

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2499

To amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require States to meet standards for the location and operation of polling places used in elections for Federal office, including a standard requiring States to ensure that no individual waits for longer than one hour to cast a vote at a polling place, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 17, 2017

Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. LEE, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. NADLER, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. POLIS, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. MCNERNEY, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. COHEN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. FOSTER, Ms. MOORE, Mr. GALLEG0, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on House Administration

A BILL

To amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require States to meet standards for the location and operation of polling places used in elections for Federal office, including a standard requiring States to ensure that no individual waits for longer than one hour to cast a vote at a polling place, 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.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Voting Access Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. REQUIRING STATES TO MEET STANDARDS FOR LO-**
 6 **CATION AND OPERATION OF POLLING**
 7 **PLACES USED IN ELECTIONS FOR FEDERAL**
 8 **OFFICE.**

9 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARDS.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—Title III of the Help Amer-
 11 ica Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 21081 et seq.) is
 12 amended by inserting after section 303 the following
 13 new section:

14 **“SEC. 303A. COMPLIANCE WITH STANDARDS FOR LOCATION**
 15 **AND OPERATION OF POLLING PLACES.**

16 “(a) COMPLIANCE.—Each State shall comply with
 17 the standards established by the Commission under this
 18 section for the location and operation of polling places
 19 used in elections for Federal office.

20 “(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARDS.—

21 “(1) STANDARDS DESCRIBED.—In consultation
 22 with the chief State election officials of the States,
 23 the Commission shall establish national standards
 24 for the location and operation of polling places used
 25 in elections for Federal office (other than sites used

1 as polling places on dates other than the date of the
2 election), including the following:

3 “(A) A requirement that no individual
4 shall be required to wait for longer than one
5 hour in order to cast a vote at a polling place.

6 “(B) Standards for determining the num-
7 ber of polling places within a jurisdiction on the
8 basis of the voting age population of the juris-
9 diction, taking into consideration factors which
10 include the linguistic preferences of voters in
11 the jurisdiction, the availability of same-day
12 voter registration in the jurisdiction, and other
13 relevant factors.

14 “(C) Standards for the nondiscriminatory
15 placement and location of polling places within
16 a jurisdiction, including standards to ensure
17 that polling places are accessible to voters with
18 disabilities and voters using public transpor-
19 tation.

20 “(D) Standards for ensuring that each
21 polling place has sufficient resources, including
22 voting systems, ballots, and election officials, to
23 meet the requirement described in subpara-
24 graph (A).

1 “(E) Standards for ensuring that voters
2 are given timely, accurate, and current informa-
3 tion in clear and concise language regarding
4 ballot information and the location of polling
5 places.

6 “(F) Best practices for preventing viola-
7 tions of laws prohibiting the intimidation or
8 harassment of voters at polling places.

9 “(2) PROCESS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF STAND-
10 ARDS.—The establishment of the standards under
11 this section shall be carried out by the Commission
12 in a manner that provides for each of the following:

13 “(A) Publication of notice of the proposed
14 standards in the Federal Register.

15 “(B) An opportunity for public comment
16 on the proposed standards.

17 “(C) Publication of the final standards in
18 the Federal Register.

19 “(c) DEADLINE; EFFECTIVE DATE.—The Commis-
20 sion shall establish the standards under this section not
21 later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this
22 section, and each State shall comply with the standards
23 with respect to all elections for Federal office held on or
24 after the expiration of the 180-day period which begins
25 on the date the Commission establishes the standards.”.

1 (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of con-
 2 tents of such Act is amended by inserting after the
 3 item relating to section 303 the following new item:

“Sec. 303A. Compliance with standards for location and operation of polling
 places.”.

4 (b) ENFORCEMENT.—Section 401 of such Act (52
 5 U.S.C. 21111) is amended by striking “and 303” and in-
 6 serting “303, and 303A”.

7 (c) FUNDING.—Section 257(a) of such Act (52
 8 U.S.C. 21007(a)) is amended by adding at the end the
 9 following new paragraph:

10 “(5) For the first fiscal year during which
 11 States are subject to the requirements of section
 12 303A (relating to standards established by the Com-
 13 mission for the location and operation of polling
 14 places), such sums as are necessary for requirements
 15 of payments to enable the States to meet the re-
 16 quirements of such section.”.

17 **SEC. 3. STUDY AND REPORT ON MISIDENTIFICATION OF IN-**
 18 **DIVIDUAL POLITICAL PARTY REGISTRATION.**

19 (a) STUDY.—The Election Assistance Commission
 20 shall conduct a study of instances of the misidentification
 21 by election officials of the political party registration of
 22 individuals attempting to vote in primary elections for
 23 Federal office, including an analysis of the frequency of
 24 such misidentification among various jurisdictions.

1 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date
2 of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall submit
3 to Congress a report on the study conducted under sub-
4 section (a), and shall include in the report such rec-
5 ommendations as the Commission considers appropriate to
6 prevent and respond to the misidentification of an individ-
7 ual’s political party registration, including recommenda-
8 tions to permit individuals to correct their political party
9 registration at the polling place on the date of voting.

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