

October 23, 2019

Dear Representative,

Our organizations strongly urge you to vote for H.R. 4617, the SHIELD Act, which would strengthen the laws to protect U.S. elections against foreign intervention. The Act has been reported by the House Administration Committee and is likely to be considered by the full House this month.

In his testimony before Congress on July 24, 2019, Special Counsel Robert Mueller discussed ongoing Russian interference in our elections, stating, “They’re doing it as we sit here, and they expect to do it in the next campaign.” According to a *New York Times* [article](#) published on October 4, 2019, “The 2020 presidential election is still 13 months away, but already Iranians are following in the footsteps of Russia and have begun cyberattacks aimed at disrupting the campaigns.”

A [bipartisan report](#) issued on October 8, 2019 by the Republican-led Senate Intelligence Committee reaffirmed the Mueller report in finding that Russia had targeted the 2016 presidential election as “part of a broader, sophisticated and ongoing information warfare campaign.”

The SHIELD Act contains important provisions to strengthen the laws that protect our elections and national security from foreign interference. These protections include:

- A new requirement for candidates and political committees to notify the FBI and the FEC any time a foreign power contacts them to provide campaign assistance;
- The Honest Ads Act to ensure greater transparency for online political ads and their sponsors;
- Provisions to close major loopholes in the prohibition on spending by foreign governments for political ads to influence U.S. elections;
- A new prohibition banning spending by foreign nationals on State or local ballot initiatives and referenda;
- A new prohibition on anyone providing false information about voting rules and qualifications for voting and new strong penalties for voter intimidation; and
- A prohibition codifying FEC rules that prevent foreign nationals from directing, controlling or participating in the decision-making process of any person about that person’s election-related activities.

These provisions address serious problems that arose in the 2016 presidential election in order to prevent them from recurring in future elections.

Our organizations strongly urge you to vote for the SHIELD Act and to vote against any amendments to weaken or undermine the legislation.

Signed:

Action Group Network
American Oversight
Campaign Legal Center
Center for Digital Democracy
Center for Popular Democracy
Clean Elections Texas
Coalition to Preserve, Protect and Defend
Common Cause
Common Defense
Concerned Citizens for Change
CREW
Defending Democracy
Democracy 21
Democracy Initiative
End Citizens United Action Fund
Equal Justice Society
Franciscan Action Network
Greenpeace USA
Indivisible
Indivisible KC
Law Works
Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
League of Women Voters
Mainers for Accountable Leadership
MoveOn
NETWORK
New Mexicans for Money Out of Politics
People For the American Way
Progressive Turnout Project
Protect Democracy
Public Citizen
Sierra Club
Stand Up America
The Loyal Opposition
Voices for Progress
Win Without War