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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION

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RODNEY DAVIS, ILLINOIS
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ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

JEN DAULBY, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

April 6, 2020

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
Chairperson
Committee on House Administration
1309 Longworth House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

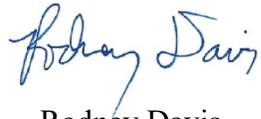
Dear Chairperson Lofgren,

I wanted to take this opportunity to respond to the letter sent to both of us from the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS). As you know, the ‘Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act’ (CARES) was the 3rd supplemental appropriations package that President Trump signed into law and included \$400 million for states to enact various measures in response to COVID-19. Measures included will certainly go a long way in assisting state and local election officials that have, and will continue to, be hit so hard by the COVID-19 virus. I write to request that we work together to address the concerns outlined by these election officials, and that we do not implement a federalized approach that will hinder states from successfully executing our elections.

First, I am supportive of reexamining the requirement for the states to match these federal funds as that was not the intent when providing this assistance. Second, we should review the December 31, 2020 clawback provision, as states may have issues with outstanding funds tied up by state procurement laws and global supply chain issues, among other complications NASS pointed out in its letter. Third, states are now required to report how they spend the money no later than 20 days following the General Election. However, election administration procedures now extend long after Election Day and there should be flexibility provided on this reporting requirement. Finally, the states have expressed concern regarding the expenses they have already incurred and the ability to use the most recent funds, as well as any future funds, to reimburse themselves for these expenses in an effort to maintain an appropriate security posture. This is worth exploring, and it is my hope that we can work together in this effort.

States are working around the clock to ensure our elections are safe and secure in this time of crisis. If circumstances warrant consideration of additional legislation to address COVID-19 issues, I stand ready to work together to balance the needs of local election officials and appropriate federal oversight to ensure a safe and secure election in November. We do not know yet what the status of COVID-19 will be in November, but we must work together to guarantee that public confidence in our democracy does not diminish in these difficult times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rodney Davis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" and "D".

Rodney Davis
Ranking Member

Cc: Honorable Paul Pate, President
National Association of Secretaries of State