

## Guidance to Leagues Regarding 2018 Omnibus Grant Funding for Election Security Issues

The 2018 Omnibus bill allotted \$380 million in grants to be distributed to all states across the country for “improving election security in the states.” In the wake of reported foreign interference in the 2016 elections, this funding will be critical to updating our election systems across the country for the 2018 midterm elections and beyond.

The grants are managed by the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) and are awarded in accordance with the [Help America Vote Act \(HAVA\)](#). Each state is guaranteed to receive at least \$3 million dollars in funding. A detailed breakdown of allotted funding can be found on the [EAC website](#). Award letters will be sent to states in the spring of 2018. States have until September 30, 2023 to request funding and have it deposited in their accounts.

The [EAC recommends](#) that states use the grants in a manner that is consistent with the requirements of HAVA. Those activities may include:

1. Replace voting equipment that only records a voter's intent electronically with equipment that utilizes a voter verified paper record;
2. Implement a post-election audit system that provides a high level of confidence in the accuracy of the final vote tally;
3. Upgrade election related computer systems to address cyber vulnerabilities identified through Department of Homeland Security, or similar scans or assessments of, existing election systems;
4. Facilitate cybersecurity training for the state chief election official's office and local election officials;
5. Implement established cybersecurity best practices for election systems; and
6. Fund other activities that will improve the security of elections for Federal office.

### **What Leagues can do in their states**

Leagues should work with election officials to ensure that states are using the money they are granted wisely and effectively.

Leagues should work in coalition with election administration and security issue partners to establish a broad base of support for supported measures.

### **LWVUS recommends that Leagues urge the chief election officer of their state to focus on the following:**

- 1. Protect Eligible Voters**
  - a. Prevent the documentary proof of citizenship requirements when registering to vote

- b. Develop systems to electronically transmit voter information between election offices
- c. Conduct proper list maintenance
- d. Maintain privacy of voter information
- e. Institute online registration and establish online accounts accessible to voters to review and update voter information pertaining to registration
- f. Educate voters about the materials they need to vote and the resources available to them to learn about the candidates

## **2. Enhance Voting Security**

- a. Advocate for voting equipment that is secure, accurate, recountable, accessible and transparent. (SARAT)
- b. Ensure election officials and administrators are provided with the proper training on cybersecurity measures
- c. Institute best practices for ensuring secure elections systems
- d. Upgrade systems and address vulnerabilities as identified by the Department of Homeland Security
- e. Maintain security of electronic poll books

## **3. Ensure Valid Votes are Counted**

- a. Encourage election officials to establish risk-limiting audits that use statistical principles to certify election results ([see report of the LWUVS Election Audits Task Force](#))
- b. Provisional ballots should be available and accessible to voters who need them. States should work to reduce the need for provisional ballots while establishing clear standards for counting them following the election
- c. Promote “no excuse absentee” voting and establish a process to count all absentee ballots following Election Day
- d. Support the expansion of early voting opportunities and ensure that all votes cast in this manner are counted