

## **HELP AMERICA VOTE ACT OF 2001**

### **Authorizes \$400 Million to Buyout Punch Card Voting Machines**

- This legislation authorizes one-time payments to states or counties to replace punch card voting systems in time for the November 2002 general election. Funding of \$6,000 per precinct would be made available to states for buy out purposes.
- The bill also authorizes one-time payments to states or counties that enhance the performance of existing voting equipment.

### **Creates an Election Assistance Commission**

- This bipartisan Commission will serve as a national clearinghouse for information and review of procedures for Federal elections. The Commission also consists of a Standards Board of state and local election officials and a Board of Advisors of election experts and interested parties. Among other duties, the Standards Board and Board of Advisors shall develop voluntary engineering and performance standards for voting systems and voluntary election management practices.

### **Allocates \$2.25 Billion in Election Fund Payments to States**

- This legislation authorizes \$2.25 billion in Election Fund Payments to the states over three years to help states establish and maintain accurate lists of eligible voters; encourage voters to vote; improve equipment; improve verification and identification of voters; recruit and train poll workers; improve access for voters with disabilities; and educate voters about their rights and responsibilities.
- All States would be eligible for Election Fund Payments, and would be required to provide a 25 percent match. States must certify that they are in compliance with voluntary voting system standards (either their own or those adopted by the Commission).
- This bill also authorizes \$20 million in grants by the Commission for research and development efforts to improve voting systems. The bill also authorizes \$10 million for a pilot program for testing of equipment and technology.

### **Establishes Minimum Standards for State Election Systems**

- This legislation prescribes that States adopt "Minimum Standards" for state election systems, including that States: 1) have a voter registration system linked to local jurisdictions in the state; 2) permit in-precinct provisional voting; 3) have a system for maintaining the accuracy of voter registration records; 4) adopt uniform standards defining what constitutes a vote on the different types of voting equipment; 5) ensure that absent uniformed and overseas voters have their votes counted; 6) require new voting systems to provide a practical and effective means for voters with disabilities to cast a secret ballot; and 7) gives voters the opportunity to correct errors.
- The Commission and Department of Justice will monitor compliance and enforce these "Minimum Standards."

### **Creates the Help America Vote Foundation and College Program**

- This legislation creates the Help America Vote College Program, which would encourage college students to assist state and local governments in the administration of elections by serving as nonpartisan poll workers. The bill also would establish the Help America Vote Foundation, which would mobilize secondary school students to assist and participate in election processes as nonpartisan poll workers.

### **Reduces Postage Rates for Official Election Mail**

- This legislation would reduce the postage rates for official election mail.