

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 640

To provide grants to support continuing education in election administration or cybersecurity for election officials and employees.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 9, 2021

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration

A BILL

To provide grants to support continuing education in election administration or cybersecurity for election officials and employees.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Invest in Our Democ-

5 racy Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7 It is the sense of Congress that—

8 (1) free and fair elections are central to our de-

9 mocracy;

1 (2) protecting our elections from foreign adver-
2 saries is a national security priority;

3 (3) the States conduct elections and it is impor-
4 tant to maintain State leadership in election admin-
5 istration;

6 (4) the States deserve Federal support to se-
7 cure our elections from interference by foreign na-
8 tions; and

9 (5) election security in the United States will
10 benefit from continued education and investment in
11 the individuals that administer our elections.

12 **SEC. 3. SUPPORTING CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR ELEC-**
13 **TION OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES.**

14 (a) PROGRAM AUTHORITY AND METHOD OF DIS-
15 TRIBUTION.—The Election Assistance Commission (in
16 this section referred to as the “Commission”) shall estab-
17 lish a program under which the Commission pays to each
18 eligible institution such sums as may be necessary to pay
19 to each eligible certificate program enrollee (as defined in
20 subsection (b)) for each academic year during which that
21 enrollee is enrolled in an accredited certificate program in
22 election administration or cybersecurity in the amount for
23 which that enrollee is eligible, as determined pursuant to
24 subsection (c). Not less than 85 percent of such sums shall
25 be advanced to eligible institutions prior to the start of

1 each payment period and shall be based upon an amount
 2 requested by the institution as needed to pay eligible cer-
 3 tificate program enrollees until such time as the Commis-
 4 sion determines an alternative payment system that pro-
 5 vides payments to institutions in an accurate and timely
 6 manner, except that this sentence shall not be construed
 7 to limit the authority of the Commission to place an insti-
 8 tution on a reimbursement system of payment.

9 (b) ELIGIBLE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM ENROLLEE.—

10 In this section, the term “eligible certificate program en-
 11 rollee” means an individual who—

12 (1) is a State or local election official, an em-
 13 ployee of a State or local election official, or an em-
 14 ployee of the Commission;

15 (2) certifies to the Commission their enrollment
 16 in an accredited certificate program in election ad-
 17 ministration or cybersecurity; and

18 (3) submits to the Commission—

19 (A) a receipt or other verification deter-
 20 mined appropriate by the Commission of the
 21 tuition amount for such certificate program;
 22 and

23 (B) an application at such time, in such
 24 manner, and containing such information as the
 25 Commission may require.

1 (c) AMOUNT OF GRANTS.—The amount of a grant
 2 for an eligible certificate program enrollee under this sec-
 3 tion for a year shall be an amount equal to 75 percent
 4 of the tuition amount for the accredited certificate pro-
 5 gram in election administration or cybersecurity for the
 6 year.

7 (d) ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

8 (1) ACCREDITED CERTIFICATE PROGRAM IN
 9 ELECTION ADMINISTRATION OR CYBERSECURITY.—
 10 The term “accredited certificate program in election
 11 administration or cybersecurity” means a program
 12 in election administration or cybersecurity that leads
 13 to a certificate, or other nondegree recognized cre-
 14 dential, at an eligible institution.

15 (2) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term “eligi-
 16 ble institution” means an institution of higher edu-
 17 cation (as defined under section 101 of the Higher
 18 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)) that—

19 (A) offers an accredited certificate pro-
 20 gram in election administration or cybersecu-
 21 rity; and

22 (B) elects to participate in the program es-
 23 tablished under this section.

24 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
 25 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

- 1 (1) \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2023; and
- 2 (2) such sums as may be necessary for each of
- 3 fiscal years 2024 through 2030.

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