

PAUL D. PATE
SECRETARY OF STATE



LUCAS BUILDING
DES MOINES, IOWA 50319

OFFICE OF THE IOWA SECRETARY OF STATE

Mark Robbins, Interim Executive Director
U.S. Election Assistance Commission
633 3rd Street NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Robbins:

The overarching mission of the Iowa Secretary of State's Office is to administer lawful, fair, impartial, and secure elections. Secretary Pate wants every eligible Iowa to register to vote and participate in our elections. The greatest challenge since 2016 has been ensuring that every possible measure is taken to protect Iowa's election infrastructure, including the statewide voter registration system, the election night reporting system, the office's public facing website and the infrastructure in all 99 counties. While Iowa has made great strides over the last five years, there is always more work to be done.

The Iowa Secretary of State's Office has worked closely with federal, state, and local partners to harden the cybersecurity and human firewall facets of Iowa's election infrastructure. Over the last five years, we've built valuable partnerships with the U.S. and Iowa Departments of Homeland Security, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Election Infrastructure – Information Sharing and Analysis Center, Center for Internet Security, Iowa National Guard, Iowa Intelligence Fusion Center, Iowa Office of the Chief Information Officer, and of course the Election Assistance Commission. All these partnerships are in addition to our pre-existing partnerships with the private election equipment vendors operating in Iowa, our County Auditors, and their IT officials.

Through these valuable partnerships, the Iowa Secretary of State's Office has worked to build robust technological and human firewalls both at the state level, and in all 99 counties. Iowa will use the \$10,786,086 in federal HAVA funds to continue to improve election administration, further harden election security and increase accessibility. An emphasis will be placed on providing resources and support to Iowa's 99 counties, with an effort to identify and encourage the use of best practices through adopted security rules.

These plans for the HAVA funds remain fluid and will be based on immediate and long-term needs. Cybersecurity is a race without a finish line and Iowa intends to lead this race. First in the nation in voting demands first in the nation security. Secretary Pate and his staff are fully committed to protecting the integrity of Iowa's elections.

HAVA Program Initiatives

1) Voter Registration

Iowa is in the process of replacing its current statewide voter registration database, I-VOTERS. The \$1,466,004.60 in state matching funds comes from the state appropriation made to replace the system.

2) Cybersecurity

HAVA funds will be used for a combination of statewide and county level measures. On a statewide level, the funds will be utilized for the management of core defensive technologies, continued hardening of the security surrounding I-VOTERS until such time that a replacement system is launched, and to continue supporting additional staff members that help serve and assist counties as they seek to enhance their security measures.

On a county level, the funds were used to create a subgrant program. Counties will be able to use the funds to come into compliance with Iowa's new minimum-security standards for local election officials, adopted via administrative rule, which became effective in 2020.

3) Voter Education

Ensuring voter confidence in our elections is an important part of getting voters to participate. Iowa will utilize HAVA funds to educate voters regarding cybersecurity and the safety of Iowa's elections. Additionally, Iowa intends to use funds to educate voters about how to spot misinformation and disinformation and where to access trusted information on elections prior to the 2022 General Election.

4) Accessibility

Following redistricting, \$99,000.00 has been set aside for each County Auditor's office to enhance the user experience for voters with disabilities by partnering with local advocacy organizations and self-advocates. Funds will also be utilized to develop accessibility specific training for precinct election officials and for outreach to the disability community.

5) Voting Processes

Funds will be used to continue and enhance training for County Auditors and their staff and precinct election officials.

