



Michael Watson
SECRETARY OF STATE

April 6, 2020

Mona Harrington, Active Executive Director
U. S. Election Assistance Commission
1335 East-West Highway, Suite 4300
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Re: Mississippi HAVA Narrative Statement

Dear Ms. Harrington:

The Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2020 appropriated \$5,021,549.00 in additional grant monies made available through the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) to the State of Mississippi. The State is required to match twenty percent of the federal grant allocation, either in cash or in-kind, totaling \$1,004,310.00, for a total grant of \$6,025,859.00

Pursuant to Section 23-15-211.1, Miss. Code Ann., the Secretary of State is the State's Chief Elections Officer for purposes of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993. The Mississippi Secretary of State's Office (MSOS) conducts all training of local election officials and is charged under Mississippi law to certify said officials to conduct all primary, general, and special elections. The MSOS Elections Division assists the Secretary with his statutory duties.

Under Mississippi law, elections are wholly conducted by local election officials, including five (5) county-elected commissioners who serve four (4) year terms, and between three (3) and seven (7) municipal commissioners who are appointed by the municipal governing authority for a term of four (4) years, which run contemporaneous with the terms of the other municipal officers. There are eighty-two (82) counties and two hundred and ninety-nine (299) incorporated municipalities consisting of towns, villages, and cities in the State of Mississippi.

Voting Registration Systems and Cyber Vulnerabilities:

The MSOS intends to use \$1,025,859.00 of the 2020 HAVA Grant Funds to continue to enhance our Statewide Election Management System (SEMS) and ensure we use the best technology for cybersecurity as it relates to elections. The MSOS maintains industry IT security protocols as part of its service level for SEMS, which is Mississippi's centralized voter roll implemented in 2004 in compliance with HAVA.

The process of risk mitigation for our election technology is an ever-changing one. The goal is to stay ahead of the bad actors, which require constant monitoring with general security enhancement of both hardware and software. Other possible enhancements include the implementation of Geographic Information System (GIS) software interface to assist with future redistricting following the 2020 Census.

Permissible County Expenditures:

Referencing the decentralized system of conducting elections in the State of Mississippi, as described above, the MSOS intends to allocate approximately \$5,000,000 of its HAVA funds to the eight-two (82) counties based upon voting-age population, for each to use toward permissible HAVA expenditures. This proposed allocation based upon voting age population is attached as Exhibit "A". This allocation will be available to each county, based upon completion of the application process set forth below, until funds are exhausted.

Direct payment of the allocated funds will not be made to the individual counties. The MSOS will offer counties the option to submit for a reimbursement grant, or the MSOS will make available the option for the State to purchase in bulk for local county jurisdictions and transfer property ownership to the counties.

Reimbursement Grant: Through an application process, each county will submit an application for approval to the MSOS, describing the county's intended use of the allocated HAVA funds. Upon a determination the intended expenditures are permitted by HAVA, the MSOS will approve the application. It will then be the responsibility of the county to make the HAVA-related expenditures and thereafter seek reimbursement from the MSOS from the HAVA monies by providing proof of payment by the county for the previously approved HAVA-related expenditures.

Bulk Purchase by MSOS: The MSOS will obtain several quotes from multiple vendors for bulk purchase of voting machines with a voter verified paper trail and tabulation equipment/servers. Counties may apply to upgrade voting systems based on the county allocated amount based on voting age population. Once the equipment is purchased, the MSOS and county will enter into a memorandum of understanding transferring the property to the county. The county will then be responsible for maintenance of the equipment.

The HAVA-related expenditures include, but may not necessarily be limited to, the purchase of new paper-based voting machines or voting equipment, the enhancement of election technology, improvements in election security, the performance of cybersecurity audits, enhancement of the county's own network and election-related technology such as transitioning to ".gov" email addresses, improvements to county-owned polling places to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 23-15-281, Miss. Code Ann., as amended, and any expense as related to COVID-19 preparations.

Sincerely,



Hawley R. Robertson
Assistant Secretary of State, Elections Division

Enclosure

| County | 2018 State Voting Age Population | 2018 County Voting Age Population | % | x5m |
|-----------------|---|--|-------------|--------------|
| Adams | 2,228,659 | 22956 | 0.010300364 | \$51,501.82 |
| Alcorn | 2,228,659 | 28029 | 0.012576621 | \$62,883.11 |
| Amite | 2,228,659 | 9837 | 0.004413865 | \$22,069.33 |
| Attala | 2,228,659 | 13746 | 0.006167835 | \$30,839.17 |
| Benton | 2,228,659 | 6386 | 0.0028654 | \$14,327.00 |
| Bolivar | 2,228,659 | 24134 | 0.010828933 | \$54,144.67 |
| Calhoun | 2,228,659 | 10806 | 0.004848656 | \$24,243.28 |
| Carroll | 2,228,659 | 8148 | 0.00365601 | \$18,280.05 |
| Chickasaw | 2,228,659 | 12738 | 0.005715545 | \$28,577.72 |
| Choctaw | 2,228,659 | 6460 | 0.002898604 | \$14,493.02 |
| Claiborne | 2,228,659 | 7074 | 0.003174106 | \$15,870.53 |
| Clarke | 2,228,659 | 12327 | 0.005531129 | \$27,655.64 |
| Clay | 2,228,659 | 15146 | 0.006796015 | \$33,980.08 |
| Coahoma | 2,228,659 | 17207 | 0.007720786 | \$38,603.93 |
| Copiah | 2,228,659 | 21701 | 0.009737246 | \$48,686.23 |
| Covington | 2,228,659 | 14260 | 0.006398467 | \$31,992.33 |
| DeSoto | 2,228,659 | 126626 | 0.056817126 | \$284,085.63 |
| Forrest | 2,228,659 | 56702 | 0.025442205 | \$127,211.03 |
| Franklin | 2,228,659 | 5882 | 0.002639255 | \$13,196.28 |
| George | 2,228,659 | 17159 | 0.007699249 | \$38,496.24 |
| Greene | 2,228,659 | 10826 | 0.00485763 | \$24,288.15 |
| Grenada | 2,228,659 | 16145 | 0.007244267 | \$36,221.33 |
| Hancock | 2,228,659 | 36503 | 0.016378908 | \$81,894.54 |
| Harrison | 2,228,659 | 149055 | 0.066881026 | \$334,405.13 |
| Hinds | 2,228,659 | 179831 | 0.080690227 | \$403,451.13 |
| Holmes | 2,228,659 | 13346 | 0.005988354 | \$29,941.77 |
| Humphreys | 2,228,659 | 6157 | 0.002762648 | \$13,813.24 |
| Issaquena | 2,228,659 | 1128 | 0.000506134 | \$2,530.67 |
| Itawamba | 2,228,659 | 18207 | 0.008169487 | \$40,847.43 |
| Jackson | 2,228,659 | 105814 | 0.047478775 | \$237,393.88 |
| Jasper | 2,228,659 | 12751 | 0.005721378 | \$28,606.89 |
| Jefferson | 2,228,659 | 5641 | 0.002531118 | \$12,655.59 |
| Jefferson Davis | 2,228,659 | 9157 | 0.004108749 | \$20,543.74 |
| Jones | 2,228,659 | 49453 | 0.022189577 | \$110,947.88 |
| Kemper | 2,228,659 | 8158 | 0.003660497 | \$18,302.49 |
| Lafayette | 2,228,659 | 42568 | 0.019100275 | \$95,501.38 |
| Lamar | 2,228,659 | 45037 | 0.020208116 | \$101,040.58 |
| Lauderdale | 2,228,659 | 58091 | 0.02606545 | \$130,327.25 |
| Lawrence | 2,228,659 | 9504 | 0.004264448 | \$21,322.24 |
| Leake | 2,228,659 | 16429 | 0.007371698 | \$36,858.49 |
| Lee | 2,228,659 | 61939 | 0.027792049 | \$138,960.24 |
| Leflore | 2,228,659 | 21158 | 0.009493601 | \$47,468.01 |
| Lincoln | 2,228,659 | 25958 | 0.011647363 | \$58,236.81 |
| Lowndes | 2,228,659 | 44730 | 0.020070365 | \$100,351.83 |
| Madison | 2,228,659 | 75113 | 0.033703227 | \$168,516.13 |

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|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|----------------|
| Marion | 2,228,659 | 19058 | 0.008551331 | \$42,756.65 |
| Marshall | 2,228,659 | 27758 | 0.012455023 | \$62,275.12 |
| Monroe | 2,228,659 | 27521 | 0.012348681 | \$61,743.41 |
| Montgomery | 2,228,659 | 7797 | 0.003498516 | \$17,492.58 |
| Neshoba | 2,228,659 | 20888 | 0.009372452 | \$46,862.26 |
| Newton | 2,228,659 | 15920 | 0.007143309 | \$35,716.55 |
| Noxubee | 2,228,659 | 8019 | 0.003598128 | \$17,990.64 |
| Oktibbeha | 2,228,659 | 39527 | 0.017735777 | \$88,678.89 |
| Panola | 2,228,659 | 25263 | 0.011335516 | \$56,677.58 |
| Pearl River | 2,228,659 | 42292 | 0.018976434 | \$94,882.17 |
| Perry | 2,228,659 | 9216 | 0.004135222 | \$20,676.11 |
| Pike | 2,228,659 | 29183 | 0.013094421 | \$65,472.11 |
| Pontotoc | 2,228,659 | 22135 | 0.009931982 | \$49,659.91 |
| Prentiss | 2,228,659 | 19600 | 0.008794526 | \$43,972.63 |
| Quitman | 2,228,659 | 5558 | 0.002493876 | \$12,469.38 |
| Rankin | 2,228,659 | 113250 | 0.050815311 | \$254,076.55 |
| Scott | 2,228,659 | 19285 | 0.008653186 | \$43,265.93 |
| Sharkey | 2,228,659 | 3360 | 0.001507633 | \$7,538.17 |
| Simpson | 2,228,659 | 20432 | 0.009167845 | \$45,839.22 |
| Smith | 2,228,659 | 12138 | 0.005446324 | \$27,231.62 |
| Stone | 2,228,659 | 14263 | 0.006399813 | \$31,999.06 |
| Sunflower | 2,228,659 | 20406 | 0.009156179 | \$45,780.89 |
| Tallahatchie | 2,228,659 | 10896 | 0.004889039 | \$24,445.19 |
| Tate | 2,228,659 | 21563 | 0.009675325 | \$48,376.62 |
| Tippah | 2,228,659 | 16270 | 0.007300354 | \$36,501.77 |
| Tishomingo | 2,228,659 | 14928 | 0.006698198 | \$33,490.99 |
| Tunica | 2,228,659 | 6932 | 0.003110391 | \$15,551.95 |
| Union | 2,228,659 | 20806 | 0.009335659 | \$46,678.29 |
| Walthall | 2,228,659 | 11084 | 0.004973394 | \$24,866.97 |
| Warren | 2,228,659 | 35389 | 0.015879056 | \$79,395.28 |
| Washington | 2,228,659 | 34346 | 0.015411061 | \$77,055.31 |
| Wayne | 2,228,659 | 15323 | 0.006875435 | \$34,377.17 |
| Webster | 2,228,659 | 7462 | 0.003348202 | \$16,741.01 |
| Wilkinson | 2,228,659 | 7059 | 0.003167376 | \$15,836.88 |
| Winston | 2,228,659 | 14026 | 0.006293471 | \$31,467.35 |
| Yalobusha | 2,228,659 | 9570 | 0.004294062 | \$21,470.31 |
| Yazoo | 2,228,659 | 20113 | 0.009024709 | \$45,123.55 |
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| Totals | | 2,228,659 | 1 | \$5,000,000.00 |