

## **Policy Resolution Supporting the Preservation and Full Funding of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA)**

**Issue:** The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) remains the primary source of federal funding supporting the administration, security, accessibility, and integrity of elections at the state and local level. Counties administer elections in the vast majority of jurisdictions nationwide and rely on HAVA funding to maintain secure election infrastructure, replace aging voting systems, improve cybersecurity, recruit and train election workers, enhance accessibility for voters with disabilities, and comply with evolving federal and state election requirements. Uncertainty in federal appropriations and any proposals to reduce or eliminate HAVA funding threaten counties' ability to conduct election operations.

**Proposed Policy:** The National Association of Counties (NACo) urges Congress and the Administration to preserve, protect, and fully fund the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) and related federal election security assistance programs. NACo opposes efforts to eliminate or reduce HAVA funding in ways that undermine the ability of counties to administer elections.

**Background:** Counties play a central role in administering elections across the United States, conducting voter registration, maintaining voting equipment, staffing polling locations, tabulating ballots, securing election systems, and certifying election results. County governments administer elections in jurisdictions representing the overwhelming majority of American voters.

Congress enacted the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) in 2002 following the 2000 presidential election to modernize election administration, improve accessibility, replace outdated voting systems, and establish minimum federal standards for election administration. HAVA created the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) and established federal grant programs supporting state and local election administration.

Since its enactment, HAVA funding has become a critical source of support for counties administering increasingly complex elections amid evolving cybersecurity threats, aging election infrastructure, rising operational costs, natural disasters, and increased demands on election personnel.

Federal election security funding has become increasingly important following heightened concerns regarding cyber threats targeting election infrastructure and growing operational pressures on local election offices. At the same time, many counties continue to face significant fiscal constraints and difficulty replacing aging voting systems that often require replacement on predictable multi-year cycles.

Counties rely on predictable and sustained federal support to maintain secure and accessible election systems while preserving public confidence in the administration of elections. Reductions, delays, or additional restrictions on HAVA funding may impair counties' ability to comply with election requirements or effectively administer federal elections.

**Fiscal/Urban/Rural Impact:** Counties of all sizes rely on HAVA funding to support election administration and security operations. Reductions or disruptions in federal election assistance funding would disproportionately impact rural and under-resourced counties with limited local tax capacity and fewer administrative resources. Insufficient federal support may result in delayed equipment replacement, cybersecurity vulnerabilities, staffing shortages, reduced accessibility improvements, and increased local costs for election administration.

**Sponsor:** Board Member Jennifer Clark, Lake County, Illinois