March 10, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House Minority Leader
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
Chair, Committee on House Administration
1401 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney Davis
Ranking Member, Committee on House Administration
2079 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Chairwoman Lofgren, Minority Leader McCarthy, and Ranking Member Davis,

As California elections officials entrusted with conducting, funding, or otherwise supporting local, state, and federal elections in our state’s 58 counties, we write to thank you for your leadership on election issues and to share how acute the election infrastructure and administration needs are in California. We urge you to prioritize funding those needs in a vehicle that moves through Congress in the first half of 2022.

Our state has been through the most challenging elections imaginable since 2020: the COVID-19 crisis, huge shifts to all vote-by-mail ballots with in-person voting opportunities, unprecedented dissemination of disinformation, assaults on our election security and accuracy, and threats against election officials. Each of those challenges was extraordinarily costly and put deep strain on our county resources.

While there was federal funding available to us last year via the CARES Act to help us administer successful elections during the pandemic, our ongoing needs remain acute.

A 2021 analysis by the Election Infrastructure Initiative found that **election infrastructure needs at the local and state level over the next decade will cost $53 billion dollars, with $4.9 billion dollars of investment needed in California.** These funds are needed to safeguard systems from cyber security threats, update and maintain equipment, systems, and facilities, and ensure that there are enough well-trained staff to effectively run elections. We believe that an equitable federal portion of those funds would be $20 billion over 10 years.

The present personnel challenge is one that we’ve never experienced. As the *Washington Post* recently documented, we’re living in a climate where election workers are being besieged, attacked, and threatened. Recently, the Department of Homeland Security issued a bulletin warning of “an increase in calls for violence online tied to election-related conspiracy theories.” It is no wonder that a recent study by the Democracy Fund and Reed College found that 60 percent of large jurisdiction elections officials are contemplating retirement over the next three years.
As you begin your new year of deliberations, we urge you to prioritize making funding available in 2022 to help conduct this year’s elections as well as prepare for the 2024 elections and meet our long-term infrastructure investment needs. This funding would give local and state election offices the ability to replace outdated equipment, purchase new equipment to efficiently serve voters at voting locations, hire and train election workers, upgrade voter registration and election management systems, invest in physical, technological, and security infrastructure, and other essential needs.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Sincerely,

Calaveras County Clerk-Recorder & Registrar of Voters Rebecca Turner
Contra Costa County Clerk-Recorder-Registrar of Voters Debi Cooper
El Dorado County Registrar of Voters Bill O’Neill
Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk Dean C. Logan
Madera County Clerk-Recorder-Registrar of Voters Rebecca Martinez
Mariposa County Treasurer-Tax Collector-County Clerk Keith M. Williams
Monterey County Registrar of Voters Gina Martinez
Nevada County Clerk-Recorder Gregory J. Diaz
Orange County Registrar of Voters Neal Kelley
San Benito County Clerk, Auditor-Controller, Recorder & Registrar of Voters Joe Paul Gonzalez
San Luis Obispo County Clerk-Recorder, Registrar of Voters Elaina Cano
Former San Luis Obispo County Clerk-Recorder, Registrar of Voters Tommy Gong
Santa Barbara County Clerk-Recorder and Assessor/Registrar of Voters Joseph H. Holland
Santa Cruz County Clerk/Registrar of Voters Tricia Webber
Sonoma County Clerk-Recorder-Assessor-Registrar of Voters Deva Marie Proto
Tehama County Clerk & Recorder – Registrar of Voters Jennifer A. Vise
Yolo County Assessor/Clerk-Recorder/Elections Jesse Salinas

Cc: California Congressional Delegation