

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 22, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
H-232 U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
H-204 U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
S-230 U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
S-221 U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leaders Schumer, McConnell, and McCarthy:

As Congress prepares a fourth stimulus package to help our nation recover from the economic impacts of COVID-19, we also need to do more to ensure our democracy is prepared to overcome the challenges brought on by this pandemic. The \$400 million in election funding that was included in the third stimulus package is a critical first step, but states need far more resources to protect the remaining primaries and the November elections.

Republican and Democratic election officials across the country have expressed concern that this pandemic will affect their ability to administer safe elections. Officials in sixteen states have already postponed presidential primary elections or transitioned their elections to all mail-in voting. We must take action now to plan for upcoming elections. Voters across Wisconsin can attest to the fact that failure to enact reforms and provide additional resources to states will result in widespread chaos and disenfranchisement of voters.

As medical experts recommend that Americans remain at home, in-person voting on Election Day, where masses of people gather at specified precinct locations, could pose a substantial risk of increasing the spread of the virus. Experts have also warned that the U.S. could face a resurgence of COVID-19 cases in the fall, so we must prepare accordingly. States need resources to scale vote-by-mail, expand early in-person voting, hire and train poll workers, and ensure everyone has access to online mail-in ballot requests and voter registration. By implementing these measures, we can help ensure Americans are able to safely participate in our democracy. Nobody should have to choose between their health and their right to vote.

That's why the next relief bill Congress passes must include significant funding – \$ 3.6 billion – to help states ensure our elections are safe and accessible. The National Association of Secretaries of State has also raised serious concerns regarding some of the provisions associated with the \$400 million in the third COVID-19 supplemental. Secretaries have noted that the twenty percent match requirement is particularly problematic. Congress must ensure that election officials can readily access the emergency resources they need to meet this threat head-on.

Accordingly, we respectfully request that you prioritize the following in any subsequent COVID-19 related funding:

- Removing the match requirement and other burdensome provisions that prevent election officials from immediate and easy access to funding.
- Providing \$3.6 billion in additional resources for states, and critical funding for the Election Assistance Commission to distribute the funds.
- Enacting election reforms, like those found in the *Natural Disaster and Emergency Ballot Act of 2020*, to make voting during a pandemic safe and easy.

This is not a partisan issue – this is an American issue. The right to vote is the foundation of our democracy – a right that generations of Americans before us have fought to secure, and a right that we must protect now.

Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator

/s/

Tom Udall
United States Senator

/s/

Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator

/s/

Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

/s/

Mazie Hirono
United States Senator

/s/

Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator

/s/

Robert Menendez
United States Senator

/s/

Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

/s/

Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator

/s/

Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

/s/

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

/s/

Mark R. Warner
United States Senator

/s/

Tina Smith
United States Senator

/s/

Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator

/s/

Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator

/s/

Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

/s/

Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator

/s/

Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator

/s/

Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator

/s/

Cory A. Booker
United States Senator

/s/

Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator

/s/

Jack Reed
United States Senator

/s/

Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

/s/

Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator

/s/

Patty Murray
United States Senator

/s/

Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator

/s/

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

/s/

Bernard Sanders
United States Senator

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Gary C. Peters
United States Senator

/s/

Tim Kaine
United States Senator

/s/

Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

/s/

Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator

/s/

Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

/s/

Jacky Rosen
United States Senator

/s/

Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

/s/

Doug Jones
United States Senator

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Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator

/s/

Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

/s/

Brian Schatz
United States Senator

/s/

Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator

/s/

Jon Tester
United States Senator

/s/

Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator

Cc: Richard Shelby, Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
Patrick Leahy, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Committee