

CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 15384 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, prior to editorial reclassification and renumbering as this section.

§ 20985. Study and report on electronic voting and the electoral process

(a) Study

(1) In general

The Commission shall conduct a thorough study of issues and challenges, specifically to include the potential for election fraud, presented by incorporating communications and Internet technologies in the Federal, State, and local electoral process.

(2) Issues to be studied

The Commission may include in the study conducted under paragraph (1) an examination of—

(A) the appropriate security measures required and minimum standards for certification of systems or technologies in order to minimize the potential for fraud in voting or in the registration of qualified citizens to register and vote;

(B) the possible methods, such as Internet or other communications technologies, that may be utilized in the electoral process, including the use of those technologies to register voters and enable citizens to vote online, and recommendations concerning statutes and rules to be adopted in order to implement an online or Internet system in the electoral process;

(C) the impact that new communications or Internet technology systems for use in the electoral process could have on voter participation rates, voter education, public accessibility, potential external influences during the elections process, voter privacy and anonymity, and other issues related to the conduct and administration of elections;

(D) whether other aspects of the electoral process, such as public availability of candidate information and citizen communication with candidates, could benefit from the increased use of online or Internet technologies;

(E) the requirements for authorization of collection, storage, and processing of electronically generated and transmitted digital messages to permit any eligible person to register to vote or vote in an election, including applying for and casting an absentee ballot;

(F) the implementation cost of an online or Internet voting or voter registration system and the costs of elections after implementation (including a comparison of total cost savings for the administration of the electoral process by using Internet technologies or systems);

(G) identification of current and foreseeable online and Internet technologies for use in the registration of voters, for voting, or for the purpose of reducing election fraud, currently available or in use by election authorities;

(H) the means by which to ensure and achieve equity of access to online or Inter-

net voting or voter registration systems and address the fairness of such systems to all citizens; and

(I) the impact of technology on the speed, timeliness, and accuracy of vote counts in Federal, State, and local elections.

(b) Report

(1) Submission

Not later than 20 months after October 29, 2002, the Commission shall transmit to the Committee on House Administration of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate a report on the results of the study conducted under subsection (a), including such legislative recommendations or model State laws as are required to address the findings of the Commission.

(2) Internet posting

In addition to the dissemination requirements under chapter 19 of title 44, the Election Administration Commission shall post the report transmitted under paragraph (1) on an Internet website.

(Pub. L. 107-252, title II, §245, Oct. 29, 2002, 116 Stat. 1690.)

Editorial Notes

CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 15385 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, prior to editorial reclassification and renumbering as this section.

§ 20986. Study and report on free absentee ballot postage

(a) Study on the establishment of a free absentee ballot postage program

(1) In general

The Commission, in consultation with the Postal Service, shall conduct a study on the feasibility and advisability of the establishment of a program under which the Postal Service shall waive or otherwise reduce the amount of postage applicable with respect to absentee ballots submitted by voters in general elections for Federal office (other than balloting materials mailed under section 3406 of title 39) that does not apply with respect to the postage required to send the absentee ballots to voters.

(2) Public survey

As part of the study conducted under paragraph (1), the Commission shall conduct a survey of potential beneficiaries under the program described in such paragraph, including the elderly and disabled, and shall take into account the results of such survey in determining the feasibility and advisability of establishing such a program.

(b) Report

(1) Submission

Not later than the date that is 1 year after October 29, 2002, the Commission shall submit to Congress a report on the study conducted under subsection (a)(1) together with recommendations for such legislative and admin-