
Election Security 2020 – Congressional Members

Talking Points



The following key messages are designed to help you inform your constituents of the work the federal government is doing to secure the upcoming 2020 elections. Foreign influence and interference pose significant threats to our democracy. The federal government has made it a priority to identify, defend, and deter these threats. We have made considerable strides since 2016 to improve and expand our capacity and capabilities in securing the U.S. elections in cooperation with state and local election officials but it truly is a whole-of-society issue. Please help build resilience in the electorate by communication about the strength of our systems, encouraging voters to use trusted sources for their election information and participation in all aspects of our democratic processes. We all must remain vigilant in our efforts to protect one of our nation's most sacred democratic rights—the right to vote. The following information represents the communication top-lines for government executives on election security in the U.S.

The design of foreign malign actors on this front is to undermine the belief in America's strong democracy. How members make use of Election Security information, or other information provided in briefings, is a test for all national security officials and elected officials equally - it will either propagate the foreign interference or help to nullify it.

Top Lines

- The United States Government (USG) is committed to protecting the integrity of United States elections.
 - Foreign threats persist to this day. Our adversaries continue to try to meddle in U.S. politics.
 - Our election system is resilient. Although the threat of foreign interference is real, Americans can have confidence that a vote cast will be a vote counted.
 - The diversity of state election systems, multiple checks and redundancies in those systems and post-election auditing, all make it difficult for adversaries to change vote tallies.
 - A number of foreign states will continue to use covert and overt influence measures in their attempts to stoke discord in the United States, influence the public debate with the hope of swaying U.S. voters' preferences and perspectives, shift U.S. policies, and undermine the American people's confidence in our democratic process.
 - The United States will not tolerate covert foreign interference in our electoral processes, and will respond to malicious foreign activities against our democratic institutions.
 - The USG has provided unprecedented levels of commitment and effort to support state, local, territorial, and tribal partners to ensure the security and resilience of the U.S. electoral process.
- This includes:
 - A sustained effort to support state and local governments in securing, updating, and maintaining the full scope of election infrastructure including, the systems used to register voters; generate ballots; and record, certify and audit results.
 - Recognizing and addressing attempts to influence U.S. elections through foreign adversaries' use of social media and other venues.
 - The election community has made significant progress in understanding and defending against these threats. However, the risk remains leading up to the 2020 elections.
 - Federal Departments and Agencies are coordinating closely with each other, and with key elections stakeholders, to ensure a united effort to secure elections infrastructure and defend against malign foreign influence.
 - The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) leads USG efforts to counter malign foreign influence operation and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) leads efforts to support state and local governments' security of elections. The Intelligence Community stands in support of informing both missions.

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If Asked

What is the federal government doing to support election security?

- The federal government continues to coordinate and share information across all departments and agencies, including state, local and private sector partners to ensure we maintain a united effort to counter malign foreign interference in our elections. The U.S. government provides support and services, including incident response and information and intelligence sharing.

Where can I go to find out more about federal government support to election security?

- CISA: www.cisa.gov/protect2020
- DOJ/FBI: www.fbi.gov/investigate/counterintelligence/foreign-influence/protected-voices
- ODNI: www.dni.gov/electionsecurity

What is different now in 2020 than 2016?

- As a result of the interference in the 2016 Presidential election and the very real threats to our elections that still exist, the USG has marshaled an unprecedented level of support to state and local officials, political campaigns and the private sector. The U.S. government is offering support and election security-related information to all Federal Election Commission (FEC) registered campaigns as well as state, local, and private partners.

How does the federal government work with social media companies on election security?

- The U.S. government is working together to share information with social media companies that may help improve their own defenses against covert issues of their platforms by adversaries.
- The federal government is providing relevant and actionable information to social media and technology companies to enable them to identify and mitigate malign foreign influence activity that threatens the integrity of their businesses.