

October 23, 2019

Dear Representative,

Our organizations strongly urge you to vote for H.R. 4617, the SHIELD Act, which would strengthen the laws to protect U.S. elections against foreign intervention. The Act has been reported by the House Administration Committee and is likely to be considered by the full House this month.

In his testimony before Congress on July 24, 2019, Special Counsel Robert Mueller discussed ongoing Russian interference in our elections, stating, “They’re doing it as we sit here, and they expect to do it in the next campaign.” According to a *New York Times* [article](#) published on October 4, 2019, “The 2020 presidential election is still 13 months away, but already Iranians are following in the footsteps of Russia and have begun cyberattacks aimed at disrupting the campaigns.”

A [bipartisan report](#) issued on October 8, 2019 by the Republican-led Senate Intelligence Committee reaffirmed the Mueller report in finding that Russia had targeted the 2016 presidential election as “part of a broader, sophisticated and ongoing information warfare campaign.”

The SHIELD Act contains important provisions to strengthen the laws that protect our elections and national security from foreign interference. These protections include:

- A new requirement for candidates and political committees to notify the FBI and the FEC any time a foreign power contacts them to provide campaign assistance;
- The Honest Ads Act to ensure greater transparency for online political ads and their sponsors;
- Provisions to close major loopholes in the prohibition on spending by foreign governments for political ads to influence U.S. elections;
- A new prohibition banning spending by foreign nationals on State or local ballot initiatives and referenda;
- A new prohibition on anyone providing false information about voting rules and qualifications for voting and new strong penalties for voter intimidation; and
- A prohibition codifying FEC rules that prevent foreign nationals from directing, controlling or participating in the decision-making process of any person about that person’s election-related activities.

These provisions address serious problems that arose in the 2016 presidential election in order to prevent them from recurring in future elections.

Our organizations strongly urge you to vote for the SHIELD Act and to vote against any amendments to weaken or undermine the legislation.

Signed:

Action Group Network  
American Oversight  
Campaign Legal Center  
Center for Digital Democracy  
Center for Popular Democracy  
Clean Elections Texas  
Coalition to Preserve, Protect and Defend  
Common Cause  
Common Defense  
Concerned Citizens for Change  
CREW  
Defending Democracy  
Democracy 21  
Democracy Initiative  
End Citizens United Action Fund  
Equal Justice Society  
Franciscan Action Network  
Greenpeace USA  
Indivisible  
Indivisible KC  
Law Works  
Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
League of Women Voters  
Mainers for Accountable Leadership  
MoveOn  
NETWORK  
New Mexicans for Money Out of Politics  
People For the American Way  
Progressive Turnout Project  
Protect Democracy  
Public Citizen  
Sierra Club  
Stand Up America  
The Loyal Opposition  
Voices for Progress  
Win Without War