SAVE AMERICA ACT LEGISLATIVE FACT SHEET

Santa Fe County urges the delegation to oppose the SAVE America Act and similar provisions. Federal election policies should protect eligible voters, strengthen election security, support election workers, and respect local election officials, without imposing significant unfunded mandates or penalties for good-faith administration.

Counties are the operational engine of elections in 36 states, overseeing more than 100,000 polling places and supporting more than 630,000 poll workers. The SAVE America Act (H.R. 7296/S. 1383) would impose significant new federal requirements on local election systems without dedicated implementation funding, sufficient transition time, or flexibility for different state and local systems.

100K+

POLLING PLACES

Counties manage more than 100,000 polling places.

630K+

POLL WORKERS

Counties support more than 630,000 poll workers each election cycle.

11.3X

ESTIMATED COST GAP

Estimated implementation costs are 11.3 times current HAVA funding levels.

KEY COUNTY CONCERNS

Voter Documentation Barriers: The bill would require documentary proof of citizenship for registration and voter identification for federal elections. Standard REAL ID-compliant licenses do not establish citizenship; NACo notes that only enhanced licenses do, and they are issued by five states.

Federal Preemption of State Law: Election administration is primarily governed by state law. A uniform federal standard could create conflicts between federal requirements and state rules, leaving local officials to reconcile competing mandates.

Criminal Liability for Election Workers: The bill includes criminal penalties for election officials while leaving important liability questions unclear. NACo reports that roughly half of counties already face challenges recruiting poll workers, adding pressure to an already strained workforce.

Unfunded Mandate: The bill would require major changes to voter registration, verification, staffing, training, technology and legal compliance without dedicated federal funding. NACo estimates implementation could cost about $510 million per election cycle, 11.3 times current HAVA funding levels.

Insufficient Implementation Time: Counties need time to update systems, develop procedures, train staff and educate voters. NACo estimates successful implementation requires 18–24 months, while the bill provides no meaningful transition period.

One-Size-Fits-All Approach: Election systems vary significantly across states. Colorado, Hawaii, Oregon, Utah and Washington conduct elections primarily by mail and could face substantial system redesign under a uniform in-person verification model.