



Protect American Voters Act (PAVA)

The Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) allocated more than \$3 billion to states in order to improve voting equipment, train election workers, and reform election law. HAVA was originally created following the 2000 presidential election as a result of its infamous “hanging chad” issue and security concerns with paper ballots. Since then, there have been vast developments in the modernization of election technology and infrastructure, which election policy has been unable to equally match. When Russia targeted and breached election technology in the 2016 presidential election, they did not hack vote-tallying equipment or ballots, but voter registration databases and other election system technology that the Help America Vote Act does not provide guidance.

Our goal is to update HAVA for the first time in almost two decades. The updates will help provide states with better resources and guidance to secure their current and future election systems, as well as any other modernized election technology that was not previously included in the original passage of HAVA.

What does the Protect American Voters Act Do?

1. Updates HAVA testing and certification guidelines for election equipment that did not exist in 2002:
 - Directs the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to establish the Emerging Election Technology Committee (“EETC”), separate from existing committees that control Voluntary Voting System Guidelines (VVSG) process, that will advise the Commission on voluntary guidelines for “non-voting election equipment.”
 - The EAC will then promulgate such guidelines, which are subject to a bi-annual review by the EETC.
 - This new system will bypass the costly and time-consuming Voluntary Voting Systems Guidelines process that exists for voting equipment.
 - What qualifies as “non-voting election equipment”:
 - Electronic pollbooks
 - Election night reporting systems
 - Electronic ballot delivery systems
 - Online voter registration systems
 - Polling place location search systems
 - Sample ballot portals
 - Any other non-voting election equipment as recommended by the established Committee
2. Allows the elections-related work of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to be more accessible and visible:
 - Directs NIST to issue a report to Congress every year containing the status, timeline, and estimated completion of any activities they are tasked with under HAVA.
3. Establishes an Election Cyber Assistance Unit to help prevent or address cyber-attacks:
 - Creates the first-ever “Election Cyber Assistance Unit,” to connect state and local election officials with leading election administration and cybersecurity experts from across the country.