

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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July 23, 2018

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AG Balderas to Congressional Leaders: “Protect the Integrity of our Elections. Our Democracy Depends on it.”

Albuquerque, NM – Today, Attorney General Hector Balderas led a bipartisan coalition of 21 Attorneys General in urging congressional leaders to improve American cyber security and protect the integrity of the upcoming 2018 midterm election, and elections to come, against cyberattacks and infiltrations like the ones committed by Russia in 2016. The latest investigations into that attack shows Russian hackers targeted the American electoral system, stole the private information of hundreds of thousands of people, and infiltrated a company that supplies voting software across the nation, putting the upcoming election at serious risk. These investigations led to the indictment of 12 Russian Intelligence Officers earlier this month.

“The intelligence could not be more clear,” said Attorney General Hector Balderas. “In 2016, Russian hackers infiltrated state and local election boards, and stole the sensitive voter information of more than 500,000 Americans. This cannot happen again. It is the vital responsibility of Congressional leaders to safeguard our elections, and prevent yet another dangerous cyber-attack. Nothing short of the fabric of our democracy is at stake.”

The coalition of AG’s urged three steps in addressing election security concerns.

Prioritizing and acting on election-security legislation. We understand that the Secure Elections Act (S.2261) is before the Senate at this time and may address some of our concerns.

Increasing funding for the Election Assistance Commission to support election security improvements at the state level and to protect the personal data of the voters of our states. Many states lack the resources and tools they need to protect the polls during this year’s upcoming elections. Additional funding for voting infrastructure will not only allow states to upgrade election systems, but will also allow for a comprehensive security risk assessment. Unfortunately, past practice has shown that the existing Election Assistance Commission grants are simply insufficient to provide for the upgraded technology needed. More funding is essential to adequately equip states with the financial resources we need to safeguard our democracy and protect the data of voting members in our states.

Supporting the development of cybersecurity standards for voting systems to prevent potential future foreign attacks. It is critical that there be a combined effort between governments and security experts to protect against the increased cyber threats posed by foreign entities seeking to weaken our institutions.

Protecting the integrity of the American voting system is a vital, bipartisan issue, reflected in the bipartisan nature of the Attorneys General joining AG Balderas. In addition to New Mexico, this coalition includes Attorneys General from California, Connecticut, Delaware, The District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Virginia and Washington.

A copy of the letter is attached below.

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



HECTOR H. BALDERAS
ATTORNEY GENERAL

July 23, 2018

House Homeland Security Committee
Chairman Michael McCaul
2001 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senate Rules and Administration Committee
Chairman Roy Blunt
260 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

The undersigned Attorneys General write to express our grave concern over the threat to the integrity of the American election system. As the latest investigations and indictments make clear, during the 2016 election, hackers within Russia's military intelligence service not only targeted state and local election boards, but also successfully invaded a state election website to steal the sensitive information of approximately 500,000 American voters and infiltrated a company that supplies voting software across the United States.

The allegations in these indictments are extremely troubling. They evidence technologically vulnerable election infrastructures and the existence of a malicious foreign actor eager to exploit these vulnerabilities. Moreover, it has never been more important to maintain confidence in our democratic voting process. It is imperative that we protect the integrity of our elections. We must ensure that the upcoming 2018 midterm elections are secure and untainted. Accordingly, we ask for your assistance in shoring up our systems so that we may protect our elections from foreign attacks and interference by:

- Prioritizing and acting on election-security legislation. We understand that the *Secure Elections Act* (S.2261) is before the Senate at this time and may address some of our concerns.
- Increasing funding for the Election Assistance Commission to support election security improvements at the state level and to protect the personal data of the voters of our states. We are concerned that many states lack the resources and tools they need to protect the polls. Additional funding for voting infrastructure will not only allow states to upgrade election systems, but will also allow for a comprehensive security risk assessment. Unfortunately, past practice has shown that the existing Election Assistance Commission grants are simply insufficient to provide for the upgraded technology needed. More

funding is essential to adequately equip states with the financial resources we need to safeguard our democracy and protect the data of voting members in our states.

- Supporting the development of cybersecurity standards for voting systems to prevent potential future foreign attacks. It is critical that there be a combined effort between governments and security experts to protect against the increased cyber threats posed by foreign entities seeking to weaken our institutions.

These changes are essential in order to strengthen public trust in our electoral system. The integrity of the nation's voting infrastructure is a bipartisan issue, and one that affects not only the national political landscape, but elections at the state, county, municipal, and local levels. It is our hope that you agree, and will take swift action to protect our national legacy of fair and free elections.

Respectfully,



Hector Balderas
Attorney General of New Mexico



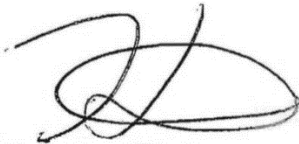
Xavier Becerra
Attorney General of California



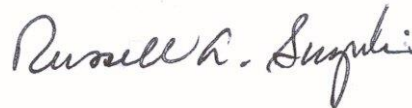
George Jepsen
Attorney General of Connecticut



Matthew P. Denn
Attorney General of Delaware



Karl Racine
Attorney General for the District of Columbia



Russell Suzuki
Attorney General of Hawaii

Lisa Madigan
Attorney General of Illinois

Thomas J. Miller
Attorney General of Iowa

Janet Mills
Attorney General of Maine

Brian Frosh
Attorney General of Maryland

Maura Healy
Attorney General of Massachusetts

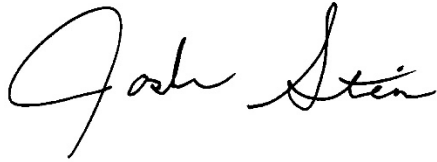
Bill Schuette
Attorney General of Michigan

Lori Swanson
Attorney General of Minnesota

Jim Hood
Attorney General of Mississippi

Gurbir Grewal
Attorney General of New Jersey

Barbara D. Underwood
Attorney General of New York



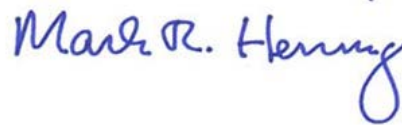
Josh Stein
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Attorney General of Oregon



Peter F. Kilmartin
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Mark R. Herring
Attorney General of Virginia



Bob Ferguson
Attorney General of Washington