

November 2021

Honorable Members of Congress:

As US business leaders, we have diverse economic interests and a broad range of political views. Yet we share a fundamental priority of ensuring the strength of America's democratic institutions and the stability of our political system. For this reason, we support strong Congressional action to invest in the security and reliability of America's election infrastructure as well as to enact commonsense bipartisan principles to ensure access to the ballot.

Amid a pandemic, high levels of polarization, and unprecedented threats to the integrity of our election systems due to foreign manipulation and cybersecurity vulnerabilities, Congress has a duty to pass legislation to renew trust in American elections.

In recent years, Republicans and Democrats have introduced legislation with common priorities — including the high-profile, bipartisan Secure Elections Act in 2018 — to upgrade security standards. Over recent years, Congress has also made valuable short-term investments in election cybersecurity and verification standards. Today, there is growing bipartisan consensus for solutions, including voter-verifiable paper ballots and audits. There is also strong support for better federal oversight with respect to voting machine vendors and for strictly keeping election infrastructure off of the Internet.

Still, major security lapses and funding needs remain. Scholars at leading US academic institutions have found worrisome vulnerabilities in touch-screens, optical scanners, and registration databases that could enable hackers to succeed in manipulating elections. Surveys of dozens of election officials across many US states have found that majorities need infrastructure upgrades but lack the funding necessary.

The 117th Congress has yet to pass bipartisan reforms to bolster security and increase trust in American elections. The key proposal now under consideration in Congress that would address issues of election security and integrity is the Freedom to Vote Act, a bill that would provide revenue-neutral grants to states for long-term voting security upgrades, support for paper ballots and risk-limiting audits, and improved oversight with respect to technology vendors.

We believe that these election security measures are essential to address vulnerabilities and bolster trust in our nation's elections. We encourage you to advance the legislation necessary to upgrade our security infrastructure and ensure more Americans their electoral franchise.

Investments in elections matter not only for our civic health but also for the future of our economy. In the days running up to the 2020 Presidential Election, analysts at JP Morgan Chase published a research note arguing that the markets' reaction to an election depends less on which candidate wins and more on the quality of the administration of the election, the degree of public trust in the result, and, ultimately, the peaceful transfer of power. The research challenged the

conventional wisdom about business and government — that companies and investors simply seek to pursue their own individual policy goals — indicating instead that the business community has an overriding interest in ensuring public trust in our political system.

We urge you to support prudent action and investments to help ensure the security of our elections and renewed trust in our democratic institutions.

Respectfully,

Signatory companies & business organizations