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April 27, 2020

Mona Harrington, Acting Executive Director
U.S. Election Assistance Commission
1335 East-West Highway, Suite 4300
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Ms. Harrington,

This letter offers a narrative of West Virginia's plan to expend 2020 HAVA Security Funds out of the West Virginia Secretary of State's (WVSOS) Office. This narrative is based on cyber and physical security assessments and needs of local election offices.

Assessment of West Virginia's Security Profile

- **West Virginia Voting System Security Requirements:**
 - All voting systems must be certified both at the state and federal level.
 - Prior to each election, counties conduct logic and accuracy testing on each voting system.
 - All touchscreen voting systems must include a voter verified paper trail.
 - All counties must conduct a post-election hand count audit of 3% of precincts, selected at a random, to ensure accuracy of the voting equipment. If a variance of just 1% is identified, or if the outcome of any race changes as a result of the audit, the entire county must be recounted by hand.
- Upon taking office as the incoming Secretary of State in January of 2017, WVSOS completed a full assessment of West Virginia's election security. WVSOS immediately implemented both in-person and web-based cybersecurity training programs for local election officials that covered spear phishing, password protections, and best practices for using the Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS).
- In May 2019, WVSOS asked local election officials to provide an itemized list of what equipment and staff they need to continue to improve the security of elections.
- In both the summer of 2018 and 2019, WVSOS conducted in person cyber security and election system security trainings.
- In late 2019, WVSOS deployed field representatives to conduct security assessments in every county. The results of these assessments were used by the WVSOS IT division to develop the program to be used for regional trainings. In addition, the assessments will be used to help determine how the 2020 HAVA Security Grants will be allocated to counties.

- In December – January 2019, WVSOS conducted the first regional cybersecurity trainings for local election officials throughout the state.
- In 2020, WVSOS published both a state and precinct level Continuity of Operations Plan for use by local election officials.

Maintaining a Culture that Prioritizes Election Security

WVSOS continues to work with local election officials and key agencies to prioritize all aspects of security. WVSOS and local officials have maintained three important partnerships:

1. Advanced Partnership with the West Virginia National Guard

WVSOS continues their partnership with the West Virginia National Guard. A full-time Guard member with Top Secret clearance monitors state-level cyber activity and gives recommendations for WVSOS security practices, protections and efforts. Deployed in 2017, this is the first known instance in the country to imbed a National Guard member in a state elections office as a cyber expert.

2. Participation in Multi-Agency and Multi-State Information Sharing Platforms

The WVSOS cyber unit, the WVSOS investigations unit, and the WV Fusion Center continue to work together to bolster state agencies' communications efforts.

3. DHS Resources for State and Local Election Officials

WVSOS works diligently to identify all available resources on election security needs. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has provided, at no cost to the state, an Albert Sensor to allow off site monitoring of state level web traffic of our SVRS and elections systems servers. WVSOS and DHS have also performed vulnerability scans and cyber security assessments, and this will continue regularly.

Use of 2020 HAVA Security Funds

West Virginia will offer the newly 2020 HAVA Security funds exclusively as grants or loans directly to local election officials to boost their purchasing power for elections systems and security upgrades. \$4,044,353 will be added to the current state-managed "County Grant and Loan Fund." WVSOS will announce the grant application opening period, during which county election officials may submit applications and proposed purchases/reimbursement requests to the HAVA Grant and Loan Board for initial consideration. The HAVA Grant and Loan Board will offer recommendations to the West Virginia State Election Commission for final grant approval or rejection.

The federal requirements for the state match will be satisfied by the counties receiving grants. Specifically, 2020 HAVA funds will be approved for election equipment (up to 50% grant with a 50% local match), physical security (up to 85% grant with a 15% local match), cybersecurity (up to 85% grant with a 15% local match), and e-pollbooks (up to 85% grant with a 15% local match).

Sincerely,



Mac Warner

West Virginia Secretary of State