



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 23, 2018

No. 032318

Contact: Samantha Miller, Election Communications Manager

Phone: (907) 500-8505

Email: samantha.miller@alaska.gov

Alaska Will Receive \$3 million in Help America Vote Act Funding

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 signed by President Trump includes \$380 million in HAVA funding to help states prepare for 2018 elections

JUNEAU – Alaska’s Division of Elections will receive an estimated \$3 million to prepare for the 2018 election cycle. Funding will be used to increase cybersecurity, replace aging voting equipment, and educate voters. The Help America Vote Act was passed into law in 2002 to improve election systems and practices. Under the Act, Congress committed \$3.9 billion to states for these efforts and had yet to provide the final \$396 million of that funding.

“I made a commitment to Alaskans to ensure their voices are heard and fulfill the promise of election reform. It is with deep gratitude to our U.S. congressional delegation for their efforts, I am proud to say we will better be able to accomplish those goals by modernizing our election system and maintain quality service to all eligible voters,” said Lieutenant Governor Byron Mallott.

Language in the bill allows states to determine their most pressing priorities and use the money to meet their needs. The State Division of Elections has been working to modernize and improve Alaska’s aging ballot delivery system by the year 2020. Alaska’s existing ballot tabulation system was purchased in 1998 with an expectation of a 20-year life cycle. While the system is still operational and accurately counts ballots, replacement parts are no longer being manufactured.

“Our mission at the Division of Elections is to ensure that every eligible voter has a meaningful opportunity to cast a ballot, have their voice count and conduct impartial, accurate and secure elections. We are thrilled to be able to better serve our voters as we plan for the 2018 elections,” said state elections director Josie Bahnke.

The HAVA funding included in the 2018 Omnibus Appropriations bill will be transferred to states within 45 days.

###