

113TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 2017

To amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to improve the operations of the Election Assistance Commission, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 16, 2013

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania (for himself, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. VARGAS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on House Administration

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## A BILL

To amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to improve the operations of the Election Assistance Commission, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; FINDINGS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the  
5 “EAC Improvements Act of 2013”.

6 (b) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

7 (1) The elections for Federal office which were  
8 held in November 2012 were plagued with a number  
9 of serious problems, including—

- 1 (A) long lines at polling places;
- 2 (B) poll workers who were trained inad-  
3 equately;
- 4 (C) the reduction of hours for early voting;  
5 and
- 6 (D) the imposition of practices which re-  
7 stricted eligible individuals from voting, such as  
8 requirements to produce photo identification.
- 9 (2) At the time these problems were developing,  
10 the Election Assistance Commission, an agency of  
11 the Federal Government which was established to  
12 assist the States in the administration of elections,  
13 lacked a quorum in its membership and therefore  
14 could not meet, appoint an executive director or gen-  
15 eral counsel, or otherwise take any actions to pre-  
16 vent these problems from occurring.
- 17 (3) The inability of the Commission to carry  
18 out its duties meant that it could not convene its  
19 Standards Board, a collection of State and local  
20 election officials with the authority to review guide-  
21 lines for the voluntary standards applicable to the  
22 voting systems used to administer these elections  
23 and to make recommendations for best practices for  
24 election administration.

1           (4) The inability of the Commission to carry  
2 out its duties meant that no new laboratories could  
3 be certified to develop and test the equipment used  
4 in these elections.

5           (5) The Election Assistance Commission should  
6 be allowed to investigate fully the problems which  
7 plagued the elections held in November 2012 and to  
8 develop solutions.

9           (6) The Election Assistance Commission should  
10 be given the tools it needs to carry out its mission  
11 in a manner immune from illogic and partisan bick-  
12 ering, so that it can provide States and others in-  
13 volved in the administration of elections with the  
14 guidance that will enable them to provide each cit-  
15 izen who wishes to participate in the electoral proc-  
16 ess the ability to do so.

17           (7) The Election Assistance Commission should  
18 be permitted to provide to taxpayers and election of-  
19 ficials accurate information on the voting equipment  
20 used to administer elections and to hold the vendors  
21 of such equipment accountable for any problems that  
22 may arise with its use.

23 **SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF COMMISSION.**

24           (a) REAUTHORIZATION.—Section 210 of the Help  
25 America Vote Act of 2002 (42 U.S.C. 15330) is amended

1 by striking “for each of the fiscal years 2003 through  
2 2005” and inserting “for each of the fiscal years 2014  
3 through 2018”.

4 (b) TREATMENT OF COMMISSION IN SAME MANNER  
5 AS FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION FOR PURPOSES OF  
6 PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT.—Section 3502(1) of title  
7 44, United States Code, is amended—

8 (1) by redesignating subparagraphs (B), (C),  
9 and (D) as subparagraphs (C), (D), and (E); and

10 (2) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the fol-  
11 lowing new subparagraph:

12 “(B) the Election Assistance Commis-  
13 sion;”.

14 **SEC. 3. REQUIRING STATES TO PARTICIPATE IN POST-GEN-**  
15 **ERAL ELECTION SURVEYS.**

16 (a) REQUIREMENT.—Title III of the Help America  
17 Vote Act of 2002 (42 U.S.C. 15481 et seq.) is amended  
18 by inserting after section 303 the following new section:

19 **“SEC. 303A. REQUIRING PARTICIPATION IN POST-GENERAL**  
20 **ELECTION SURVEYS.**

21 “(a) REQUIREMENT.—Each State shall furnish to the  
22 Commission such information as the Commission may re-  
23 quest for purposes of conducting any post-election survey  
24 of the States with respect to the administration of a regu-  
25 larly scheduled general election for Federal office.

1       “(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall apply  
2 with respect to the regularly scheduled general election for  
3 Federal office held in November 2014 and any succeeding  
4 election.”.

5       (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT RELATING TO EN-  
6 FORCEMENT.—Section 401 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 15511)  
7 is amended by striking “and 303” and inserting “303, and  
8 303A”.

9       (c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents  
10 of such Act is amended by inserting after the item relating  
11 to section 303 the following new item:

“Sec. 303A. Requiring participation in post-general election surveys.”.

12 **SEC. 4. DETERMINING EXTENT TO WHICH DISABLED INDI-**  
13 **VIDUALS HAVE ACCESS TO POLLING PLACES.**

14       (a) ONGOING SURVEYS OF COMPLIANCE WITH  
15 ADA.—In accordance with section 241 of the Help Amer-  
16 ica Vote Act of 2002 (42 U.S.C. 15381), not later than  
17 180 days after the date of the regularly scheduled general  
18 election for Federal office held in November 2014 and  
19 each succeeding regularly scheduled general election for  
20 Federal office, the Election Assistance Commission, shall,  
21 with the assistance of the Comptroller General, conduct  
22 and publish a survey of each polling place used for the  
23 election to determine the percentage of such polling places  
24 that were in compliance with the standards applicable to

1 such locations under the Americans With Disabilities Act  
2 of 1990.

3 (b) EVALUATION OF NEED TO CONTINUE SUR-  
4 VEYS.—At the time the Election Assistance Commission  
5 publishes the results of the survey conducted under sub-  
6 section (a) with respect to the regularly scheduled general  
7 election for Federal office held in November 2022, the  
8 Commission shall evaluate and make a recommendation  
9 to Congress regarding whether the percentage of polling  
10 places in compliance with the standards applicable to such  
11 locations under the Americans With Disabilities Act of  
12 1990 has increased to such an extent that there is no  
13 longer a need to conduct surveys under subsection (a) with  
14 respect to subsequent elections.

15 **SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF PROCEDURES AND FEE**  
16 **SCHEDULES FOR CONDUCTING TESTING OF**  
17 **VOTING EQUIPMENT HARDWARE AND SOFT-**  
18 **WARE; PAYMENT OF USER FEES FOR COM-**  
19 **PENSATION OF ACCREDITED LABORATORIES.**

20 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 231(b) of the Help Amer-  
21 ica Vote Act of 2002 (42 U.S.C. 15371(b)) is amended  
22 by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

23 “(3) PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING TESTING;  
24 PAYMENT OF USER FEES FOR COMPENSATION OF  
25 ACCREDITED LABORATORIES.—

1           “(A) ESTABLISHMENT OF ESCROW AC-  
2           COUNT.—The Commission shall establish an es-  
3           crow account (to be known as the ‘Testing Es-  
4           crow Account’) that will serve as the exclusive  
5           source for making payments to accredited lab-  
6           oratories for the costs of the testing carried out  
7           in connection with the certification, decertifica-  
8           tion, and recertification of voting system hard-  
9           ware and software.

10           “(B) SCHEDULE OF FEES.—In consulta-  
11           tion with the accredited laboratories, the Com-  
12           mission shall establish and regularly update a  
13           schedule of fees for the testing carried out in  
14           connection with the certification, decertification,  
15           and recertification of voting system hardware  
16           and software, based on the reasonable costs ex-  
17           pected to be incurred by the accredited labora-  
18           tories in carrying out the testing for various  
19           types of hardware and software.

20           “(C) REQUESTS AND PAYMENTS BY MANU-  
21           FACTURERS.—A manufacturer of voting system  
22           hardware and software may not have the hard-  
23           ware or software tested by an accredited labora-  
24           tory under this section unless—

1           “(i) the manufacturer submits a de-  
2           tailed request for the testing to the Com-  
3           mission;

4           “(ii) the request provides sufficient in-  
5           formation for the Commission to determine  
6           the applicable fee for the testing under the  
7           schedule established and in effect under  
8           subparagraph (B);

9           “(iii) the Commission approves the re-  
10          quest; and

11          “(iv) the manufacturer pays to the  
12          Commission, for deposit into the Testing  
13          Escrow Account established under sub-  
14          paragraph (A), the applicable fee for the  
15          testing.

16          “(D) SELECTION OF LABORATORY.—Upon  
17          approving a request for testing and receiving  
18          the payment from a manufacturer required  
19          under subparagraph (C), the Commission shall  
20          select at random (to the greatest extent prac-  
21          ticable), from all laboratories which are accred-  
22          ited under this section to carry out the specific  
23          testing requested by the manufacturer, an ac-  
24          credited laboratory to carry out the testing.

1           “(E) PAYMENTS TO LABORATORIES.—  
2           Upon determining that a laboratory selected to  
3           carry out testing pursuant to subparagraph (D)  
4           has completed the testing in accordance with  
5           the approved request, the Commission shall  
6           make a payment to the laboratory from the  
7           Testing Escrow Account established under sub-  
8           paragraph (A) in an amount equal to the appli-  
9           cable fee paid by the manufacturer under sub-  
10          paragraph (C)(iv).

11          “(4) DISSEMINATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMA-  
12          TION ON ACCREDITED LABORATORIES.—

13                 “(A) LIST OF ACCREDITED LABORA-  
14                 TORIES.—The Commission shall maintain and  
15                 publish an updated list of all accredited labora-  
16                 tories under this section.

17                 “(B) INFORMATION ON STATUS OF LAB-  
18                 ORATORIES.—In addition to updating the list  
19                 maintained and published under subparagraph  
20                 (A), the Commission shall promptly notify Con-  
21                 gress, the chief State election official of each  
22                 State, and the public whenever—

23                         “(i) the Commission revokes, termi-  
24                         nates, or suspends the accreditation of a  
25                         laboratory under this section;

1           “(ii) the Commission restores the ac-  
2           creditation of a laboratory under this sec-  
3           tion which has been revoked, terminated,  
4           or suspended; or

5           “(iii) the Commission has credible evi-  
6           dence of a significant security failure at an  
7           accredited laboratory.

8           “(C) INFORMATION ON TESTING.—Upon  
9           completion of the testing of a voting system  
10          under this section, the Commission shall  
11          promptly disseminate to the public the identi-  
12          fication of the laboratory which carried out the  
13          testing.”.

14          (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 231 of  
15          such Act (42 U.S.C. 15371) is further amended—

16               (1) in subsection (a)(1), by striking “testing,  
17               certification,” and all that follows and inserting the  
18               following: “testing of voting system hardware and  
19               software by accredited laboratories in connection  
20               with the certification, decertification, and recertifi-  
21               cation of the hardware and software for purposes of  
22               this Act.”;

23               (2) in subsection (a)(2), by striking “testing,  
24               certification,” and all that follows and inserting the  
25               following: “testing of its voting system hardware and

1 software by the laboratories accredited by the Com-  
2 mission under this section in connection with certi-  
3 fying, decertifying, and recertifying the hardware  
4 and software.”;

5 (3) in subsection (b)(1), by striking “testing,  
6 certification, decertification, and recertification” and  
7 inserting “testing”; and

8 (4) in subsection (d), by striking “testing, cer-  
9 tification, decertification, and recertification” each  
10 place it appears and inserting “testing”.

11 (c) **DEADLINE FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF ESCROW AC-**  
12 **COUNT AND SCHEDULE OF FEES.**—The Election Assist-  
13 ance Commission shall establish the Testing Escrow Ac-  
14 count and schedule of fees described in section 231(b)(3)  
15 of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (as added by sub-  
16 section (a)) not later than January 1, 2014.

17 **SEC. 6. STUDY OF METHODS TO REDUCE COSTS OF ADMIN-**  
18 **ISTERING ELECTIONS.**

19 (a) **ANALYSIS OF FACTORS AFFECTING COSTS OF**  
20 **ADMINISTERING ELECTIONS.**—The Election Assistance  
21 Commission shall conduct a study analyzing various fac-  
22 tors that affect the costs to States and units of local gov-  
23 ernment of administering elections for Federal office, in-  
24 cluding the following specific factors:

1           (1) The durability of the equipment used in vot-  
2           ing systems.

3           (2) The extent to which States and units of  
4           local government must replace existing systems be-  
5           cause such systems are not capable of using en-  
6           hanced software or are not capable of being up-  
7           graded in a cost-effective manner.

8           (3) The lack of competition among vendors and  
9           manufacturers of the equipment used in voting sys-  
10          tems because of consolidation in the voting system  
11          industry.

12          (b) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STEPS TO REDUCE  
13          COSTS.—The Commission shall include in the study con-  
14          ducted under this section such recommendations as the  
15          Commission shall consider appropriate to reduce the costs  
16          incurred by States and units of local government in ad-  
17          ministering elections for Federal office, including rec-  
18          ommendations for legislative action by Congress or the  
19          States.

20          (c) DEADLINE.—Not later than 180 days after the  
21          date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall  
22          submit the study conducted under this section to Con-  
23          gress.

1 **SEC. 7. STUDY OF METHODS FOR INCREASING EFFICIENCY**  
2 **AND COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF ELECTION AS-**  
3 **SISTANCE COMMISSION.**

4 (a) **STUDY.**—The Comptroller General shall conduct  
5 a study of the administrative operations of the Election  
6 Assistance Commission, and shall include in the study an  
7 analysis of various methods for increasing the efficiency  
8 and cost-effectiveness of such operations.

9 (b) **DEADLINE; REPORT.**—Not later than 90 days  
10 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comp-  
11 troller General shall submit to Congress a report on the  
12 study conducted under subsection (a), and shall include  
13 in the report such recommendations as the Comptroller  
14 General considers appropriate.

15 (c) **PARTICIPATION OF ELECTION ASSISTANCE COM-**  
16 **MISSION.**—The Election Assistance Commission shall pro-  
17 vide the Comptroller General with such assistance as the  
18 Comptroller General may require to carry out this section.

○