



September 13, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
U.S. Capitol Building, S-230
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
U.S. Capitol Building, S-221
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John McCain
United States Senate
218 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed
United States Senate
728 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Senator McCain, and Senator Reed:

On behalf of the 3,069 county governments and their staff, we write to urge adoption of the proposed amendment (S.A. 656) by Senators Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) and Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 (H.R. 2810). Counties are on the front lines of administering the nation's elections, and county election officials must address security issues daily. This amendment would provide vital and necessary resources for states and counties to meet the growing security demands of administering elections.

Counties support much of the nation's elections infrastructure, and allowing states to use additional grant funds to invest in essential election infrastructure will help counties protect our systems across the country. Additionally, NACo strongly supports the role the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) plays in coordinating collaborative efforts among local, state and federal government officials in addressing elections issues, and we are encouraged by the amendment's efforts to work through the EAC to establish cybersecurity best practice recommendations. Finally, we are pleased the amendment enhances communication between the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and election officials, and we encourage Congress to include county officials in future legislative efforts.

As the election officials closest to the polling booths, we know the intricate threats to conducting fair and free elections. Strengthening our election security will require a strong partnership between local, state and federal officials, and we hope Congress will take this important step in furthering those partnerships.

Sincerely,

Matthew D. Chase
Executive Director
National Association of Counties