

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3725

To expand vote by mail and early voting, and to improve the safety, accessibility, and efficiency of in-person voting during elections for Federal office.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 13, 2020

Ms. HARRIS introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration

A BILL

To expand vote by mail and early voting, and to improve the safety, accessibility, and efficiency of in-person voting during elections for Federal office.

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 “VoteSafe Act of 2020”.

5 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

6 Congress finds the following:

7 (1) The right to vote is the foundation of Amer-
8 ican democracy. Voting provides the citizenry with a
9 vital check on their elected officials and grants peo-

1 ple the political power necessary to exercise and de-
2 fend the rights guaranteed by the United States
3 Constitution.

4 (2) The Elections Clause of the United States
5 Constitution gives Congress sweeping power to regu-
6 late the time, place, and manner of Federal elections
7 (Article I, section 4 of the Constitution of the
8 United States; see also *Arizona v. Inter Tribal*
9 *Council of Arizona, Inc.*, 570 U.S. 1 (2013)). Con-
10 gress also has enforcement power under the Four-
11 teenth and Fifteenth Amendments of the Constitu-
12 tion of the United States.

13 (3) As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. explained in
14 a speech delivered on May 17, 1957, “So long as I
15 do not firmly and irrevocably possess the right to
16 vote I do not possess myself. I cannot make up my
17 mind—it is made up for me. I cannot live as a
18 democratic citizen, observing the laws I have helped
19 to enact—I can only submit to the edict of others.”.

20 (4) The right to vote was not guaranteed to all
21 Americans at our Nation’s founding. The ratification
22 of the Fifteenth and Nineteenth Amendments, the
23 civil rights movement’s struggle for justice and
24 equality, and the enactment of the Voting Rights

1 Act of 1965 and its subsequent amendments suc-
2 ceeded in expanding access to the franchise.

3 (5) Unfortunately, the barriers faced by voters
4 who have historically experienced the greatest obsta-
5 cles to voting are exacerbated by the coronavirus
6 (COVID–19) pandemic.

7 (6) Strategies to mitigate the spread of
8 COVID–19 include “social distancing”, a practice
9 that requires individuals to maintain a distance be-
10 tween themselves and other people in order to avoid
11 acquiring or transmitting the virus. The need to em-
12 brace such precautions will require States to quickly
13 modify voting processes to minimize person-to-per-
14 son contact.

15 (7) Voting by mail is a critical part of the solu-
16 tion and must be expanded as quickly as possible,
17 not simply as a means of ensuring access during
18 public health emergencies, but also as a means of ex-
19 panding access to the franchise to those whose work,
20 health, or ability to access the ballot may be limited.

21 (8) However, safe and secure in-person voting
22 remains vitally important for large groups of voters,
23 including voters with disabilities, language minority
24 voters, American Indian and Alaska Native voters,
25 and African-American voters.

1 (9) The Americans with Disabilities Act of
2 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) and the Rehabilita-
3 tion Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701 et seq.) require
4 that individuals with disabilities have equal access to
5 every aspect of the voting process. Vote-by-mail
6 poses various accessibility challenges for voters with
7 disabilities, including blind, low-vision, or other
8 print-disabled voters who may require in-person vot-
9 ing or assistive technology in order to privately and
10 independently mark their ballots. Remedies for vot-
11 ers with disabilities require an investment of re-
12 sources to ensure State and local election websites,
13 online voter registration portals, and vote-by-mail
14 systems are accessible; that in-person voting loca-
15 tions permit a safe, dignified, and accessible voting
16 experience; and that the right of voters with disabil-
17 ities to a secret ballot is not sacrificed due to the
18 pandemic.

19 (10) Language minority voters face unique bar-
20 riers to voting that require additional resources and
21 support to ensure full and equal access, including
22 additional resources to ensure local compliance with
23 the language minority voting protections in section
24 203 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C.
25 10503) and greater language assistance services, in-

1 including additional bilingual or multilingual poll
2 workers and election workers.

3 (11) American Indian and Alaska Native voters
4 face unique obstacles in a vote-by-mail system. Trib-
5 al communities in rural areas often do not have tra-
6 ditional residential mailing addresses and have lim-
7 ited access to transportation. Tribal members have
8 distant rural post offices, slow mail routes, limited
9 numbers of post office operation, and too few post
10 office boxes. As a result, rural Tribal communities
11 require distinct voting accommodations to ensure
12 participation in a vote-by-mail system.

13 (12) Finally, in-person voting holds great sig-
14 nificance for African-American voters, for whom the
15 right to vote was hard won. African Americans have
16 been excluded from the franchise through State and
17 local laws, poll taxes, voting literacy tests, physical
18 violence, and lynchings. For many African-American
19 voters today, casting a ballot at one's polling place
20 is a solemn ritual that honors those who sacrificed
21 their safety and their lives in order to secure the
22 right to vote. However, COVID-19 poses substantial
23 risks to the African-American population and has in-
24 fected and killed African Americans in the United
25 States at disproportionately high rates, highlighting

1 longstanding inequalities in resources and access to
2 health care.

3 (13) Social distancing designed to curb the
4 COVID–19 pandemic will also greatly impact in-per-
5 son voter registration efforts, including voter reg-
6 istration drives and voter registration services re-
7 quired by the National Voter Registration Act. Many
8 government offices, like State departments of motor
9 vehicles, are currently closed to in-person traffic and
10 are likely to remain closed for an indefinite period
11 of time in 2020.

12 (14) Therefore, it is appropriate for Congress
13 to expand no-excuse absentee vote-by-mail while also
14 ensuring the safety and accessibility of in-person
15 voting and voter registration during exigent cir-
16 cumstances, including the current pandemic.

17 **SEC. 3. REQUIREMENTS FOR NO-EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOT-**
18 **ING, EARLY IN-PERSON VOTING, AND PLAN**
19 **TO ENSURE POLLING PLACES IMPLEMENT**
20 **CDC GUIDANCE FOR FEDERAL ELECTIONS IN**
21 **2020.**

22 (a) APPLICABLE FEDERAL ELECTION.—For pur-
23 poses of this section, the term “applicable Federal elec-
24 tion” means any election for Federal office which occurs

1 on or after the date that is 60 days after the date of the
 2 enactment of this Act and before January 1, 2021.

3 (b) REQUIREMENTS.—In the case of any applicable
 4 Federal election, each State and local jurisdiction shall—

5 (1) permit no-excuse mail-in absentee voting as
 6 described in subsection (c);

7 (2) maintain an early in-person voting period as
 8 described in subsection (d); and

9 (3) establish a plan as described in subsection
 10 (e) with respect to in-person voting, including during
 11 early voting periods and on the day of the election.

12 (c) NO-EXCUSE MAIL-IN ABSENTEE VOTING.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—No-excuse mail-in absentee
 14 voting meets the requirements described in this sub-
 15 section with respect to an applicable Federal elec-
 16 tion, if the State—

17 (A) provides a no-excuse mail-in absentee
 18 ballot to every registered voter who requests
 19 such a ballot (or, in the case of any State that
 20 does not register voters, to every individual who
 21 is eligible to vote and requests such a ballot);

22 (B) allows voters to request a mail-in ab-
 23 sentee ballot online;

24 (C) if the State requires a signature for
 25 absentee ballots, allows voters to provide their

signature by providing a mark or signature stamp or by providing a signature with the use of an assistant because of age, disability, or other need;

(D) accepts and counts ballots received before the State's certification deadline if the ballot—

(i) is postmarked by the date of the election; or

(ii) includes an indication that it was mailed by the date of the election;

(E) provides a pre-paid and self-sealing return envelope for each ballot furnished by mail;

(F) beginning with the date that is 45 days before the date of the election and ending with the time that polls close on the date of the election, provides in-person, secured drop boxes for voters to submit completed absentee ballots as an alternative to submitting ballots by mail;

(G) before discarding any absentee ballot for error or technicalities (including the failure to meet any signature matching requirement that is unrelated to the voter's qualification)—

(i) as soon as practicable, by mail, phone, email, or text message, notifies the

1 voter of such defects and explains that the
2 voter may provide information to cure the
3 ballot pursuant to clause (ii), or else the
4 vote will not be counted; and

5 (ii) provides the voter an opportunity
6 to cure such defects that—

7 (I) is uniform among all voters in
8 the State;

9 (II) allows the voter to provide
10 confirmation or information to cure
11 the defect through the same form of
12 communication in which the notice
13 under clause (i) is provided; and

14 (III) in the case of any error re-
15 lating to a signature requirement,
16 meets the requirements of paragraph
17 (2);

18 (H) in the case of any voter with disabil-
19 ities—

20 (i) provides the voter with access to
21 Remote Access Vote By Mail (RAVBM)
22 systems, ballot marking software, and
23 screen reading software; and

1 (ii) allows the voter to receive assist-
 2 ance from a person of their choosing to
 3 complete and submit a mail-in ballot;

4 (I) ensures adequate support for language
 5 minority voters, including multilingual versions
 6 of vote-by-mail materials and language assist-
 7 ance services; and

8 (J) allows voters to designate a person to
 9 return a voted and sealed absentee ballot in ac-
 10 cordance with the requirements of paragraph
 11 (3).

12 (2) REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO SIGNATURE
 13 DEFECTS.—The requirements of this paragraph re-
 14 lating to any defect described in paragraph
 15 (1)(G)(ii)(III) are the following:

16 (A) In any case in which a ballot is re-
 17 turned without a signature, or it is determined
 18 that the signature provided with the ballot is
 19 not the voter's authentic signature, the voter
 20 shall be provided an opportunity to provide con-
 21 firmation or information to cure the signature
 22 discrepancy.

23 (B) Voters shall have until the day before
 24 certification of election results to provide con-
 25 firmation that the signature in question is their

1 genuine signature. The State shall accept con-
2 firmation of a genuine signature orally, in writ-
3 ing, or electronically, and without a separate
4 oath or affirmation.

5 (C) The voter shall have the opportunity to
6 appeal any rejection of the ballot based on the
7 defect or the additional information provided.
8 Such opportunity to appeal must be provided
9 and decided before certification of election re-
10 sults.

11 (D) Any final determination of the validity
12 of the ballot with a signature mismatch shall be
13 made by a group of 2 or more election officials.
14 Where applicable, at least one of the election of-
15 ficials must be of an opposing party. The vote
16 shall be counted unless the officials unani-
17 mously determine, beyond a reasonable doubt,
18 that the ballot is not valid due to signature dis-
19 crepancy.

20 (3) REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO ALLOWING
21 DESIGNATED PERSONS TO RETURN BALLOTS.—The
22 requirements of this paragraph relating to allowing
23 a voter to designate a person to return a voted and
24 sealed absentee ballot are the following:

1 (A) A voter may designate any person to
2 return the voted and sealed absentee ballot to
3 the post office, ballot drop-off location, tribally
4 designated building, or election office.

5 (B) A person designated by a voter under
6 subparagraph (A) shall not receive any form of
7 compensation based on the number of ballots
8 that the person has returned, and no individual,
9 group, or organization shall provide compensa-
10 tion to such person on such basis.

11 (C) The State shall not limit how many
12 voted and sealed ballots any person so des-
13 igned may return.

14 (d) EARLY IN-PERSON VOTING PERIOD.—The early
15 in-person voting period described in this subsection with
16 respect to an applicable Federal election is a period of at
17 least 20 days. Such period must include at least 1 Satur-
18 day and 1 Sunday. For each day of early in-person voting
19 during such period, polls must be open for a minimum
20 of 10 hours, including hours before and after the standard
21 work day.

22 (e) PLAN TO IMPLEMENT CDC GUIDANCE.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—The requirement described
24 in this subsection with respect to in-person voting is
25 met if the State establishes a plan to ensure that

1 polling places are implementing Centers for Disease
2 Control and Prevention guidance relating to
3 COVID–19 preparedness. Such plan must be final-
4 ized and approved by the State within 30 days of the
5 date of enactment of this Act.

6 (2) MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS.—At a minimum,
7 a State plan established under this subsection must
8 include a plan—

9 (A) to keep as many voting locations as
10 possible open during the pandemic;

11 (B) to prepare polling locations to imple-
12 ment social distancing protocols in lines and at
13 voting booths;

14 (C) to provide sufficient quantities of hy-
15 giene and cleaning supplies at polling locations;

16 (D) to increase the number of—

17 (i) paper ballots and provisional bal-
18 lots (including the numbers of such ballots
19 that are translated, multilingual, or in-lan-
20 guage ballots) available at each polling
21 place; and

22 (ii) disposable ballot marking utensils
23 available at each polling place;

24 (E) to provide masks and other personal
25 protective equipment to poll workers;

1 (F) to provide hazard pay to poll workers
2 during the pandemic;

3 (G) to increase the number of poll workers
4 who can reliably staff voting locations;

5 (H) to provide training to poll workers on
6 pandemic conditions and COVID–19 prepared-
7 ness; and

8 (I) to educate voters on changes to proce-
9 dures or voting opportunities during the pan-
10 demic.

11 (f) PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.—Any person ag-
12 grieved by a violation of paragraph (1) or (2) of subsection
13 (a) (relating to requirements for no-excuse mail-in absen-
14 tee voting and early in-person voting period) may bring
15 an action for all appropriate remedies, including injunctive
16 relief and compensatory and punitive damages, in a Fed-
17 eral district court of competent jurisdiction.

18 (g) PAYMENTS TO STATES TO CARRY OUT REQUIRE-
19 MENTS.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Election Assistance
21 Commission shall makes a payment to each State to
22 carry out the requirements under this section. Such
23 payments shall be made not later than 30 days after
24 the date of enactment of this Act.

25 (2) AMOUNT OF PAYMENT.—

1 (A) IN GENERAL.—The amount of pay-
 2 ment made to a State under this subsection
 3 shall be the voting age population proportion
 4 amount described in subparagraph (B) plus any
 5 additional amount determined by the Commis-
 6 sion under subparagraph (C).

7 (B) VOTING AGE POPULATION PROPOR-
 8 TION AMOUNT.—

9 (i) IN GENERAL.—The voting age
 10 population proportion amount described in
 11 this paragraph is the product of—

12 (I) the amount made available
 13 for payments under paragraph (3)
 14 minus the total of all of the additional
 15 payment amounts determined under
 16 subparagraph (C); and

17 (II) the voting age population
 18 proportion for the State (as defined in
 19 clause (ii)).

20 (ii) VOTING AGE POPULATION PRO-
 21 PORTION DEFINED.—The term “voting age
 22 population proportion” means, with respect
 23 to any State, the amount equal to the
 24 quotient of—

1 (I) the voting age population of
2 the State (as determined by the most
3 recent American Community Survey
4 conducted by the Bureau of the Cen-
5 sus); and

6 (II) the total voting age popu-
7 lation of all States (as determined by
8 the most recent American Community
9 Survey conducted by the Bureau of
10 the Census).

11 (C) DETERMINATION OF ADDITIONAL
12 AMOUNT BASED ON COSTS OF IMPLEMENTING
13 NO-EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOTING AND EARLY IN-
14 PERSON VOTING IN STATE.—

15 (i) IN GENERAL.—The Commission
16 shall, with respect to each eligible State,
17 provide an amount of payment for the
18 State in addition to the amount deter-
19 mined under subparagraph (B).

20 (ii) ELIGIBLE STATE.—A State shall
21 be eligible for an additional amount of pay-
22 ment under this subparagraph if the State
23 is not in compliance with paragraph (1) or
24 (2) of subsection (b), or both of such sub-

1 paragraphs, as of the date of enactment of
2 this Act.

3 (iii) DETERMINATION OF AMOUNT.—

4 In determining the amount of payment
5 with respect to an eligible State under this
6 subparagraph, the Commission shall con-
7 sider the costs to the State and local juris-
8 dictions of coming into compliance with ei-
9 ther or both of such paragraphs.

10 (D) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS TO UNITS

11 OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—At least 70 percent
12 of funds provided to a State under this sub-
13 section shall be distributed to units of local gov-
14 ernment to carry out the requirements under
15 subsection (b).

16 (3) FUNDING.—There are authorized to be ap-

17 propriated to make payments under this subsection,
18 \$2,500,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2020
19 and 2021. Amounts appropriated under the pre-
20 ceding sentence shall remain available until Decem-
21 ber 31, 2024.

1 **SEC. 4. GRANTS TO PROMOTE SAFE, ACCESSIBLE, AND EF-**
 2 **FICIENT IN-PERSON VOTING.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle D of title II of the Help
 4 America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 21001 et seq.) is
 5 amended by adding at the end the following:

6 **“PART VII—GRANT PROGRAM TO PROMOTE**
 7 **SAFE, ACCESSIBLE, AND EFFICIENT IN-PER-**
 8 **SON VOTING**

9 **“SEC. 297. PAYMENTS TO STATES.**

10 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall make a
 11 payment to each eligible State (as described in section
 12 298(a)). Such payments shall be made not later than 30
 13 days after the date of enactment of this part.

14 “(b) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible State shall use the
 15 payment received under this part to carry out one or more
 16 of the authorized activities described in section 298(b)
 17 with respect to elections for Federal office.

18 “(c) AMOUNT OF PAYMENT.—

19 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount of payment
 20 made to an eligible State under this section shall be
 21 the voting age population proportion amount de-
 22 scribed in paragraph (2) plus any additional amount
 23 determined by the Commission under paragraph (3).

24 “(2) VOTING AGE POPULATION PROPORTION
 25 AMOUNT.—

1 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The voting age popu-
 2 lation proportion amount described in this para-
 3 graph is the product of—

4 “(i) the aggregate amount made avail-
 5 able for payments under this section minus
 6 the total of all of the additional payment
 7 amounts determined under paragraph (3);
 8 and

9 “(ii) the voting age population propor-
 10 tion for the State (as defined in subpara-
 11 graph (B)).

12 “(B) VOTING AGE POPULATION PROPOR-
 13 TION DEFINED.—The term ‘voting age popu-
 14 lation proportion’ means, with respect to an eli-
 15 gible State, the amount equal to the quotient
 16 of—

17 “(i) the voting age population of the
 18 State (as determined by the most recent
 19 American Community Survey conducted by
 20 the Bureau of the Census); and

21 “(ii) the total voting age population of
 22 all States (as determined by the most re-
 23 cent American Community Survey con-
 24 ducted by the Bureau of the Census).

1 “(3) DETERMINATION OF ADDITIONAL AMOUNT
2 BASED ON NEEDS OF VOTING AGE POPULATION IN
3 STATE.—The Commission shall, with respect to each
4 eligible State, determine an amount of payment for
5 the State in addition to the amount determined
6 under paragraph (2) based on the needs of the vot-
7 ing age population in the State. In determining such
8 additional amount of payment with respect to an eli-
9 gible State, the Commission shall take into ac-
10 count—

11 “(A) the number of individuals with in-
12 come below 250 percent of the poverty line ap-
13 plicable to a family of the size involved (as de-
14 termined under section 673(2) of the Commu-
15 nity Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C.
16 9902(2)));

17 “(B) the number of individuals in the vot-
18 ing age population of the State covered by sec-
19 tion 203 of the Voting Rights Act (52 U.S.C.
20 10503);

21 “(C) the number of individuals with a dis-
22 ability as defined in section 3 of the Americans
23 with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.
24 12102);

1 “(D) the number of individuals who live in
2 a nonmetropolitan area (as determined by the
3 Bureau of the Census); and

4 “(E) the number of individuals who belong
5 to an Indian tribe (as such term is defined in
6 section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and
7 Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304)).

8 “(4) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS TO UNITS OF
9 LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—At least 70 percent of funds
10 provided to a State under this part shall be distrib-
11 uted to units of local government to carry out one
12 or more of the authorized activities described in sec-
13 tion 298(b) with respect to elections for Federal of-
14 fice.

15 **“SEC. 298. ELIGIBILITY FOR PAYMENT; AUTHORIZED AC-**
16 **TIVITIES.**

17 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Each State that desires to re-
18 ceive a payment under this part shall submit a certifi-
19 cation of intent to use such funds for at least one of the
20 authorized activities described in subsection (b) with re-
21 spect to elections for Federal office.

22 “(b) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES DESCRIBED.—Funds
23 provided under this part shall be used for one or more
24 of the following authorized activities:

1 “(1) FUNDING TO ENSURE ELECTIONS ARE AC-
2 CESSIBLE DURING PANDEMIC.—Ensuring voters can
3 safely access polling sites during the COVID–19
4 pandemic, including—

5 “(A) expanding the number of voting loca-
6 tions, as well as the days and hours of early in-
7 person voting;

8 “(B) providing mobile voting centers and
9 temporary voting stations, including advance
10 notice of schedule and locations;

11 “(C) increasing the ratio of machines and
12 poll workers to voters in each precinct;

13 “(D) preparing polling locations to imple-
14 ment social distancing protocols in lines and
15 voting booths;

16 “(E) providing sufficient quantities of hy-
17 giene and cleaning supplies, including materials
18 to sanitize voting machines after each use;

19 “(F) increasing the number of paper bal-
20 lots available at each polling location;

21 “(G) providing masks, gloves, and other
22 personal protective equipment to poll workers;

23 “(H) increasing pay for poll workers dur-
24 ing the COVID–19 pandemic; and

1 “(I) providing voter education on changes
2 or improvements to election procedures, accessi-
3 bility, or voting opportunities during the pan-
4 demic.

5 “(2) FUNDING TO ENSURE ELECTIONS ARE AC-
6 CESSIBLE TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES DUR-
7 ING PANDEMIC.—Ensuring voters can safely reg-
8 ister, access polling sites, and vote by mail during
9 the COVID–19 pandemic, in accordance with this
10 Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42
11 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), the Voting Accessibility for
12 the Elderly and Handicapped Act (42 U.S.C. 1973ee
13 et seq.), and other applicable law, by improving poll-
14 ing place accessibility and providing accommodations
15 for individuals with disabilities, including—

16 “(A) purchasing Remote Access Vote By
17 Mail (RAVBM) systems, ballot marking devices
18 and software, and screen reading software, and
19 making them available to voters with disabil-
20 ities;

21 “(B) equipping polling locations with tech-
22 nologies that enable individuals with disabilities
23 to privately and independently mark, verify, and
24 cast their ballots, including through the avail-

1 ability of ballot marking devices, headsets, con-
 2 trollers, and other assistive devices;

3 “(C) making permanent or temporary
 4 modifications to render polling places accessible;

5 “(D) ensuring appropriate polling place
 6 siting to avoid locations that pose higher health
 7 risks to the public;

8 “(E) conducting analysis on polling place
 9 reconfiguration to account for social distancing
 10 and implementing changes;

11 “(F) providing training for poll workers on
 12 how to best serve individuals during the pan-
 13 demic, including specialized training for serving
 14 individuals with disabilities;

15 “(G) assessing the accessibility of election
 16 websites and remediating any accessibility prob-
 17 lems to ensure voter information is clear and
 18 accessible; and

19 “(H) providing fully accessible online voter
 20 registration services.

21 “(3) FUNDING TO ENSURE CONTINUING PRO-
 22 TECTIONS FOR LANGUAGE MINORITY VOTERS.—En-
 23 suring continuing protections for language minority
 24 voters, including—

1 “(A) ensuring compliance with section 203
2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C.
3 10503)—

4 “(i) with respect to vote-by-mail and
5 new voter registration procedures; and

6 “(ii) with respect to voting materials
7 (as such term is defined in such section);

8 “(B) ensuring adequate support for such
9 individuals (including for language minority
10 voters who do not reside in jurisdictions covered
11 by section 203 of the Voting Rights Act), in-
12 cluding through—

13 “(i) language assistance hotlines in
14 covered languages;

15 “(ii) phone interpretation and inter-
16 preter services;

17 “(iii) funding to produce, print, and
18 distribute multi-lingual versions of mate-
19 rials;

20 “(iv) enhancing in-language media ad-
21 vertising regarding polling place changes;

22 “(v) recruiting and hiring bilingual or
23 multilingual election workers; and

1 “(vi) enhancing in-language media ad-
 2 vertising regarding procedures for obtain-
 3 ing and returning mail-in ballots; and

4 “(C) providing voter education on activities
 5 carried out under this paragraph.

6 “(4) FUNDING TO ENSURE VOTING ACCESS BY
 7 AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE VOTERS AND
 8 RURAL VOTERS.—Ensuring voting access American
 9 Indian and Alaska Native voters and rural voters,
 10 including—

11 “(A) ensuring polling place availability
 12 within 20 miles of where voters live;

13 “(B) providing transportation services for
 14 American Indian, Alaska Native, and rural vot-
 15 ers to reach their nearest polling location;

16 “(C) establishing polling places in Indian
 17 country, as defined in section 1151 of title 18,
 18 United States Code, and on any land in Alaska
 19 owned pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims
 20 Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), that
 21 are open for voting days and hours commensu-
 22 rate with polling place days and hours in urban
 23 areas within the State;

24 “(D) giving Indian tribes, as defined in
 25 section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and

1 Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304),
2 authority to designate buildings that can be
3 used as a residential address for voter registra-
4 tion and for physical sites for ballot pickup,
5 drop-off, and collection;

6 “(E) offering information in unwritten lan-
7 guages or languages not widely used in written
8 form, in consultation with relevant Tribal gov-
9 ernments;

10 “(F) collecting ballots from remote polling
11 locations, ballot collection boxes, and tribally
12 designated buildings;

13 “(G) carrying out any activities permitted
14 under paragraph (2) to improve accessibility for
15 American Indian and Alaska Native voters with
16 disabilities; and

17 “(H) providing voter education on the ac-
18 tivities carried out under this paragraph.

19 “(5) CURBSIDE VOTING.—The implementation
20 and promotion of curbside voting to allow individuals
21 to pick up ballots, complete them, and return them
22 to a poll worker from their vehicles.

23 “(6) FUNDING TO MEET MAXIMUM WAIT TIME
24 STANDARD AT POLLING LOCATIONS.—

1 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The implementation
2 of standards that reduce wait times at polling
3 locations.

4 “(B) CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT.—In
5 the case where the State uses funds for pur-
6 poses described in subparagraph (A) with re-
7 spect to an election for Federal office, the State
8 shall certify to the Commission within 120 days
9 of the election that wait time standards were
10 met in the State with respect to such election.

11 “(7) FUNDING FOR PUBLICATION OF WAIT
12 TIMES.—

13 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The development or
14 implementation of an accessible, web-based
15 platform for the publication of wait times for
16 voting in Federal elections.

17 “(B) REQUIREMENT.—If a State uses
18 funds for a purpose described in subparagraph
19 (A), the State shall take reasonable steps before
20 using such platform in an election for Federal
21 office—

22 “(i) to provide advance training to
23 election workers regarding use of the plat-
24 form;

1 “(ii) to notify voters of the platform;

2 and

3 “(iii) to test and verify the security

4 and functionality of the platform.

5 “(8) METHODS TO IMPROVE LINE MANAGE-

6 MENT.—Implementing standards to improve line

7 management systems and polling place management.

8 “(9) STANDARDS FOR TRAINING AND RECRUIT-

9 MENT OF POLL WORKERS.—Providing for the train-

10 ing and recruitment of poll workers, including—

11 “(A) developing poll worker training cur-

12 rricula and standards for serving individuals

13 with disabilities and language minority voters;

14 “(B) ensuring that poll workers receive

15 training, which—

16 “(i) may include remote training; and

17 “(ii) may cover applicable Federal and

18 State laws and regulations, recent changes

19 in election laws and processes, election se-

20 curity and cyber vulnerabilities, ballot re-

21 views, incident response, polling accessi-

22 bility for language minorities and individ-

23 uals with disabilities, and COVID–19 pre-

24 paredness;

1 “(C) expanding the number of election
2 workers hired;

3 “(D) hiring individuals to serve as election
4 workers from among high school and college
5 students and, where feasible, compensating
6 such individuals with course credits; and

7 “(E) hiring work-eligible non-citizens to
8 satisfy the need for bilingual poll workers,
9 where language assistance is required by law.

10 “(10) IMPROVING ACCESS TO VOTER REGISTRA-
11 TION.—Improving access to voter registration, in-
12 cluding—

13 “(A) authorizing and implementing same
14 day registration;

15 “(B) ensuring that online voter registra-
16 tion systems are in place and have the capacity
17 to process registration applications electroni-
18 cally;

19 “(C) expanding online voter registration
20 systems to allow use by the maximum number
21 of individuals, including—

22 “(i) by allowing individuals to register
23 to vote without records in the department
24 of motor vehicle system of the State by
25 submitting their signatures online;

1 “(ii) by digitally uploading a picture
2 of the required signature;

3 “(iii) by allowing individuals to pro-
4 vide the required signature when voting at
5 the polls or when returning a mail-in bal-
6 lot; or

7 “(iv) by allowing individual to provide
8 a required signature with a mark or signa-
9 ture stamp or through the use of an assist-
10 ant because of age, disability, or other
11 need;

12 “(D) sending a voter registration mailer,
13 including a blank voter registration application,
14 a self-sealing prepaid return envelope, and in-
15 structions on additional methods to register if
16 the mailer is not accessible, to all eligible indi-
17 viduals with State records who are not cur-
18 rently registered to vote; and

19 “(E) testing capacity to ensure that exist-
20 ing online voter registration systems can with-
21 stand the likely increase in usage.

22 “(c) INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION.—Not later than
23 15 days after the date of enactment of this part, the Com-
24 mission shall—

1 “(1) consult with the Centers for Disease Con-
2 trol and Prevention on preventing transmission of
3 COVID–19 at polling places and election offices; and

4 “(2) consult with the Civil Rights Division of
5 the Department of Justice to ensure changes to vot-
6 ing procedures made pursuant to this part are non-
7 discriminatory and comply with applicable Federal
8 laws, including this Act, the Americans with Disabil-
9 ities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), the Vot-
10 ing Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped
11 Act (42 U.S.C. 1973ee et seq.), the Voting Rights
12 Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq.), the National
13 Voter Registration Act of 1993 (52 U.S.C. 20501 et
14 seq.), and the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52
15 U.S.C. 20901 et seq.).

16 **“SEC. 299. FUNDING; REPORTS.**

17 “(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appro-
18 priated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise
19 appropriated, for the period of fiscal years 2020 and 2021,
20 for making payments under this part, \$2,500,000,000.
21 Such amounts—

22 “(1) shall be in addition to other amounts oth-
23 erwise available for such purposes; and

24 “(2) shall remain available until December 31,
25 2024.

1 “(b) REPORTS.—Not later than one year after the
 2 applicable election for which a payment was provided
 3 under this part, each eligible State that received such
 4 funds shall submit a report to the Commission on the ac-
 5 tivities conducted using such payment and to substantiate
 6 authorized activities described in section 298(b) carried
 7 out using such funds. Not later than 30 days after receipt
 8 of such reports, the Commission shall transmit such re-
 9 ports to the Committee on Rules and Administration of
 10 the Senate and the Committee on House Administration
 11 of the House of Representatives.”.

12 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents
 13 of such Act is amended by inserting after the item relating
 14 to section 296 the following:

“PART VII—GRANT PROGRAM TO PROMOTE SAFE, ACCESSIBLE, AND
 EFFICIENT IN-PERSON VOTING

“Sec. 297. Payments to States.

“Sec. 298. Eligibility for payment; authorized activities.

“Sec. 299. Funding; reports.”.

