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## **Summary of Pew-Proposed Election Data Collection Grant Program**

### **What Does It Establish?**

- Amends the Help America Vote Act to establish a new competitive grant program at the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) specifically designed to improve the biennial collection of election data for federal elections by states beginning in 2008.
- Each participating state would receive a \$2 million grant no later than May 30, 2008.
- With a \$10 million appropriation, five states would receive grants.

### **Why Is This Important?**

#### *In the short term:*

- The program will improve data collection in five states during the 2008 election.

#### *In the long-term:*

- The program will inform future Congressional efforts to expand the collection of election data, especially contributing to an accurate estimate of required appropriations and how they should be targeted.

### **What Do States Submit to be Considered?**

- To be considered for a grant, each state must submit an application to the EAC containing, at a minimum, a plan to 1) “substantially improve compliance” with EAC data requests; 2) “expand election data collection at the precinct jurisdictional level”; and, 3) collect data in a “common electronic format” as determined by the EAC.
- Other information as determined by the EAC.

### **What Are They Required to Use Funds On?**

- Requires that 100% of funds be used to improve data collection through improvements to, 1) voter registration databases; 2) vote tallying technology; or, 3) election returns databases.

### **Report to Congress**

- Following the conclusion of the 2008 election, the EAC, working with participating states, would be required to submit to Congress a report on the impact of the program and recommendations on how to improve data collection in all the states.

## DRAFT LANGUAGE

*Pursuant to the authorization of appropriations in Section 257 of the Help America Vote Act (42 USC 15407), the Committee provides that \$10,000,000 be appropriated to the Election Assistance Commission to establish and implement a competitive grant program as outlined in amendments to the Help America Vote Act contained in this bill creating a new Section 297 with the express purpose of improving the biennial collection of election data for federal elections.*

### **ELECTION DATA COLLECTION GRANT PROGRAM**

In General.—Subtitle D of title II of the Help America Vote Act (42 USC 15401 et seq.) is amended by adding the following new part:

#### **PART 7—ELECTION DATA COLLECTION GRANT PROGRAM**

##### **Section 297. Election Data Collection Grant Program**

(a) Establishment- Not later than March 30, 2008, the Election Assistance Commission shall establish and implement an Election Data Collection grant program (in this section referred to as the ‘program’).

(b) Purpose- The express purpose of the program is to provide grants to States to improve the biennial collection of election data for federal elections.

(c) Application-

(1) A State seeking to participate in the program shall submit an application to the Election Assistance Commission containing such information, and at such time, as the Election Assistance Commission shall require, which shall include a plan designed to, with respect to biennial data requests by the Election Assistance Commission--

(A) Substantially improve compliance;

(B) Expand election data collection at the precinct jurisdictional level; and

(C) Collect data in a common electronic format as determined by the Election Assistance Commission.

(d) Required use of funds-

(1) 100 percent of funds provided to States under the program shall be used at the State, county, county-equivalent, or precinct jurisdictional level to improve the biennial collection of election data for federal elections through the establishment or improvement of--

(A) computerized statewide voter registration lists and other voter registration systems;

(B) vote tallying technology; or

(C) election returns databases.

(e) Amount and duration of program-

(1) AMOUNT-

(A) Each State participating in the program shall receive \$2,000,000.

(2) DURATION-

(A) All grants to States participating in the program shall be awarded not later than May 30, 2008.

`(f) Report to Congress- Not later than June 30, 2009, the Election Assistance Commission, working with States participating in the program and their Board of Advisors, shall submit a report to Congress on the impact of the program and making recommendations for federal policy changes and estimated appropriations necessary to improve biennial election data collection in all the States.

**CLERICAL AMENDMENT-** The table of contents of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 296 the following:

**`PART 7—ELECTION DATA COLLECTION GRANT PROGRAM**

    `Section 297. Election Data Collection Grant Program.`.