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# ELECTION TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH ACT OF 2020

Ms. SHERRILL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4990) to direct the National Institute of Standards and Technology and the National Science Foundation to carry out research and other activities to promote the security and modernization of voting systems, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4990

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

## SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Election Technology Research Act of 2020”.

## SEC. 2. NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY.

(a) VOTING SYSTEMS RESEARCH.—The Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, in collaboration with the National Science Foundation as appropriate, shall carry out a program of research on voting systems, including—

- (1) the cybersecurity of different components of such systems;
- (2) end-to-end verifiable systems;
- (3) Internet-enabled voting;
- (4) the accessibility and usability of different components of such systems;
- (5) voter privacy and data protection;
- (6) methods for auditing elections;
- (7) the interoperability of system technologies;
- (8) means for providing voters with the ability to easily check whether a ballot sent by mail has been dispatched to the voter and whether the voter's marked ballot has been received and accepted by the appropriate election official;
- (9) the reliability of various approaches to voter authentication; and
- (10) such other areas of research as the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology determines to be appropriate and related to the security and integrity of elections for Federal office.

(b) ELECTIONS SYSTEMS CENTER OF EXCELLENCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology shall make an award to an institution of higher education or an eligible nonprofit organization (or a consortium thereof) to establish a Center of Excellence in Election Systems.

(2) COLLABORATIONS.—The Director shall ensure that the Center of Excellence includes a collaboration of institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, private sector entities, and State and local election officials.

(3) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Center of Excellence shall be to—

(A) conduct measurement research and statistical analyses to inform the development of standards for technologies and processes that contribute to more secure, fair, and accessible elections;

(B) test and evaluate the security, usability, and accessibility of the technologies of voting systems, including the accessibility of poll book data by voters;

(C) research testing methods that could be used for the certification of voting system technologies;

(D) educate and train students studying in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields to conduct measurement

science and standards research relevant to such systems; and

(E) foster collaboration among academic researchers, private sector vendors of election technology, and State and local election officials.

(4) REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—An institution of higher education or an eligible nonprofit organization (or a consortium thereof) seeking funding under this subsection shall submit an application to the Director at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Director may require.

(B) APPLICATIONS.—Each application under subparagraph (A) shall include a description of—

(i) how the Center will work with other research institutions, industry partners, and State or local election officials to identify the measurement, testing, and standards needs of voting systems and to leverage the expertise of election practitioners; and

(ii) how the Center will promote active collaboration among researchers in multiple disciplines involved in ensuring the security and integrity of such systems.

(C) SELECTION AND DURATION.—Each Center established under this section is authorized to carry out activities for a period of 5 years, renewable for an additional 5 years at the discretion of the Director.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$12,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2021 through 2025.

## SEC. 3. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION.

(a) RESEARCH GRANTS.—The Director of the National Science Foundation, in collaboration with the National Institute of Standards and Technology and other relevant agencies, as appropriate, shall award basic research grants to increase the understanding of cyber and other threats to voting systems and to inform the development of technologies, processes, and policies that contribute to more secure, fair, and accessible elections, including research on—

- (1) the cybersecurity of different components of such systems;
- (2) end-to-end verifiable systems;
- (3) the risks and benefits of Internet-enabled voting;
- (4) the human-technology interface, including the usability, accessibility, and comprehensibility of ballot design, ballot marking devices, and other components of such systems;
- (5) voter privacy and data protection;
- (6) voter practices regarding the verification of ballots generated by ballot marking devices and the likelihood that voters, both with and without disabilities, will recognize errors or omissions with respect to such ballots; and
- (7) such other topics as the Director determines to be appropriate and related to the integrity of elections.

(b) ELECTIONS SYSTEMS RESEARCH CENTER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the National Science Foundation, in consultation with the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology and the Secretary of Homeland Security, as appropriate, shall award grants to institutions of higher education or eligible nonprofit organizations (or consortia thereof) to establish at least 1 multidisciplinary center for elections systems research and education.

(2) CONSORTIA.—A consortia receiving an award under this subsection may include institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, private sector entities, and State and local election officials.

(3) PURPOSE.—The purpose of a center established with a grant awarded under this subsection shall be to—

(A) conduct basic research to advance understanding of cyber and other threats to election systems and the conduct of secure, fair, and accessible elections;

(B) conduct research that may inform the development of technologies, processes, and policies that contribute to more secure, fair, and accessible elections;

(C) educate and train students studying in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields to conduct research relevant to election systems;

(D) design curricula that address the growing organizational management and information technology needs of the election community; and

(E) foster collaboration among academic researchers, private sector vendors of election technology, and State and local election officials.

(4) REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—An institution of higher education or an eligible nonprofit organization (or a consortium thereof) seeking funding under this subsection shall submit an application to the Director of the National Science Foundation at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Director may require.

(B) APPLICATIONS.—Each application under subparagraph (A) shall include a description of—

(i) how the center established with a grant awarded under this subsection will work with other research institutions, industry partners, and State and local election officials to identify research needs and leverage the expertise of election practitioners; and

(ii) how the center will promote active collaboration among researchers in multiple disciplines involved in elections systems security, including computer science, data science, and social and behavioral sciences.

(5) SELECTION AND DURATION.—Each center established with a grant awarded under this section is authorized to carry out activities for a period of 5 years, renewable for an additional 5 years at the discretion of the Director.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$10,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2021 through 2025.

## SEC. 4. OTHER ACTIVITIES OF NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY TO PROMOTE SECURITY AND MODERNIZATION OF VOTING SYSTEMS.

(a) COMMON DATA FORMAT.—The National Institute of Standards and Technology shall establish and make publicly available common data format specifications for auditing, voter registration, and other elements of voting systems, and provide the specifications to the Technical Guidelines Development Committee of the Election Assistance Commission under section 221(e) of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 20961(e)).

(b) ELECTIONS SYSTEMS CERTIFICATIONS.—The National Institute of Standards and Technology shall work in collaboration with the Election Assistance Commission to update the process under which voting systems are certified pursuant to the Help America Vote Act of 2002 so that State and local election officials will be better able to carry out updates and otherwise modernize such systems.

(c) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology shall—

(1) provide technical assistance to State and local election officials on the implementation of cybersecurity standards, privacy standards, risk assessments, risk-limiting audits, and technologies which are incorporated in the voluntary voting system guidelines issued under the Help America Vote Act of 2002; and

(2) in collaboration with the Department of Homeland Security and the Election Assistance Commission, as appropriate, conduct outreach to State and local election officials in order to disseminate best practices for the implementation of such voluntary voting system guidelines.

#### SEC. 5. GAO REPORT.

Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit a report to Congress that—

(1) addresses the extent to which efforts by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to assist the Technical Guidelines Development Committee of the Election Assistance Commission in the development of voluntary voting systems guidelines have resulted in market-ready standardized voting equipment and software, and addresses the resources made available to NIST to carry out these activities;

(2) addresses efforts by NIST to monitor and review the performance of laboratories accredited by the Elections Assistance Commission and to make recommendations for continuing accreditation, increased voting technology reliability, and the number of accredited private laboratories, and addresses resources made available to NIST to carry out these activities; and

(3) addresses the extent to which the annual list of suggestions required to be submitted by NIST to the Election Assistance Commission for research issues for grants and pilot programs under section 271(d) of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 21041) and the evaluation of grants and programs by NIST has improved voting technology and been successful in encouraging the implementation of new technologies in voting systems and equipment.

#### SEC. 6. AMENDMENTS TO THE HELP AMERICA VOTE ACT OF 2002.

Section 301(b) of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 21081(b)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “this section” and inserting “this Act”;

(2) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph (1);

(3) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (6); and

(4) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraphs:

“(2) any other paper or electronic technologies or processes for collecting, storing, or transmitting personal information of voters for use in the administration of elections for Federal office, including electronic poll books with respect to an election;

“(3) voter registration databases and systems, including online interfaces;

“(4) systems for carrying out post-election auditing;

“(5) chain-of-custody procedures; and”.

#### SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term “voting system” has the meaning given such term in section 301(b) of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 21081(b)), as amended by section 6; and

(2) the term “State” means each of the several States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Ms. SHERRILL) and the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Jersey.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. SHERRILL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 4990, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Ms. SHERRILL. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of H.R. 4990, the Election Technology Research Act. This bipartisan legislation, which I was proud to introduce alongside my friend Representative GONZALEZ, Chairwoman JOHNSON, and Ranking Member LUCAS, is a practical, commonsense bill that would yield important results for the security of our elections.

Madam Speaker, 48 days from today, Americans will exercise one of their most important duties in a democratic society and vote. Amidst a global pandemic, targeted attacks on our democracy by our adversaries, and political unrest, Americans deserve to know that our elections are secure.

Last summer, the Science, Space, and Technology Committee held a hearing with voting technology and election administration experts to discuss U.S. election system technologies and research recommendations made in the 2018 National Academies report, *Securing the Vote: Protecting American Democracy*. This report and the input we received during that hearing made it clear that targeted research designed to protect our voting systems is not only wise but necessary.

The COVID-19 global pandemic has put stress on our healthcare system, caused nearly 200,000 deaths in the United States, devastated our economy, and underscored racial inequities in our society. But Americans are resilient. They will mail in their ballots or go to their polling stations to cast their vote. Why? Because they care deeply about our country and our democracy. In return, one of our jobs in government is to ensure the American people have confidence in the integrity of our election process.

Nearly 20 years ago, Congress enacted the Help America Vote Act. HAVA provided funding for States to purchase new voting equipment and created the Election Assistance Commission. It also included provisions to advance research, technology, and standards development for voting systems.

There are more than 10,000 voting jurisdictions across the United States. HAVA mandated that the National Institute of Standards and Technology work with the EAC to develop voluntary voting systems guidelines for voting machines.

Today, all U.S. States and territories look to those guidelines to make decisions to about technology procurement

and securing their elections. My legislation modernizes the 20-year-old provisions in HAVA to reflect the state of today's technology and the nature of today's election security challenges.

The most important new areas of research and standards development this bill supports are online voter registration systems and electronic poll books. Forty States now offer online voter registration, and many States also use e-poll books on election day for quick access to voter information.

The Election Technology Research Act also creates centers of excellence at NIST and the National Science Foundation to further study a range of important election technology challenges, including cybersecurity, privacy, reliability, and interoperability.

We must strive to ensure the highest standards are in place for all technologies used in the election process. And while the overwhelming majority of election experts agree that the technology is not yet ready for secure voting over the internet, this bill does support continued research on internet voting.

In addition to the security and integrity of voting equipment, voting accessibility is also important. Keeping security at the forefront, we should make it as easy as possible for all voters to cast their ballots. H.R. 4990 supports research at NSF to study ways to improve the voter interface with different voting technologies, including accessibility, ballot design, and ballot-marking devices.

Beyond the ballot box, this bill supports education and training of students and design of curricula focused on organizational management and informational technology needs of the election community.

Finally, H.R. 4990 directs NIST to provide technical assistance to States for their election needs, including risk assessments and risk-limiting audits.

This is a bipartisan piece of legislation. The Members of the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee worked to put together a bipartisan bill that represents our values and our commitment to protecting our democracy. It recognizes the simple fact that technology advances quickly. So, when it comes to something as fundamental as ensuring the security and the sanctity of our elections, it is incumbent upon Congress to pass legislation to make sure our election technology is modern, secure, and state of the art.

Madam Speaker, I sincerely thank Representative GONZALEZ, Chairwoman JOHNSON, and Ranking Member LUCAS for joining me as cosponsors on this bill, as well as my other colleagues on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee and in the House for adding their names to this legislation.

I urge all Members to support the Election Technology Research Act, and I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues to see it enacted in law.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION,  
Washington, DC, February 10, 2020.

Hon. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON,  
Chairwoman, Committee on Science, Space, and  
Technology, House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRWOMAN JOHNSON: I am writing to you regarding H.R. 4990, the "Election Technology Research Act of 2019." This measure, introduced on November 8, 2019, was referred to your committee as well as the Committee on House Administration.

The Committee on House Administration agrees to waive further consideration of H.R. 4990. The Committee does so with the understanding that by waiving further consideration of this bill it does not waive any future jurisdictional claims over similar measures. In addition, the Committee reserves its right to seek conferees on any provisions within its jurisdiction which are considered in a House-Senate conference and requests your support if such a request is made.

I would appreciate the inclusion of this letter and a copy of your response in the Congressional Record during consideration of H.R. 4990 on the House floor.

Sincerely,

ZOE LOFGREN,  
Chairperson.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COM-  
MITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND  
TECHNOLOGY,  
Washington, DC, February 10, 2020.

Chairperson ZOE LOFGREN,  
Committee on House Administration,  
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRPERSON LOFGREN: I am writing to you concerning H.R. 4990, the "Election Technology Research Act of 2019," which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration on November 8, 2019.

I appreciate your willingness to work cooperatively on this bill. I recognize that the bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on House Administration. I appreciate that your Committee will waive further consideration of H.R. 4990 and that this action is not a waiver of future jurisdictional claims by the Committee on House Administration over this subject matter.

I will make sure to include our exchange of letters in the legislative report for H.R. 4990 and in the Congressional Record. Thank you for your cooperation on this legislation.

Sincerely,

EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON,  
Chairwoman, Committee on Science,  
Space, and Technology.

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4990, the Election Technology Research Act of 2020. I am proud to join Representatives SHERRILL and GONZALEZ and Chairwoman JOHNSON as an original cosponsor of this bill.

The security and integrity of elections is fundamental to American democracy and should not be a partisan issue. To that end, this bipartisan bill takes necessary and appropriate steps to update research activities at the National Science Foundation and the National Institute of Standards and Technology to promote the security and the modernization of U.S. voting systems.

The bill also establishes an election systems center of excellence at NIST

to foster collaborations between NIST, universities, and State and local election officials to address election security challenges.

The U.S. Constitution vests the responsibility of administering elections with State and local governments, and we in Congress should respect the boundaries of this well-established system of federalism.

However, the Federal Government has an important role to play in providing guidance and assistance to States on election systems. The Federal Government can and should work closely with States and local government officials to deal with foreign and domestic cyber threats.

This bill provides the research tools to do just that, and it does so without imposing costly or burdensome mandates on States. Instead, this bill leverages an established system to provide voluntary guidelines to State and local election officials to use as they see fit.

I appreciate Chairwoman JOHNSON and her staff for working with us to produce a good, bipartisan bill. I urge my colleagues to support it, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SHERRILL. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JOHNSON).

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4990, the Election Technology Research Act of 2020. I am proud to join my colleagues, Representatives SHERRILL and GONZALEZ, in introducing this bipartisan bill.

Just a few weeks from now, Americans will begin casting their ballots in the 2020 election. They will also do so in the midst of a global pandemic and a divided country. The stakes could not be higher. We face many threats to our democratic institutions, including to our most sacred right and responsibility as citizens: our vote.

Unfortunately, the greatest threats today are the spread of misinformation and the active disenfranchisement of American citizens. Those are human vulnerabilities that are amplified by technology. However, we must not lose sight of the vulnerabilities inherent to the technologies that we use to cast and count our votes.

As it has across all aspects of our lives and society, technology has become an integral part of the election process. The use of technology in elections has changed significantly since the enactment of Help America Vote nearly 20 years ago.

H.R. 4990 authorizes research and standards development activities at the National Science Foundation and the National Institute of Standards and Technology to help modernize and secure our election systems and ensure that they are accessible to all.

The legislation also includes a small amendment to HAVA to ensure that the standards and guidelines developed to help States secure their election systems cover all of the election technologies in use today.

This legislation represents just a tiny piece of what is needed in terms of policy, leadership, and funding to ensure free, fair, transparent, and secure elections, but it is an important piece, if not in time for this election, then for all future elections.

I want to again thank my colleagues, Representatives SHERRILL and GONZALEZ, for their hard work and our colleagues on the House Administration Committee for their support in getting this bill to the floor.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this good, bipartisan legislation.

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GONZALEZ).

Mr. GONZALEZ of Ohio. Madam Speaker, election security is an issue essential to our democracy, and I am glad to see the House taking up legislation today to address it in a bipartisan manner.

My colleague, Representative SHERRILL, and I have been working together on this issue since being sworn in, and I am glad to join her, as well as Chairwoman JOHNSON and Ranking Member LUCAS, in supporting H.R. 4990, the Election Technology Research Act.

This legislation would modernize and secure U.S. voting systems by authorizing NIST and the National Science Foundation to conduct research on ways to improve and secure voting systems. Importantly, any standards recommended by NIST under this act are voluntary, and adoption of the standards remain in the purview of the Election Assistance Commission.

H.R. 4990 also provides grant funding to establish a center of excellence in election systems to promote the research and modernization of election practices. A stated purpose of this center will be to foster collaboration between universities, nonprofits, private organizations, and State and local election officials. Encouraging communication and collaboration between these groups is vital to make sure the voices of States and local election officials are heard.

The Election Research Technology Act also amends the Help America Vote Act to update the definition of voting systems to match modern technology encompassing electronic poll books and voter registration databases. There is bipartisan consensus that an update of the definition is necessary to reflect the modern election technology used by States today.

With new threats facing our electoral systems, it is imperative that we continue to update our election laws and improve our election security by passing bipartisan election security legislation.

Madam Speaker, I thank Chairwoman JOHNSON, Ranking Member LUCAS, and the Science, Space, and Technology staff for their hard work on this legislation, and also Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose's office for their input throughout the process.

Madam Speaker, I also want to thank my friend, Ranking Member DAVIS, for his dedicated work on election issues. I look forward to continuing working with him to ensure the administration of our elections are safe and secure.

The Election Technology Research Act will update Federal laws to reflect today's technology, encourage basic research and innovation on the State and local level to secure our election systems, and streamline collaboration between private and public stakeholders.

This bill is a simple, bipartisan piece of legislation that will take a step forward in improving our election security. I urge my colleagues to vote in support of H.R. 4990.

Ms. SHERRILL. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. PERLMUTTER).

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend from New Jersey.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4990, which I am proud to cosponsor. This is a bipartisan bill introduced by my Science, Space, and Technology Committee colleagues, Representatives SHERRILL and ANTHONY GONZALEZ.

Technology in elections is necessary to provide convenience, speed, accuracy, and accessibility. However, our country needs to modernize this technology from time to time to ensure security, privacy, reliability, and transparency.

For the past 20 years, the Help America Vote Act of 2002 was instrumental in the development of voluntary voting system guidelines and the advancement of voting technologies to improve the security and integrity of our elections. Unfortunately, the law has not kept pace with the rapid advances in technology.

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H.R. 4990 authorizes activities and makes investments at the National Institute of Standards and Technology and the National Science Foundation to support research to help secure and modernize our election systems. This legislation also supports critical standards development work carried out by NIST in collaboration with the Election Assistance Commission to improve the cybersecurity, privacy, reliability, and interoperability of voting systems technologies.

Voting is one of our most cherished rights as Americans, and without sacrificing security, we must make it as easy as possible for all voters to cast their ballots this year and every year.

I thank my colleagues, Representative MIKIE SHERRILL and Representative GONZALEZ, for their bipartisan leadership on this bill.

H.R. 4990 will help improve the security of our elections, and I urge all my colleagues to vote "aye."

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS), a fellow ranking member on a full committee and always an insightful individual.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend from Oklahoma for yielding and for the glowing recommendation there. I think I could have gotten a better one from Mr. PERLMUTTER over there. It is great to be here. It is great to be among friends and great to see bipartisanship.

This is an example of what the House of Representatives should do on a regular basis, have fun, joke around, like Ranking Member LUCAS and I do on regular occasions. This is what we should do on a wide variety of other pieces of legislation, including what we want to do before the end of this month, how we want to fill the holes in the stimulus bill that we passed back months and months ago in a very bipartisan way.

I have to raise some concerns about this piece of legislation because the House Administration Committee got this bill sent to the committee last November and, unfortunately, as has been the norm in this Congress and on this committee, we didn't hold one meaningful hearing or markup on this bill.

The Chair waived our jurisdiction in February, and now 7 months later this bill is on the House floor without ever being discussed by the committee with jurisdiction over Federal election issues.

H.R. 4990 allocates over \$100 million over the next 5 years to the National Institute of Standards and Technology in order to conduct election system research and distribute grants to higher-education institutions and nonprofits.

Funding expanded research at NIST, a nonregulatory agency of the Department of Commerce, would allow the agency to circumvent policy priorities set by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, a politically balanced agency.

This is especially concerning when we know there have already been calls for more transparency when it comes to the work that NIST does on behalf of the EAC. Currently, EAC commissioners are not regularly updated on the projects that they task NIST with. There is no timeline for completion and no reporting structure. H.R. 4990 further empowers NIST without proportional accountability to the EAC.

I have addressed this issue previously in my bill H.R. 5707, the Protect American Voters Act, PAVA, by calling election-related work of NIST to be more accessible and visible by directing them to issue a report to Congress every year containing the status, timeline, and estimated completion of activities that they are tasked with under HAVA.

Additionally, H.R. 4990 would expand the voting system definition to include nonvoting technology in the already overwhelmed voluntary voting system guidelines process.

We have been waiting for updated HAVA guidelines, or VVSG 2.0, for over a decade now. So while I absolutely believe guidelines for nonvoting equip-

ment, such as e-poll books are needed, adding more to the VVSG process likely isn't going to get this done.

My bill, PAVA, addresses this by bypassing the costly and time-consuming VVSG process and calls for the EAC to establish a separate process for testing and certifying guidelines for nonvoting election equipment.

The bottom line, H.R. 4990 does not update HAVA, and allocates over \$100 million to the discretion of NIST, rather than investing in the bipartisan independent government agency created by Congress. And that agency is well-versed in elections. The EAC provides guidance, not mandates. Keeping power at the EAC preserves States' primary and constitutional role in administering Federal elections.

This House should work in a real, bipartisan fashion to create the election reform that the American people deserve. I am willing and ready whenever my colleagues on both sides of the aisle would like to do this.

I am happy we see bipartisanship today as this bill works its way through the process after it passes today. I certainly hope that the sponsors and my colleagues can work with us to address some of the concerns that I raise today.

I thank, again, Ranking Member LUCAS. I will give him a glowing recommendation, too, of nothing.

And I thank the sponsors of this bill, Ms. SHERRILL and Mr. GONZALES, for your work in this field. I would like to work with you to address some of these concerns as we move it to the Senate. Thank you for your time today.

Ms. SHERRILL. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Oklahoma (Ms. KENDRA S. HORN).

Ms. KENDRA S. HORN of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding. I thank my colleagues Congresswoman SHERRILL, Ranking Member LUCAS, Chairwoman JOHNSON, and Congressman GONZALES for all of their work on this bill.

Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of H.R. 4990, the Election Technology Research Act, a strong bipartisan bill that I am proud to support and also proud to cosponsor.

Madam Speaker, in less than 2 months, Americans will head to the polls and exercise their fundamental right as Americans to vote and to have a voice in their government. Our elections are foundational to our democracy, and Americans deserve to know that their vote is secure.

The Help America Vote Act, which became law nearly two decades ago, included a much-needed investment in election technologies, security systems, electronic poll books, and others supported by HAVA are in common use today.

But as we all know, technology advances quickly, and it is critical that our election technology advances with it. Given the varied and widespread election technologies in use across our country, it is vitally important that we

examine the risks, find opportunities for modernization, and pursue secure updates to protect the sanctity and security of our elections.

We must make investments in research to improve cybersecurity of our voting systems. Cyber warfare is an ever-escalating program, and our right to vote is foundational and must be protected.

This bipartisan bill will initiate important research into the security of election technology, enabling us to take the necessary steps for every American to trust that their vote is counted.

Madam Speaker, I am glad to support this bill and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank Chairwoman JOHNSON, Chairwoman SHERRILL, and Representative ANTHONY GONZALEZ for working together in a bipartisan manner to produce measured legislation that will help secure and modernize America's voting systems.

I encourage my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. SHERRILL. Madam Speaker, this is a practical, bipartisan piece of legislation that will work to secure our elections.

The administration committee discharged this bill in February, and I hope I can count on robust support from my colleagues there.

When the House passed the Help America Vote Act nearly 20 years ago, we recognized that our election systems need protection. That is why that landmark legislation included the provisions I already mentioned to advance research, technology, and standards development for voting systems.

We are in a new technological landscape today, and our voting systems need to be updated accordingly, and this is the first step in that direction.

NIST already has a team of experts working with the Election Assistance Commission on standards for voting technology, and they are absolutely qualified to pursue this research.

Madam Speaker, I thank my colleagues today. Thank you to Representative GONZALEZ for his work on this bill.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CASE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to voice my strong support for H.R. 4990, the Election Technology Research Act, of which I am a proud cosponsor.

My return to Congress in 2019 was prompted in part by my membership in Issue One's ReFormers Caucus, a nonpartisan group of more than 200 former Members of Congress, governors, ambassadors and cabinet members. This committed Caucus, whose slogan is "fix democracy first", is focused on a range of reforms essential to returning government to the people.

Central to these reforms are much higher and broader participation in our elections and enhanced faith in the validity of our election

results. Election security is in turn the critical foundation of participation and faith. It should be and largely is a universal goal, especially given continuing, emerging and expanding threats to our election systems.

This bipartisan measure would help ensure that our elections are secured by the most advanced and best voting technology. It authorizes federal research to establish and maintain the highest standards possible, and establishes a Center of Excellence in Election Systems to regularly and thoroughly test the security and accessibility of voting systems and certify voting system technology.

This measure passed our House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology with unanimous support because the Committee recognized the critical need for federal resources and leadership on this issue. It also was endorsed by my Blue Dog Coalition because it advances our own commitment to national security and accessible democracy.

I thank Congresswoman SHERRILL for her leadership on this important issue, and urge full House passage.

Ms. LOFGREN. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4990.

Voting is the bedrock of our representative democracy. The integrity of our election infrastructure is essential to free and fair elections. Votes are cast and counted using a variety of systems, from hand-marked paper ballots to direct-recording electronic machines. There is a whole host of other technology that also supports the process, including electronic pollbooks, voter registration databases, and other components of comprehensive systems.

I support H.R. 4990, the Election Technology Research Act of 2019, because it invests in science to bolster the resilience of election technology, and commend its sponsor, Representative SHERRILL, for authoring the bill. This legislation is in keeping with other bills this House has passed in the 116th Congress to protect our democratic institutions, including H.R. 1 (the For the People Act), H.R. 2722 (the SAFE Act), and H.R. 4617 (the SHIELD Act).

Russia attacked our democracy in 2016. Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation confirmed that Russian GRU officers "targeted individuals and entities involved in the administration of the elections. Victims included U.S. state and local entities, such as state boards of elections (SBOEs), secretaries of state, and county governments, as well as individuals who worked for those entities. The GRU also targeted private technology firms responsible for manufacturing and administering election-related software and hardware, such as voter registration software and electronic polling stations."

In July 2020, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) published an election infrastructure risk assessment. It found that "compromises to the integrity of state-level voter registration systems, the preparation of election data (e.g., ballot programming), vote aggregation systems, and election websites present particular risk to the ability of jurisdictions to conduct elections."

Our elections remain under threat from foreign adversaries. In August 2020, the Director of the United States Counterintelligence and Security Center said that foreign states may use the 2020 elections to "seek to compromise our election infrastructure for a range of possible purposes, such as interfering with

the voting process, stealing sensitive data, or calling into question the validity of the election results."

H.R. 4990 is commonsense, bipartisan legislation that responds to these ongoing threats. It authorizes new research and standards for election infrastructure security. It directs the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the National Science Foundation (NSF) to carry out research that will increase the understanding of cyber and other threats to voting systems. It will lead to the development of technology, processes, and policies for more secure and accessible elections. This includes the cybersecurity of different components of voting systems, end-to-end verifiable systems, voter privacy and data protection, election auditing, interoperability of system technologies, and ballot tracking.

Importantly, the bill also amends the Help America Vote Act to expand the definition of voting systems to include electronic pollbooks, voter registration databases, systems for carrying out post-election auditing, and related technology. This will lead to improved guidance to election administrators for these systems by the Election Assistance Commission and its partners, which include NIST.

I am pleased to support H.R. 4990 and urge its passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Ms. SHERRILL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4990, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### ENSURING CHILDREN AND CHILD CARE WORKERS ARE SAFE ACT OF 2020

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CRIST). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7909) to facilitate access to child care services safely and securely during the COVID-19 pandemic, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 387, nays 33, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 190]

YEAS—387

Abraham	Baird	Bishop (NC)
Adams	Balderson	Bishop (UT)
Aderholt	Barr	Blumenauer
Aguilar	Barragán	Blunt Rochester
Allen	Bass	Bonamici
Allred	Beatty	Bost
Amodel	Bera	Boyle, Brendan
Armstrong	Bergman	F.
Axne	Beyer	Brady
Babin	Bilirakis	Brindisi
Bacon	Bishop (GA)	Brooks (IN)