

118th CONGRESS
2nd Session

H. R. XXXX

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

[Date]

Mr./Ms. [Name of the Representative] introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on [Committee Name].

A BILL

To modernize the United States election system by introducing a secure online voting option alongside traditional polling stations to enhance voter access, increase security, reduce election costs, and restore public confidence in the electoral process.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “**Election Modernization Act of 2024**”.

SECTION 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

1. The current election system, relying heavily on paper ballots and physical polling stations, has become outdated and increasingly mistrusted by the public due to various issues, including ballot mishandling, lengthy delays in results, and stories of lost or tampered ballots.

2. Many voters face significant barriers to participation, including a lack of transportation, inability to take time off work, childcare responsibilities, and other personal commitments, which disproportionately affect low-income and marginalized communities.
3. The high costs associated with maintaining physical polling stations and outdated voting machines strain public resources that could be better allocated toward more efficient and secure voting methods.
4. A secure online voting option can increase voter access, reduce costs, and restore public confidence in the integrity of elections, while maintaining the choice for those who prefer traditional voting methods.
5. The transition to online voting should be carefully managed with a phased implementation to ensure system security, public trust, and accessibility for all voters.
6. Adequate resources must be allocated for voter participation initiatives, including registration drives, voter assistance programs, and nonpartisan voter education, to ensure broad and informed participation in the electoral process.

SECTION 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF A SECURE ONLINE VOTING SYSTEM.

(a) Role of the Federal Election Commission. The Federal Election Commission (FEC), in collaboration with state and local election authorities, shall oversee the development, implementation, and maintenance of a secure online voting system. The FEC will be responsible for ensuring the system's compliance with federal election laws and standards.

(b) Role of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA). The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) shall provide oversight and technical support to ensure the highest standards of cybersecurity are integrated into the online voting system. This includes ongoing vulnerability assessments, threat monitoring, and incident response capabilities.

(c) System Development and Security Features. The secure online voting platform shall be developed with the following key features:

1. **Multi-Factor Authentication:** The system shall require multi-factor authentication to verify voter identity. This includes:
 - a. **Financial Verification:** Voters will be required to pay a nominal fee of 99 cents using a valid bank account, credit card, or debit card. This payment will serve as an additional verification layer, ensuring that voters have legitimate financial ties within the U.S.

- b. **ID Verification:** Voters will have the option to scan a government-issued ID, such as a driver’s license or passport, to further verify their identity.
 - c. **Biometric Authentication:** The system will use advanced facial recognition technology to match the voter’s live image with their ID photo, ensuring that the person voting is the same as the one on record.
2. **End-to-End Encryption:** All data transmitted during the voting process shall be encrypted using end-to-end encryption to protect voter information and ballot integrity.
3. **Accessibility:** The platform shall be designed to accommodate all voters, including those with disabilities, and shall support multiple languages to ensure accessibility for non-English speakers.
4. **User Interface:** The online voting interface shall be intuitive and user-friendly, featuring clear instructions and visual aids, such as candidate photos, to assist voters in making informed decisions.
5. **Audit Trails:** The system shall generate secure, anonymized audit trails for each vote, allowing for post-election audits and verifications without compromising voter anonymity.
6. **Redundancy and Backup:** The system shall include redundant servers and data backup protocols to ensure continuity and prevent loss of data in the event of a technical failure.
7. **Real-Time Monitoring and Alerts:** The system will include real-time monitoring to detect and alert authorities to any suspicious activities or attempts to tamper with the voting process. This will allow for immediate action to be taken, further securing the integrity of the vote.

SECTION 4. TRANSITIONAL FEE AND FUNDING.

(a) **Nominal Fee During Transition.** During the initial rollout of the online voting system, a nominal fee of 99 cents shall be charged to voters who choose to vote online. This fee serves as an additional authentication layer and helps fund the development and operational costs of the online voting system.

(b) **Allocation of Funds.** Funds raised through the online voting fee shall be allocated as follows:

1. **System Development and Maintenance:** Covering the costs associated with the design, implementation, and ongoing maintenance of the online voting platform.

2. **Voter Participation Initiatives:** Supporting initiatives to increase voter turnout and participation, including:
- a. **Voter Registration Drives:** Targeted efforts to register voters in underrepresented areas, ensuring a balanced outreach to both rural and urban communities with the additional intention of registering approximately as many democrats as republicans.
 - b. **Voter Assistance Services:** Providing services to assist voters who cannot easily access polling stations or the internet, including delivering voting devices to homes of elderly, disabled, or otherwise disenfranchised voters.
 - c. **Voter Education Programs:** Funding nonpartisan voter education programs that provide clear, accessible information on candidates' positions, their funding proposals, and the potential impact of their policies.

(c) **Phase-Out of Fee.** The 99-cent fee shall be phased out if at any point the online voting system is fully established and proven secure and effective and replaces traditional polling stations, ensuring that all citizens always have the option to vote without a fee.

SECTION 5. PILOT PROGRAM FOR THE 2028 ELECTION.

(a) **Implementation of Pilot Program.** The secure online voting system shall be introduced as a pilot program for the 2028 federal election, providing voters the option to cast their ballots either online or through traditional polling stations, ensuring that voters who do not want to pay the nominal fee required to use the online voting system still have the option to vote for free at traditional polling stations.

(b) **Data Collection and Evaluation.** The Federal Election Commission, in collaboration with state and local election authorities, shall collect and analyze data on the performance of the online voting system during the 2028 election. This analysis shall include metrics such as voter turnout, system security, ease of use, and public feedback.

(c) **Reporting to Congress.** A comprehensive report on the effectiveness, security, and public reception of the online voting system shall be submitted to Congress within 180 days following the conclusion of the 2028 election. The report shall include recommendations for improvements and an assessment of whether the online voting system should be expanded for future elections.

SECTION 6. VOTER PARTICIPATION INITIATIVES.

(a) **Voter Registration Drives.** The Federal Election Commission shall allocate funds raised through the online voting fee to support voter registration drives. These drives shall be conducted with a focus on reaching underrepresented populations in both rural and urban areas, ensuring that all eligible citizens have the opportunity to register and participate in elections.

(b) **Voter Assistance Services.** The Federal Election Commission, in partnership with state and local election authorities, shall establish voter assistance services to support individuals who face barriers to voting, including:

1. **Home Voting Assistance:** Providing access to mobile devices or other necessary technology for the purpose of voting to the homes of elderly, disabled, or otherwise disenfranchised voters.
2. **Transportation Services:** Offering transportation options for voters who lack the means to travel to polling stations or do not have access to the internet.
3. **Technical Support:** Establishing a dedicated technical support line to assist voters with the online voting process, ensuring that all voters can successfully cast their ballots.

(c) **Nonpartisan Voter Education Programs.** A portion of the funds shall be used to support nonpartisan voter education initiatives. These programs will:

1. **Inform Voters:** Provide voters with clear, accessible information on the candidates' platforms, including their proposed policies and funding strategies.
2. **Promote Transparency:** Ensure that voters are informed about the implications of their choices, with an emphasis on understanding the fiscal impacts of candidate proposals.
3. **Encourage Informed Voting:** Engage with voters to help them make informed decisions based on accurate, nonpartisan information.

SECTION 7. SYSTEM MAINTENANCE AND SECURITY OVERSIGHT.

(a) **Ongoing System Maintenance.** The Federal Election Commission, in collaboration with state and local election authorities, shall ensure the continuous maintenance of the

online voting system. This includes regular updates, technical support, and system enhancements to address evolving cybersecurity threats and to improve user experience.

(b) Cybersecurity Oversight by CISA. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) shall provide ongoing oversight of the online voting system’s cybersecurity measures. This oversight includes:

1. **Vulnerability Assessments:** Conducting regular assessments to identify and address potential vulnerabilities within the online voting platform.
2. **Threat Monitoring:** Implementing real-time monitoring systems to detect and respond to cybersecurity threats or breaches.
3. **Incident Response:** Establishing protocols for immediate response and mitigation in the event of a cybersecurity incident.

SECTION 8. IMPLEMENTATION.

(a) Effective Date. This Act shall take effect 180 days after the date of enactment.

(b) Regulations. The Federal Election Commission, in consultation with CISA and state and local election authorities, shall issue such regulations as necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 9. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of this Act and the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 10. SUNSET PROVISION.

This Act shall be reviewed by Congress five years after its enactment to assess its impact and effectiveness. Congress may reauthorize, amend, or repeal the Act based on this review.