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CA Budget Invests \$134 Million in New Voting Systems, \$3 Million to Strengthen Election Cybersecurity

SACRAMENTO – California Secretary of State Alex Padilla applauds Governor Jerry Brown and the Legislature for including historic investments in new voting systems and election cybersecurity in the 2018-2019 Budget.

"Cyber threats, both foreign and domestic, have become the new norm in our elections," said Secretary of State Alex Padilla. "The California Budget addresses cyber threats by providing \$134 million for counties to modernize aging voting equipment and \$3 million to create the Office of Elections Cybersecurity and the Office of Enterprise Risk Management. These investments will improve the voter experience, strengthen existing security measures, and improve collaboration and coordination with county elections officials and our partners in the intelligence community."

The \$134 million [budget allocation](#) will allow the Secretary of State to support counties' efforts to upgrade or replace voting equipment including the purchase of ballot on demand technology, electronic poll books, and open source voting systems.

"While the White House remains in denial, our national security apparatus has verified that the Russian attacks on our democracy did not end with the 2016 election," said Senator Henry Stern. "Cyberattacks and misinformation-based warfare continue today. California voters deserve secure elections and credible information leading into November. That's why we're establishing the Office of Elections Cybersecurity immediately. This office will bring California's full expertise in technology and cybersecurity to bear to protect voters, and go after criminals who attempt to disrupt our democracy with hacking, voter confusion and vote suppression."

The Enterprise Risk Management Office will coordinate efforts between the Secretary of State and local elections officials to reduce the likelihood and severity of cyber incidents, as well as establish cyber incident response best practices. The Office of Elections Cybersecurity will facilitate information sharing between federal, state, and local agencies on threats to election cybersecurity, risk assessment, and threat mitigation in a manner that is both timely and that protects sensitive information.

The Department of Finance allocated the initial \$1 million to create the ERM and the California Legislature approved an additional \$2 million to supplement the office's security and outreach efforts related to elections through the Office of Elections Cybersecurity.

"Given the ongoing and increasingly sophisticated threats posed to our elections systems, creating an Office of Elections Cybersecurity is an important step to ensuring that state and county elections officials have the information and the tools necessary to defend our democracy from cyber-attacks," said Assemblymember Marc Berman. "I'm pleased that the budget passed by the Legislature today includes funding to create this critically important office."

The legislature's funding will also support the Secretary of State's Communications Department to develop immediate information-correction campaigns, better outreach to communities in rural and urban areas, and assist county elections officials and voters with up-to-date information about potential threats.

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