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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 233 Session of  
2019

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INTRODUCED BY HUGHES, HAYWOOD, LEACH, SANTARSIERO, BLAKE,  
SCHWANK, FONTANA, TARTAGLIONE AND MUTH, SEPTEMBER 30, 2019

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REFERRED TO STATE GOVERNMENT, SEPTEMBER 30, 2019

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A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Congress of the United States to take measures to  
2 protect the security of the nation's election system.

3 WHEREAS, On July 25, 2019, the United States Senate Select  
4 Committee on Intelligence released a report on the 2016  
5 election; and

6 WHEREAS, The Select Committee on Intelligence report on  
7 "Russian Active Measures Campaigns and Interference in the 2016  
8 U. S. Election" found that "[t]he Russian government directed  
9 extensive activity, beginning in at least 2014 and carrying into  
10 at least 2017, against U. S. election infrastructure at the  
11 state and local level"; and

12 WHEREAS, The Committee found that "Russian efforts exploited  
13 the seams between federal authorities and capabilities, and  
14 protections for the states. The U. S. intelligence apparatus  
15 [has]...limited domestic cybersecurity authorities[.]...State  
16 election officials, who have primacy in running elections, were  
17 not sufficiently warned or prepared to handle an attack from a  
18 hostile nation-state actor"; and

1       WHEREAS, The Committee found that "Russian government-  
2 affiliated cyber actors conducted an unprecedented level of  
3 activity against state election infrastructure in the run-up to  
4 the 2016 United States elections"; and

5       WHEREAS, While the full scope of Russian activity against the  
6 states remains unclear because of collection gaps, the Committee  
7 "found ample evidence to suggest that the Russian government was  
8 developing and implementing capabilities to interfere in the  
9 2016 elections, including undermining confidence in U. S.  
10 democratic institutions and voting processes"; and

11       WHEREAS, The Committee found that "Russian activities demand  
12 renewed attention to vulnerabilities in U. S. voting  
13 infrastructure. In 2016, cybersecurity for electoral  
14 infrastructure was lacking; for example, voter registration  
15 databases were not as secure as they could have been"; and

16       WHEREAS, The Committee also found that "[a]ging voting  
17 equipment, particularly voting machines that had no paper record  
18 of votes, were vulnerable to exploitation...[and] some of these  
19 vulnerabilities remain"; and

20       WHEREAS, The Committee recommended that Congress should  
21 evaluate the results of the \$380 million in state election  
22 security grants allocated in 2018 and evaluate whether an  
23 additional appropriation is necessary to address remaining  
24 insecure voting machines and systems; and

25       WHEREAS, The Committee recommends reinforcing states' primacy  
26 in running elections, building a stronger defense by creating  
27 effective deterrence, improving information sharing on threats,  
28 securing election-related systems and securing the vote by  
29 rapidly replacing outdated and vulnerable voting systems; and

30       WHEREAS, The right to vote is a foundation of the American

1 democracy and any attack, whether internal or external, is a  
2 direct assault on the very foundation of our nation; and

3 WHEREAS, Foreign interference on any level is unacceptable  
4 and requires the utmost attention from our policymakers and  
5 security community; and

6 WHEREAS, The United States must create effective deterrents,  
7 communicate to adversaries that an attack on election  
8 infrastructure is a hostile act and respond accordingly to  
9 attacks with a clear message at significant cost to  
10 perpetrators; and

11 WHEREAS, The Russian interference against United States  
12 election infrastructure is unacceptable and must be addressed;  
13 therefore be it

14 RESOLVED, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
15 urge the Congress of the United States to immediately take up  
16 the recommendations of the United States Senate Select Committee  
17 on Intelligence recommendations to strengthen election security;  
18 and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to  
20 the President of the United States, the presiding officers of  
21 each chamber of Congress and each member of Congress from  
22 Pennsylvania.