

Chairman Will Hurd  
Opening Statement  
Subcommittees on Information Technology and Intergovernmental  
Affairs  
Joint Hearing  
“Cybersecurity of Voting Machines”  
Wednesday, November 29, 2017

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*It's been over 240 years since our forefathers declared independence and our democratic experiment began. Throughout the entirety of our existence, our adversaries, both internal and external, have sought to suppress and destroy our Democratic process. Voting is one of our fundamental Democratic rights and is the cornerstone of American democracy. Our existence as a democracy depends on free, fair, and accurate elections.*

*Today, we are here to talk about the best way to protect the integrity of our voting systems through the cybersecurity of our voting machines and election systems. There are about 10,000 election jurisdictions nationwide that administer elections, and even within states, counties use different systems and different technologies to conduct elections. A little over a year ago, last September, Ranking Member Kelly and I held a hearing in the IT Subcommittee titled "Cybersecurity: Ensuring the Integrity of the Ballot Box" to discuss potential cybersecurity issues with the upcoming election. It was an issue then and remains an issue now.*

*Former DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson has made clear that to the best of his knowledge, the Russian government did not through any cyber intrusion alter ballots, ballot counts, or reporting of election results. However, Our adversaries have always sought to use our nation's unique qualities to undermine our robust and resilient democracy. Just because Russia did not tamper with ballots or reporting of election results during the last election, it doesn't mean they or other adversaries won't try to do so in the next election, or the election after that.*

*Like anything else in the digital age, electronic voting is vulnerable to hacking. Our voting systems are no exception. This past January, DHS designated the nation's election systems as "critical infrastructure" - something that was being discussed at our hearing back in September 2016. We are here today to follow up on what impact that designation has had on states.*

*It is essential that states take appropriate steps to secure their voting infrastructure. It is also essential that states have the ability to audit their ballots for accuracy whenever any kind of manipulation is suspected. The state of Virginia, which held an election recently, has joined the growing list of states that went to a paper system. I'm curious to hear about how that transition went and what our witnesses think about moving to paper-based voting systems.*

*Additionally, What are the chances that a foreign entity could tamper with the ballot box? These are all questions and issues that I want to explore today. I'm very interested to hear what our witnesses have to say on this topic and I thank the witnesses for being here today and for their efforts as fellow citizens to ensure that our country's elections are free and fair.*