election officials as Congress considers new federal legislation on the subject, according to testimony today by Indiana Secretary of State Todd Rokita, immediate past president of the National Association of Secretaries of State. Rokita delivered his remarks during a hearing of the U.S. Senate Committee on Rules and Administration on S. 3212, the Bipartisan Voting Reform Act of 2008.

"We know that most states needed every minute of their Help America Vote Act waiver to get a statewide voter file completed by 2006," said Rokita, who serves on the NASS Executive Board. "The technology proposed by the Senate is innovative, yet much more complex than what was included in HAVA. We urge our Senators to keep this in mind as this bill moves forward."

S. 3212 would expand federal oversight of elections and create mandatory audits, among other things.

Rokita stressed to Senate Rules members the benefits of holding regular discussions with secretaries of state and other election officials as they contemplate the finer points of the bill. He noted that NASS has a formal list of principles on federal legislation and would share these upon request. He also added that state officials appreciate the innovative steps that bill sponsors are taking to encourage research and development regarding new voting technologies.

"The fact that this legislation does not mandate a paper-only solution for voter verification shows just how much the Senators are thinking about the future of technology and long-term successes," Rokita said.

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