

Democrats Take Action to Safeguard Our Democracy, Address the Threat of Foreign Interference in Our Elections

Foreign interference in our elections continues to be a serious threat to the integrity of America's democratic process. After passing H.R. 1, the For the People Act; the SAFE Act; and funding legislation to improve our election infrastructure, House Democrats are continuing to advance legislation to prevent foreign interference and shed a light on dark money in our democracy.

Foreign Interference Continues to Threaten Our Democracy

Ellen L. Weintraub, Chair of the Federal Election Commission: “As chair of the Federal Election Commission, I am gravely concerned about ongoing efforts by geopolitical adversaries to undermine our democracy. It is critically important that everyone involved in U.S. politics understands the law, recognizes the threat, and confronts and contains it.” [07/20/19]

Debora A. Plunkett, Senior Fellow at The Belfer Center, Harvard University: “Our democracy is under attack and at risk. Threats to elections is a national security issue. We must take bold, decisive and expeditious steps to address them, and then assume that they are insufficient given the rise of nation state capabilities and intentions, and the relative known insecurities of elections systems.” [Testimony before the House Judiciary Committee, 09/27/19]

Lawrence D. Norden, Deputy Director of the Democracy Program at the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law: “While Special Counsel Robert Mueller’s report confirmed a ‘sweeping and systemic’ attack on American elections in 2016, there are several reasons to believe the threat against our election infrastructure will be even greater in 2020.” [Testimony before the Committee on House Administration, 5/8/19]

Mr. Tom Burt, Microsoft: “Our adversaries have a stated goal of seeking to diminish the confidence of our citizens in the processes that are at the very core of our democracy. We should anticipate that we will see more attacks on our election processes in 2020 in furtherance of this goal.” [Testimony before the House Judiciary Committee, 9/27/19]

Kathryn Boockvar, Acting Secretary of the Commonwealth, Pennsylvania State Department: “Election security is a race without a finish line, and our adversaries are continuously advancing their technologies.” [Testimony before the House Judiciary Committee, 9/27/19]

Jocelyn Benson, Michigan Secretary of State: “... While the threats to the security of our elections didn’t begin in 2016, we know for certain they won’t end in 2020.” [Testimony before the Committee on House Administration, 5/8/19]

THE CORPORATE TRANSPARENCY ACT

On Tuesday, the House passed the Corporate Transparency Act, which will shine a light on dark money in our democracy by requiring companies to disclose their true owners. The legislation would prevent bad actors like Russian oligarchs and foreign dictators from using shell companies in the U.S. to launder their ill-gotten wealth.

THE SHIELD ACT

On Wednesday, the House will vote on the SHIELD Act, bipartisan legislation to prevent foreign interference in our elections and defend the integrity of our voting systems by:

- Creating a duty to report illicit offers of campaign assistance from foreign governments and their agents.
- Improving transparency of online political advertisements.
- Closing loopholes that allow foreign nationals and governments to influence contributions, including by strengthening the foreign money ban by prohibiting foreign nationals from participating in decision-making about contributions.
- Restricting exchange of campaign information between candidates and foreign governments and their agents.
- Prohibiting deceptive practices about voting procedures, such as providing false information about voting rules and qualifications for voting.

DEMOCRATS CONTINUE TO WORK TO SAFEGUARD OUR DEMOCRACY

House Democrats have already acted to subvert the threat of foreign interference and strengthen voting infrastructure by passing:

- **H.1. 1, the For the People Act**: Early in the Majority, House Democrats passed a comprehensive government reform package, which included a number of election security provisions, such as:
 - Requiring states to use paper ballots.
 - Establishing cybersecurity standards for voting systems vendors.
 - Funding grants to improve the security of their election systems.
 - Requiring the President to produce a national strategy for protecting democratic institutions.
 - Creating a National Commission to Protect United States Democratic Institutions.
- **The SAFE Act**: In June, House Democrats passed an election security bill that authorizes a \$600 million Election Assistance Commission (EAC) grant program to assist states in securing election infrastructure, in addition to:
 - Requiring paper ballots;
 - Mandating risk limiting audits, which help detect incorrect election outcomes;
 - Strengthening accountability for election technology vendors;
 - Requiring new accessibility requirements and establishing a grant program to study accessible paper.
- **Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2020**: In June, the House also passed a funding bill that included \$600 million in funding for the EAC, consistent with the funding authorized by the SAFE Act.

House Democrats continue to call on the Senate to take up and pass these bills to strengthen our election security and thwart continued efforts to interfere in the 2020 elections.