

*Holding Power Accountable*

U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

U.S. House Committee on Homeland Security  
H2-176 Ford House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

May 21, 2019

Dear Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Peters, Chairman Thompson, and Ranking Member Rogers,

In the 2016 election, Russia committed an act of war, not with bombs and guns, but with zeros and ones. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and all government agencies must continue to devote necessary staff and resources to protect our election infrastructure from hostile foreign actors. It was extremely troubling that [DHS is reportedly](#) trying to shift employees from its Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency to the southern border. On behalf of Common Cause's 1.2 million members, we immediately call on you to hold oversight hearings to investigate whether DHS is shifting resources away from cybersecurity and how that could impact the 2020 elections.

In 2016, Russian intelligence agencies and affiliated operatives targeted at least 21 state election systems and likely managed to break into [seven](#) of those systems. However, states and localities remain extremely vulnerable to continued election manipulation. DHS, in collaboration with the EAC and other agencies, must continue to work with states and localities to address ongoing cybersecurity threats, not shift staff and resources elsewhere. Indeed, the DHS Inspector General issued a damning [report](#) concluding that "despite Federal requirements, DHS has not completed the plans and strategies critical to identifying emerging threats and mitigation activities, and establishing metrics to measure progress in securing the election infrastructure." The Trump administration should be given more resources to complete its work, and not have resources diverted.

As the 2020 elections approach, our government must be doing everything possible to secure our elections to ensure that Russia and other hostile foreign actors can't hack into our voting equipment and continue to try to manipulate the voices of Americans at the ballot box. Our voices and our votes must be heard, and we must protect against future attacks on our democracy by ensuring we have voter verifiable paper ballots, risk limiting audits, and additional election security funding.

Sincerely,



Karen Hobert Flynn  
President  
Common Cause