REGULAR CALENDAR

October 31, 2023

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The Committee on Election Law to which was referred HB 447-FN,

AN ACT relative to the purchase of election equipment.

Having considered the same, report the same with the following amendment, and the recommendation that the bill OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT.

Rep. Ross Berry

FOR THE COMMITTEE

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee:	**Election Law**
Bill Number:	**HB 447-FN**
Title:	**relative to the purchase of election equipment.**
Date:	**October 31, 2023**
Consent Calendar:	**REGULAR**
Recommendation:	**OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT 2023-2366h**

STATEMENT OF INTENT

This bill allocates federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funds to towns for the purchase of new voting equipment. The Ballot Law Commission has approved new equipment to replace the aging Accuvote machines, and many municipalities will be looking to convert to the new systems. Two prevailing thoughts emerged from the committee for passage. The first is that the HAVA funds are expressly intended to alleviate the financial burden placed on towns for conducting elections. The second is that the current HAVA fund is not managed in a way that ensures its longevity; instead of slowly draining it down, it is prudent to expend it given the advent of the newly approved voting machines. Concerns were also raised that the fund is under the sole discretion of the Secretary of State, potentially constituting a government slush fund with the potential for future abuse.

Vote 19-1.

Rep. Ross Berry
FOR THE COMMITTEE

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

REGULAR CALENDAR

Election Law

HB 447-FN, relative to the purchase of election equipment. **OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT.**

Rep. Ross Berry for Election Law. This bill allocates federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funds to towns for the purchase of new voting equipment. The Ballot Law Commission has approved new equipment to replace the aging Accuvote machines, and many municipalities will be looking to convert to the new systems. Two prevailing thoughts emerged from the committee for passage. The first is that the HAVA funds are expressly intended to alleviate the financial burden placed on towns for conducting elections. The second is that the current HAVA fund is not managed in a way that ensures its longevity; instead of slowly draining it down, it is prudent to expend it given the advent of the newly approved voting machines. Concerns were also raised that the fund is under the sole discretion of the Secretary of State, potentially constituting a government slush fund with the potential for future abuse. **Vote 19-1.**

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

Rep. Lane, Merr. 16
October 26, 2023
2023-2366h
08/10

Amendment to HB 447-FN

Amend RSA 5-d:6, III as inserted by section 1 of the bill by replacing it with the following:

III. The secretary of state [~~is authorized to~~] ***shall*** accept, budget, and, subject to the limitations of this paragraph, expend monies in the election fund received from any party for the purposes of conducting elections, voter and election official education, the purchase or lease of equipment that complies with the Help America Vote Act of 2002, Public Law 107-252, or with RSA 659:13, V, reimbursing the department of safety for the actual cost of voter identification cards, election law enforcement, enhancing election technology, making election security improvements, and improvements to related information technology, including acquisition and operation of an automated election management system. ***Except as provided in this section, the secretary of state*** [~~With the exception of federal and state portions of funds associated with the 2018 Election Reform Program, the secretary of state~~] shall not expend any monies in the election fund unless the balance in the fund following such expenditures shall be at least 12 times the estimated annual cost of maintaining the programs established to comply with the Help America Vote Act of 2002, Public Law 107-252. ***The secretary of state shall expend funds in the election fund established in this section and those funds associated with the 2018 Election Reform Program and other funds received by the state under RSA 5:6-d, II to assist in an equitable manner the purchase of equipment by towns and cities for the use of conducting elections and improving election security through the purchase of technology, including ballot counting devices, electronic poll books, and dedicated laptops to be used to access the election information system established by the secretary of state. The funds used pursuant to this paragraph shall be administered, regulated, and maintained by the secretary of state and shall be subject to the following restrictions:***

(a) The principal amount of the election funds spent shall not exceed $3,000,000.

(b) The amount awarded to each town and city shall be no more than one-half of the estimated cost of the requested technology. Each town and city shall return any excess funds to the secretary of state within 6 months of the purchase of the requested technology by the town or city.

(c) The authority to disburse funds under this paragraph shall terminate upon the disbursement of $3,000,000 or December 31, 2027, whichever occurs first. Any funds not disbursed pursuant to this paragraph shall be returned to the election fund established in RSA 5:6-d, I by January 31, 2028.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ELECTION LAW

EXECUTIVE SESSION on HB 447-FN

BILL TITLE: relative to the purchase of election equipment.

DATE: October 31, 2023

LOB ROOM: 306-308

MOTIONS: OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT

Moved by Rep. Lane	Seconded by Rep. Berry	AM Vote: 18-0

Amendment # 2023-2366h

Moved by Rep. Lane	Seconded by Rep. Berry	Vote: 19-1

CONSENT CALENDAR: YES

Statement of Intent: Refer to Committee Report

Respectfully submitted,

Rep Jessica Grill, Clerk

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE HOUSE CLERK

2023 SESSION

10/31/2023 8:10:53 AM
Roll Call Committee Registers Report

Election Law

Bill #: HB 440 FN **Motion:** OTP/A **AM #:** 2366h **Exec Session Date:** 10-31-2023

Members	YEAS	Nays	NV
Berry, Ross Chairman	X		
Boehm, Ralph G. Vice Chairman	X		
Prudhomme-O'Brien, Katherine J.	X		
Qualey, James R.	X		
Ankarberg, Aidan	X		
Burnham, Claudine R	X		
Wherry, Robert J	X		
Wood, Clayton D	X		
Osborne, Jason M.	X		
Kuttab, Katelyn		X	
Lane, Connie Boyles	X		
Ward, Gerald W.R.	X		
Hamer, Heidi M.	X		
Hamblet, Joan L.	X		
Muirhead, Russell	X		
Bay, Luz	X		
Brennan, Angela	X		
Grill, Jessica Clerk	X		
Howard, Heath	X		
Rafter, Hal W	X		
TOTAL VOTE:	19	1	

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE HOUSE CLERK

2023 SESSION

10/31/2023 8:10:53 AM
Roll Call Committee Registers Report

Election Law

Bill #: HB-447 FN Motion: Adopt amendment AM #: 2366h Exec Session Date: 10-31-2023

Members	YEAS	Nays	NV
Berry, Ross Chairman	X		
Boehm, Ralph G. Vice Chairman	X		
Prudhomme-O'Brien, Katherine J.	X		
Qualey, James R.	X		
Ankarberg, Aidan	X		
Burnham, Claudine R	X		
Wherry, Robert J	X		
Wood, Clayton D	X		
Osborne, Jason M.	X		
Kuttab, Katelyn			
Lane, Connie Boyles	X		
Ward, Gerald W.R.	X		
Hamer, Heidi M.	X		
Hamblet, Joan L.	X		
Muirhead, Russell	X		
Bay, Luz	X		
Brennan, Angela	X		
Grill, Jessica Clerk	X		
Howard, Heath			
Rafter, Hal W	X		
TOTAL VOTE:	18		

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON Election Law

BILL NUMBER: **HB 447-FN**

BILL TITLE: **relative to the purchase of election equipment.**

DATE: **March 7, 2023**

THE COMMITEE HAS VOTED TO RETAIN THIS BILL.

Rep. S. Smith, Chair

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ELECTION LAW

EXECUTIVE SESSION on HB 447-FN

BILL TITLE: relative to the purchase of election equipment.

DATE: March 7, 2023

LOB ROOM: 306-308

MOTIONS: **RETAINED**

Moved by Rep. Lane | Seconded by Rep. Grill | Vote: 19-1

CONSENT CALENDAR: YES

Statement of Intent: Refer to Committee Report

Respectfully submitted,

Rep Jessica Grill, Clerk

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE HOUSE CLERK

1/5/2023 1:43:00 PM
Roll Call Committee Registers Report

2023 SESSION

Election Law

Bill #: HB 447-FN Motion: RETAIN AM #: _____ Exec Session Date: 3-7-2023

Members	YEAS	Nays	NV
Smith, Steven D. Chairman	X		
~~Berry, Ross~~ Vice Chairman PIEMONTE	X		
Prudhomme-O'Brien, Katherine J.	X		
Boehm, Ralph G.	X		
Qualey, James R.	X		
Ankarberg, Aidan			X
Burnham, Claudine R	X		
Kennedy, Stephen J.	X		
~~Wherry, Robert J~~ DUNN	X		
Wood, Clayton D	X		
Lane, Connie Boyles	X		
Ward, Gerald W.R.	X		
Hamer, Heidi M.	X		
Hamblet, Joan L.	X		
Muirhead, Russell	X		
Bay, Luz	X		
Brennan, Angela	X		
Grill, Jessica	X		
Howard, Heath	X		
TOTAL VOTE:	19		1

PALMER X

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ELECTION LAW

PUBLIC HEARING ON HB 447-FN

BILL TITLE: **relative to the purchase of election equipment.**

DATE: **February 27, 2023**

LOB ROOM: **306-308** **Time Public Hearing Called to Order:** **11:31 a.m.**

Time Adjourned: **12:21 p.m.**

Committee Members: Reps. Berry, Grill, Prudhomme-O'Brien, Boehm, Qualey, Burnham, Kennedy, Wood, Lane, Ward, Hamer, Hamblet and Brennan

Bill Sponsors:
Rep. Telerski **Rep. Elberger** **Rep. Lane**
Sen. Soucy

TESTIMONY

* Use asterisk if written testimony and/or amendments are submitted.

TESTIMONY

Acting Chair Berry opened the public hearing.

Rep. Laura Telerski,* sponsor, introduced the bill and spoke in favor. She stated that the purpose of the bill is to create opportunities for municipalities to replace ballot-counting devices using existing HAVA funds, and allow funds to be used for other election technology, including poll books. She said that the existing AccuVote machines are at the end of their lifespan and difficult to repair, and that replacing the old machines will prevent them from breaking down during an election. She said that because the state has taken so long to finalize their selection of new voting machines, towns do not have enough time to budget for new machines. She referenced a handout showing the HAVA balance over the last nine years and stated that the fund has not dropped below $10MM. She referred to concerns from the Secretary of State and said she would be open to an amendment capping the amount of funds that can be distributed to towns. She said that with the current HAVA balance of $11.9MM plus an expected grant, we can still offer $3MM to towns with nearly $10MM remaining. She stated that amending the bill to cap the funds would allow towns to purchase new machines without drawing down the balance. She said that currently, many supervisors must use their own personal laptops for election processes, which undermines election security, and that the HAVA funds could also be used to provide this technology. She said that the use of HAVA funds would be an investment that increases confidence in our elections.

Rep. Boehm asked how Rep. Telerski thinks the SOS should allocate funds between towns. Rep. Telerski said that the SOS would be able to address this, but that budgets would be distributed based on the number of machines used for each towns, and the number of voters per district.

Rep. Lane asked where the $1MM grant expected in April was coming from. Rep. Telerski was not sure.

Rep. Berry asked what defines a “secure laptop.” Rep. Telerski stated that this refers to a municipal laptop not used for personal purposes. Rep. Berry asked if she would be okay with removing that language. Rep. Telerski said she would be open to the committee deciding.

Natch Greyes of the NHMA spoke in favor of the bill and stated that this is a companion bill to SB-773. He said that replacement of current machines would cost between $6-$8.5K/machine, not including maintenance, contractual fees, or other costs. He said that his focus is helping municipalities find funding for new machines outside of locally-raised taxes, and the HAVA fund is

one option for this. He stated that the NHMA is aware that the company currently servicing AccuVote machines has stated that the machines are nearing end-of-life and that he is hoping that the new machines can be certified soon.

Rep. Kennedy asked if Mr. Greyes knew how much money from the HAVA fund was available. Mr. Greyes cited $12.7MM, aside from outstanding November 2022 election costs. Rep. Kennedy asked if this is the money available to us. Mr. Greyes confirmed.

Rep. Brennan asked Mr. Greyes to clarify the total cost of replacing voting machines. Mr. Greyes said that there are 125 towns using AccuVote machines, so replacement would total around $1.7MM, depending on the selected replacement vendor. Rep. Brennan asked that if HAVA funds are not made available to municipalities, who would be responsible for replacement costs? Mr. Greyes said that local taxpayers would be responsible for these costs.

Rep. Prudhomme-O'Brien asked whether communities who do not use these machines would consider the HAVA funds to be "free money." Mr. Greyes said that there are a total of 308 polling places in NH, the majority of which use machines. He stated that the SOS has not clarified how funds would be distributed to towns, and whether the funds could be used for new machines or replacement of existing machines.

Rep. Burnham asked how towns would accept funds. Mr. Greyes said that any unexpected funds would be accepted by the town's select board, and they could allocate the fund in accordance with the grant.

Rep. Boehm asked for clarification on the total number of machines needing replacement. Mr. Greyes said that the total number of machines may include towns that need more than one machine. Rep. Boehm asked whether the funds would be based on the total number of machines, or towns alone. Mr. Greyes said that he would follow up with additional detail.

Olivia Zink of Open Democracy Action spoke in support of the bill. She stated that the bill helps election workers secure the funds needed to replace counting machines and stated that Franklin has 3 wards, 3 polling places, and 3 devices, and other towns like Candia last purchased devices in 1996. She said that soon, parts may no longer be available for existing machines. She stated that the grant system could operate similar to the CARES act, where towns received additional budget for elections.

Rep. Brennan asked that if the ballot counting devices stop working, what happens to the ballot counting process? Ms. Zink said that in this instance, election workers would conduct a hand count. Rep. Brennan followed up to ask that in the case of a ballot-counting failure in Manchester during the 2024 election, how long would it take to hand-count the ballots? Ms. Zink stated that in Manchester, they have moved machines around, but hand-counting would take hours in a similar large municipality and require a large team. She stated that in 2022, town clerks and moderators looked for people to work a later counting shift and that counting takes hours, even in small towns. Rep. Brennan asked about the need to recruit election volunteers and how the need for a hand-count would impact volunteer recruitment. Ms. Zink stated that it is currently difficult to recruit volunteers and that retirees, who historically have worked at the polls, are aging out, creating the need for newer volunteers. She said that it is difficult for working families to make the commitment due to the long hours required, with some clerks working up to 24-hour shifts.

Rep. Alvin See spoke in opposition to the bill. He stated that cities and towns have already been notified about the pending obsolescence of the voting machines, and that many towns have included line items in their budgets for new voting machines. He said that towns and cities should plan ahead and it is not appropriate for the state to give grants to towns that did not plan ahead.

McKenzie St. Germain of America Votes spoke in support of the bill. She stated that the legislation is crucial to towns that need to replace their voting machines, that the current voting machines were introduced in the 80s and parts are no longer manufactured. She said that in 2019, concern was raised around the software used in the voting machines, and that conditions such as a hot Election Day can cause the machines to malfunction. She stated that in 2022, LHS Associates stated that they intended to support their current machines through 2024, and that the date is quickly approaching. She said that New Hampshire communities are currently operating on borrowed time, and additional difficulties with voting machines can create stress and jeopardize same-day reporting of election results. She said that the Ballot Law Commission is currently working on certifying new

machines, but this has not been completed yet, requiring towns to purchase their own machines if they do not have support from the state. She stated that the purchase of new machines fits in the guidelines for use of the HAVA funds, and that it is a fiscally-responsible decision that saves taxpayers money. She stated that the legislation meets two recommendations of the Ballot Law Commission by enabling local communities to safely conduct elections.

Secretary of State David Scanlan spoke in opposition to the bill. He stated that the need for new voting machines is not as urgent as has been expressed and that communities have time to replace the voting machines in time for 2026. He said that the need for replacement machines does not warrant the use of HAVA funds and that states that have used HAVA funds are now asking the federal government for additional dollars. He stated that the HAVA fund guidelines included several key provisions and that when first passed, the NH legislature allowed the SOS's office to spend funds on an annual basis to meet HAVA requirements and keep funds in perpetuity. He stated that the fund currently allows us to spend about $1MM/year to administer the HAVA mandates and we have used those funds to create a new centralized voter database, create and enhance accessible voting stations, and expand poll worker training programs to local election officials statewide. He said that training needs to be updated each year to align with new laws. He stated that the federal government has provided additional funds over the years, such as budget to address cybersecurity concerns, and additional federal dollars during the pandemic to fund cities and towns' elections. He stated that all but $300K was sent to cities and towns and the rest was used to hire an accountant to manage the funds. He said that the bill calls for a grant program, which would require a large amount of state- and local-level recordkeeping in order to align with federal reporting requirements. He said that we are currently getting ready to receive an additional grant that can be used for security purposes or other reasons deemed appropriate, and that there may be the option to send additional budget to the cities and towns, but his recommendation would be to do so in a uniform way. He stated that in terms of providing equipment, municipalities have always been responsible for conducting their own elections and it is the town's decision how they want to count their ballots. He said that it should continue to be a local decision, and that the use of electronic poll books should also be a local decision. He said that the 16 towns using electronic poll books are saving time and money and that the SOS's office is developing an interface allowing towns to upload their data directly to the state's voter database, which would save supervisors' time. He said that the state has been incredibly responsible in the use of HAVA funds and it would be short-sighted to attempt spending down the fund on one-time purchases and putting the balance in jeopardy. He stated that if the issue of funding electronic poll books is urgent, he would recommend requesting those dollars from the general fund.

Rep. Lane stated that she understands the need for conserving funds, but that the bill only asks for a portion of the budget, and asked if this is not his understanding. SOS Scanlan said that he did not see that within the bill, but that may be included in an amendment. He said that the SOS's office has managed the funds appropriately, and that if there is an excess, they would look at allocating those dollars.

Rep. Hamer asked if SOS Scanlan was aware that the current ballot tabulator in Manchester was nearing the end of its life. SOS Scanlan confirmed that he knew the current machines were nearing the end of usefulness.

Rep. Brennan asked if there were any other state revenues incorporated in the HAVA budget. SOS Scanlan stated that any additional funds require a state match to credit the books properly.

Rep. Boehm asked if he knew what the cost of the new machines would be. SOS Scanlan cited $6-$9K/machine, but stated that it depends on the machine chosen by the commission. He said that the technology of the new machines is great, but that the companies that build them want to sell an entire election system, not just the machine, raising costs. Rep. Boehm asked what the current cost of an AccuVote machine that is currently in use. SOS Scanlan was unable to answer, but said that he thought it was less than he originally believed.

Rep. Lane asked if there are any other funds available that might be available for use by towns aside from HAVA funds. SOS Scanlan said he was not aware of any other grants or offerings.

Rep. Prudhomme-O'Brien stated that the original machines were chosen to address the issue with punch cards in the 2000 election, and asked if there is any mandate across the country for states to replace their machines. SOS Scanlan said that a provision of HAVA when it passed was that states

that used punch cards must replace their machines. He said that many other states administer elections by county and many replaced punch cards with an electronic recording device rather than paper ballots. He stated that some states are using HAVA funds to purchase equipment. Rep. Prudhomme-O'Brien asked whether the cost of replacing machines is the "whole picture" and that many towns would require more funds to replace multiple machines. She asked how many machines were online right now. SOS Scanlan agreed that many towns without counting machines would want one, and said that he would not expect a large increase in the number of new machines requested by towns.

Rep. Brennan asked SOS Scanlan to clarify the amount of HAVA funds currently available. SOS Scanlan said that his current estimate was $12.9MM.

Rep. Berry asked what is taking so long to approve new machines

Acting Chair Berry read the entries on the blue sign-in sheet: 1 in favor.

Acting Chair Berry adjourned the public hearing.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rep Jessica Grill, Clerk

SIGN UP SHEET

To Register Opinion If Not Speaking

Bill #: HB447 Date: 2/28/23

Committee: Election Law

**** Please Print All Information ****

Name	Address	Phone	Representing	Pro	Con
Rep Michael Cahill	Newmarket	603 380 1736	Rockio	✓	

House Remote Testify

Election Law Committee Testify List for Bill HB447 on 2023-02-28

Support: 322 Oppose: 4 Neutral: 0 Total to Testify: 0

Export to Excel

Name	City, State Email Address	Title	Representing	Position	Testifying	Non-Germane
Dupont, Suzanne	Bedford, NH suedupont.ofa@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Smith, Hayden	Hanover, NH hasmith1520@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Holstein, Susanne	Bedford, NH srholstein@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Maldonado, Ursula	Concord, NH ursula.m.maldonado@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Weston, Joyce	Plymouth, NH jweston14@roadrunner.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
longley, margaret	sandwich, NH peggylongley@sbcglobal.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
St.Germain, Kindred	Hooksett, NH kfstgermain@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Desmarais, Doreen	Northwood, NH doreend@netzero.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Malsbenden, Kathleen	Newmarket, NH Kmalsbenden@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Kirby, Pamela	Derry, NH pkirby1@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Couture, Matthew	Rochester, NH coochdog@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Boyer, Marjorie	Merrimack, NH marjorie.boyer847@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Lewandowski, Jean	Nashua, NH jlewando@hotmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Davidson, Geri	Nashua, NH geridavidson15@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Naylor, Claire	Peterborough, NH cnaylor714@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Pugh, Barbara	Amherst, NH barbara.pugh@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Pugh, Stephen	AMHERST, NH miaferal@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Eisner, Mary	Derry, NH nhdem@msn.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Staples, Monica	Nashua, NH monica.staples@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Weiner, Stephanie	Lancaster, NH sjweiner03@hotmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Kornhauser, Naomi	Durham, NH naomi.kornhauser@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Wells, Lee	Andover, NH leewells.locustfarm@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No

Cormen, Thomas	Lebanon, NH Thomas.Cormen@leg.state.nh.us	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	No	No	
Thornton, Stephanie	Sanbornville, NH saythornton@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Richman, Susan	Durham, NH susan7richman@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Damon, Claudia	Concord, NH cordsdamon@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Broshek, Mary Anne	Andover, NH mabandsadie@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Taylor, Gale	Concord, NH galeforcefacilitators@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Austin, Lorna	Pembroke, NH laustinthyme@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Feller-Kopman, Michelle	Meriden, NH michelle@shore.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Verschueren, James	Dover, NH jd.verschueren@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
BURLINGAME, TERRY	GILMANTON IRON WORKS, NH mexicananh@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Perencevich, Ruth	Concord, NH rperence@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Lowen, Rosalind	Lincoln, NH Roz.lowen@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Cutshall, Catherine	Bedford, NH vivadofamily@aol.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Vivado, Mauricio	Bedford, NH maumojo@aol.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Holt, Kimberley	Concord, NH kimberleyholt2301@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Johsnon, Judith	Goffstown, NH judygjohnson@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Davis, Johnna	Gilford, NH jdavis@metrocast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Spence, Susan	Dover, NH susandspence@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Straiton, Marie	Pembroke, NH M.straiton@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Satterfield, Peter	Pembroke, NH Psatterfield@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Rasche, Patrice	Canterbury, NH Mattieandriley@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Rasche, Stephen	Canterbury, NH Mattieandriley@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Wessels, Susan	RINDGE, NH slwessels2010@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Andrews, Diane	Plainfield, NH dianemandrews@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
House, Don	Belmont, NH Donhouse@metrocast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Ellermann, Maureen	Concord, NH ellermannf@aol.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Sellarole, Jana	Walpole, NH jgsellarole@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	

Caron, Mary	Dover, NH maryecaon53@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
D'Arcy, Rosemary	Bristol, NH rvdarcy@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Lehocky, Barbara	Dover, NH lehockyb1998@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Casino, Joanne	Concord, NH joannecasino@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Steel, Sandy	PLAINFIELD, NH selizabethsteel@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Farnum, Ellen	Tamworth, NH ellenlynnfarnum@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Brown, Jean	Hanover, NH jean.e.brown1@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Lurie, Elizabeth	Plainfield, NH ehlurie@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Berrien, Skip	Exeter, NH fberrien@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Lenz, James	Meriden, NH jelenz@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
Geary, Fiona	Atkinson, NH fionamaegeary@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
O'Neill, Joseph	Amherst, NH oneill3@msn.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No
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Taylor, David	Plainfield, NH dstaylor342@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Scarborough, Valerie	Plymouth, NH val7@roadrunner.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Paquette, Brian	New Boston, NH rhokayabi@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Holcombe, Susan	Hanover, NH shholcombe@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Schreck, Carol	Brookline, NH carolschreckkw@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Ackerson, Judith	Franklin, NH ackerjack45@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Ackerson, Kenneth	Franklin, NH ken.ackerson14@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Koch, Laurie	Concord, NH kochlj@aol.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Martin, Lucretia	Hanover, NH Lucretia.L.Martin@Dartmouth.EDU	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Nastasi, Sue	Rollinsford, NH ctcoastmetro@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Wood, Jacqueline	Auburn, NH jackie_wood47@hotmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Tuthill, John	Acworth, NH johng.tuthill@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Blanchard, Sandra	Loudon, NH sandyblanchard3@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Hinebauch, Mel	Concord, NH melhinebauch@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	

Hughes, Megan	Walpole, NH mhughes1wbc@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Burgess, Thomas	Peterborough, NH tburgess5@sbcglobal.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Muehlke, Natalie	Pelham, NH nhmuehlke@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Drysdale, Robert	Hanover, NH scotdrysdale47@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Gillam, Patrick	Lyndeborough, NH jpgillam@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Clark, Martha	Can, NH mctraveler1@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Fisher, Heather	Hollis, NH henglest@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Lynch, Chrisinda	Concord, NH cmmelynch@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Polomski, Krystyna	Amherst, NH downinutah@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Hayes, Colleen	Claremont, NH colleenannhayes@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Nelson, Elizabeth	Derry, NH BethDavid@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Zink, Olivia	Franklin, NH olivia@opendemocracy.me	A Lobbyist	Open Democracy Action	Support	No	No	
Cilley Foisy, Michelle	Temple, NH michelle.cilley@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Guevarra, Catherine	Derry, NH catguevarra@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Bertrand, Sally	Derry, NH sallybertrand14@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Wilke, Mary	Concord, NH wilke.mary@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Woods, Beverly	Wolfeboro, NH citizen@beverlywoods.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Gendron, Michael	Derry, NH michael.gendron@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Fullam, Felice	Wilton, NH felicitef@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Paradise, Janis	Amherst, NH janisparadise@hotmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Cloutier, Brenda	Merrimack, NH Dbclout@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Mackin, Jonna	Hanover, NH jonnamackin1@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
White, Tim	Effingham, NH tl.white@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Hyman, Vernon	Peterborough, NH tomhyman@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Corell, Elizabeth	Concord, NH Elizabeth.j.corell@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
morgan, meredith	hanover, NH meredithm@kahres.org	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Heath, Ruth	Canterbury, NH ruthmheath@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	

Spiro, Beverly	Peterborough, NH Beverlyspiro@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Salmon, Nancy	Peterborough, NH nansalmon@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Zajano, Emily	Exeter, NH emzajano@aol.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Miles, Nancy	Hanover, NH nmiles3342@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Hoeh, Sandra	Hanover, NH Suhoeh@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Billingham, Carla	Salem, NH billingham2@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	
Magnifico, Alecia	Durham, NH aleciam@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	

HB 447-FN
relative to the purchase of election equipment

Secretary of State – Election Fund

Purpose of Dedicated Fund: To meet the requirements of section 254(b) of the Help America Vote Act, Public Law 107-252.

Report Summary

Fiscal Year	Beginning Balance	Revenue & Fund Sources	Expenses & Fund Uses	Ending Balance
2014	13,800,723	93,335	-831,962	13,049,956
2015	12,121,543	40,298	-1,233,976	10,927,865
2016	10,927,865	88,181	-690,601	10,325,445
2017	10,325,743	88,255	-534,961	9,878,315
2018	9,878,315	177,157	-502,250	9,553,222
2019	9,554,955	3,389,863	-1,011,484	11,933,334
2020	11,933,334	7,004,375	-1,029,307	17,908,402
2021	17,908,402	521,215	-4,388,025	14,041,592
2022	14,041,592	1,011,779	-1,097,596	13,955,775
2023		$1m grant expected April		

$11,955,962 HAVA Fund Balance as of January 31, 2023

$11,700,000 current x12 election maintenance costs
(By statute, HAVA funds must cover 12 years of election maintenance costs.)

Dedicated Funds Reporting
Fiscal Year: 2022
Pursuant to RSA 6:12

Rev 2 11/7/2022 9:20:32 AM

Fund Name Election Fund
Agency Secretary of State

RSA 6:12 ID# 226

Statutory Reference RSA 5:6-d

House Policy Committee Election Law

Senate Policy Committee Public and Municipal Affairs

Purpose of Dedicated Fund
To meet the requirements of section 254(b) of the Help America Vote Act, Public Law 107-252.

					Accounting Unit 1064	
Fiscal Year	**Beginning Balance**	**Revenue & Fund Sources**	**Expenses & Fund Uses**	**Other Srcs (Uses)**	**Ending Balance**	**Commitments**
2022	14,041,592	1,011,779	(1,097,596)	-	13,955,775	-
2021	17,908,402	521,215	(4,388,025)	-	14,041,592	-
2020	11,933,334	7,004,375	(1,029,307)	-	17,908,402	-
2019	9,554,955	3,389,863	(1,011,484)	-	11,933,334	-

Detailed Activities
None supplied

Revenue and Funding Sources Narrative
Seven main lump sum federal HAVA payments were received in: May, 2003; July, 2004; November 2011, July 2018, March 2020, April 2020 & May 2022 to fund the activities required under PL107-252, the federal Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA). Interest earned must be deposited into the Election Fund and represents the preponderance of ongoing revenue. A portion of sales of statewide checklists are deposited into this fund, with the balance going to the towns and cities.

Expenses and Fund Uses Narrative
The fund is used to support the objectives of HAVA, which include improving election security and technology, election administration, maintaining and improving the accessible voting system, maintaining and securing the statewide voter registration system, developing and maintaining an election management system, and enabling uniformed and overseas voters to cast absentee ballots, and responding to coronavirus for the 2020 Federal election cycle. Election Fund spending is subject to RSA 5:6-d: The secretary of state shall not expend any monies in the election fund unless the balance in the fund following such expenditures shall be at least 12 times the estimated annual cost of maintaining the programs established to comply with (HAVA).

Future Funding Needs Narrative
None supplied

Signed: _____ **Title:** Secretary of State

I attest the above information is accurate and correctly identifies activities of this dedicated fund.

Note: _____

Dedicated Funds Reporting Rev 2 9/25/2018 9:12:27 AM
Fiscal Year: 2018
Pursuant to RSA 6:12

Fund Name Election Fund
Agency Secretary of State

RSA 6:12 ID# 226

Statutory Reference RSA 5:6-d

House Policy Committee Election Law

Senate Policy Committee Public and Municipal Affairs

Purpose of Dedicated Fund
To meet the requirements of section 254(b) of the Help America Vote Act, Public Law 107-252.

Accounting Unit 1064

Fiscal Year	Beginning Balance	Revenue & Fund Sources	Expenses & Fund Uses	Encumbrances	Other Funding Sources	Ending Balance
2018	9,878,315	177,157	(502,250)	-	-	9,553,222
2017	10,325,743	88,255	(534,961)	(1,732)	-	9,878,315
2016	10,927,865	88,181	(690,601)	-	-	10,325,445
2015	12,121,543	40,298	(1,233,976)	-	-	10,927,865

Detailed Activities
None supplied

Revenue and Funding Sources Narrative
Three lump sum federal "Requirements Payments" were received; one in May, 2003; another in July, 2004 and a third in November 2011, to fund the activities required under PL107-252. Interest earned is required to be deposited into the Fund and is the majority of ongoing revenue. Sales of statewide checklists were deposited into this fund beginning in fiscal year 2010 was a reversal of an entry made at FY2010 year-end.

Expenses and Fund Uses Narrative
The fund is used to support the objectives of PL107-252 which include improving election administration, maintaining the accessible voting system, maintaining the statewide voter registration system, funding the attorney general's office to maintain the election administrative complaint procedures system, educate and train voters and election officials, and verify that every polling place in NH is handicap accessible.

Future Funding Needs Narrative
None supplied

Signed: _____ **Title:** _____

I attest the above information is accurate and correctly identifies activities of this dedicated fund.

Note: _____

Dedicated Funds Reporting

Rev 2 9/11/2015 3:58:27 PM

For the Fiscal Year 2015
Pursuant to RSA 6:12

Fund Name Election Fund
Agency SOS
RSA 6:12 ID# 226 **Statutory Reference** RSA 5:6-d

House Policy Committee Election Law

Senate Policy Committee Public and Municipal Affairs

Purpose of Dedicated Fund
To meet the requirements of section 254(b) of the Help America Vote Act, Public Law 107-252.

				Accounting Unit 1064		
Year	**Beginning Balance**	**Revenue & Fund Sources**	**Expenses & Fund Uses**	**Encumbrances**	**Other Funding Sources**	**Ending Balance**
2015	12,121,543	40,298	(1,233,976)			10,927,865
2014	13,800,723	93,335	(831,962)	(12,140)		13,049,956
2013	13,800,723	93,335	(831,962)	(12,140)		13,049,956

Detailed Activities
None supplied

Revenue and Funding Sources Narrative
Three lump sum federal "Requirements Payments" were received; one in May, 2003; another in July, 2004 and a third in November 2011, to fund the activities required under PL107-252. Interest earned is required to be deposited into the Fund and is the majority of ongoing revenue. Sales of statewide checklists were deposited into this fund beginning in fiscal year 2010 was a reversal of an entry made at FY2010 year-end.

Expenses and Fund Uses Narrative
The fund is used to support the objectives of PL107-252 which include improving election administration, maintaining the accessible voting system, maintaining the statewide voter registration system, funding the attorney general's office to maintain the election administrative complaint procedures system, educate and train voters and election officials, and verify that every polling place in NH is handicap accessible.

Future Funding Needs Narrative
None supplied

Signed: _____ **Title:** _____

I attest the above information is accurate and correctly identifies activities of this dedicated fund.

Note: _____

I Support HB447

Hon Representatives,

I support HB447.

Elections in NH have proven to be safe and are the core of its vision.

Providing towns with good, working equipment is essential to this endeavor.

Please support HB447 so towns can have updated and effective voting equipment.

This bill follows the NH Constitutional vision that “all government of right originates from the people, is founded in consent, and instituted for the general good.”

Please recommend HB447.

Respectfully,

Len

Leonard Campbell
Meredith, NH
603-455-1105

February 28, 2023 Senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs HB 447

Mister Chair and Members of the House Election Law Committee:

I support HB 447, relative to the purchase of election equipment.

The purposes of HAVA funds are to help New Hampshire meet standards in election administration such as voting information, updated and upgraded voting equipment, and statewide voter registration databases. Our state is now facing these very issues. Even though the Secretary of State's Office has managed our HAVA funds frugally so as to maintain the principle by only spending the interest, the needs we have now warrant sensible spending of these funds. Municipalities will need to purchase new ballot counting devices. Some cities and towns are beginning to institute the use of electronic poll books. Other municipalities need secure laptops for supervisors of the checklist to use only for work on ElectioNet. These expenditures are an appropriate and necessary use of HAVA funds. The Special Committee on Voter Confidence stated in its final report that, "It is important that sufficient funds are provided, from state and federal sources, to implement the suggestions in this report and enable local communities to have the resources to conduct elections." By establishing a grant process for towns and cities to apply for HAVA funds, they still can be managed in a fiscally responsible way that is in keeping with the intent and purpose of the HAVA Act.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Bundy
Antrim

OPEN DEMOCRACY ACTION

February 28, 2023

The Honorable Steven Smith, Chairman, Election Law
Legislative Office Building, Room 308
Concord, NH 03301

TESTIMONY in SUPPORT of HB 447

Dear Chairman Smith and members of the Election Law Committee,

Local election officials largely do a good job, but the training is voluntary and varies. Local election officials help form the bedrock of our democracy and deserve more support. HB 447 helps election workers who need resources to replace ballot counting devices. I have heard, NH has about 309 polling places and half have ballot counting devices. The LHS list of machines on the SOS websites, says 129 communities have ballot counting devices. The City of Franklin city has 3 wards, 3 polling places and 3 ballot counting devices. Candia and Canterbury purchased devices in Feb 1996, making the machines in these towns 27 years old.

We are still waiting for the town meeting test of machines for the Ballot Law Commission to approve new machines but once they are approved, towns need money to buy them. Towns and cities who use a ballot counting device will need a new ballot counting device within the next two years. The current machines cannot be guaranteed to work during or after the 2024 elections. In an NHPR Article published on December 19, 2022 said "starting in 2024, state officials said the manufacturer of those machines will no longer produce parts for that older model"

The machines consistently need parts and servicing. If the manufacturer is no longer producing parts many machines would no longer work on election day. The Secretary of State's office has $12.8 million in Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funds that can be used to purchase these machines.This bill creates a grant system administered by the Secretary of State's Office to distribute these funds to towns that need them.

Please vote OTP on HB 447.

Thank you,
Olivia Zink
Executive Director,
Open Democracy Action,
4 Park St., Suite 301 Concord, NH 03301
603-715-8197

Kathleen Malsbenden

There is money available from the Help America Vote Act in NH Secretary of State coiffures. NH communities need updated equipment to replace voting machines that will no longer be serviceable after 2024. The approximate cost to replace these machines is $500,000 from what I understand. Helping communities purchase these machines would be a cost savings to all tax payers.

Also, supervisors of the checklist must use their personal equipment to link into the state system. These funds which are our taxes being returned to invest in our elections, would cover computers needed by our election supervisors for use during elections.

It does seem that we do have the money to upgrade our systems and not pass on these expenses to local communities. Please pass HB447 using the funds available through the HAVA fund. Thank you.

Monica Staples

The changes proposed by this bill clearly give an unfair advantage to candidates nominated by party primary and are prejudicial to candidates seeking to be nominated by papers /petition. The filing process should be the same for every candidate.

Susan Richman

I urge a vote of Ought to Pass for HB447. The funds are available, so please allow municipalities to put them to good use, modernizing election equipment, including ballot counting devices and electronic poll books. Such investments would increase public confidence in election procedures.

Gale Taylor

Towns and Cities may be unable to budget for these machines in time.

Allowing HAVA funds to be used may enable cities and towns to access these machines

James Verschueren

Well functioning equipment, in any field, creates trust and efficiency. This bill puts in place a good process for expending funds we have. Please OTP to move this bill forward to that our state remains well-equipped to conduct our elections well.

Rosalind Lowen

The grant system created will allow towns to purchase election equipment, freeing towns from these expenditures!

Judith Johsnon

After extensive research by the Committee of Voter Confidence it was the recommendation to spend state and federal dollars on election equipment for election officials. The Secretary of State's office has $12.8 million in Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funds that can be used to purchase these machines. This fund will improve the election night experience for Election Officials and voters alike and will ease local community budgets who will be forced to purchase new machines.

Rosemary D'Arcy

Funding for towns to purchase polling equipment will help equalize access across New Hampshire communities.

Ellen Farnum

Dear Election Law Committee Members,

I am from Tamworth, a small town in Carroll County burdened with a high tax rate. Tamworth is facing many large projects in the coming years as we seek to improve critical infrastructure and maintain current services. At this time, it is critical to access state and federal funds whenever possible!

I urge your committee to support HB447, a bill that would allow towns like mine to access funds from the Help America Vote Act. If our town meets the eligibility guidelines, these funds could be used to upgrade and purchase election equipment and electronic poll books, essential for making the voting process run smoothly.

I have been closely following the work done by the Committee of Voter Confidence this past year. This group recommended using state and federal dollars on election equipment for election officials, as many older model voting machines will need to be upgraded. I again urge you to support the recommendation of the Voter Confidence Committee and vote YES on HB 447.

Ellen Farnum,
Tamworth, NH

Gerald Hanauer

1. Sec. of State funds are currently available ($12 million?).
2. Federal funds are available.
3. If not passed, many of our cities and towns will need to raise property taxes to upgrade voting equipment

Please vote in favor.

Daniel Richardson

This bill removes fund balance requirement and adds fund-uses redundancy. It is legislative clutter meant to look like action.

Jeannie Madley

Dear Representative,

I would like to go on the record opposing HB405, relative to out-of-state college students voting.

- HB405 would disenfranchise many students domiciled in NH, by only allowing students to vote if they pay in-state tuition.

New Hampshire law is clear – if someone is a citizen, at least 18 years old, and domiciled in our great state, they can vote here. Resident students are no exception.

- This proposal is tantamount to voter suppression. We should all be working to keep students engaged in their communities here in New Hampshire, to usher in the next generation of leaders and needed workforce. By trying to take away students' right to vote, HB405 does the opposite and must be soundly rejected.

Thank You!
Jeannie Madley

Marie Nardino

Our electoral equipment will expire in 2024 (according to the manufacturer). New equipment is needed to secure our elections. The Secretary of State is sitting on $12 million that could be allocated to make our election process secure. The Senate Election Committee has already passed a similar bill. It's a no-brainer!!

Christopher Gillespie

Regardless of political party, I think we can all agree that we want our elections to be as safe, secure and efficient as possible. By creating a grant system of HAVA funds, we can ensure that every town in our state has the most up-to-date election equipment, regardless of their individual budget.

Kent Hackmann

Support for the bill is common sense, as the Special Committee on Voter Confidence noted and recommended.

Rolf Best

It's a wonder that a pro-voter bill such as HB447 is even necessary in the first place. One would think that ensuring free and fair elections, the bedrock of any democracy, would be of the utmost priority for any government. Alas, such is the state of affairs in our country that even basic measures to safeguard the electoral process are met with opposition and debate.

But let us not dwell on the past. Instead, let us examine the merits of this bill. The fact that it seeks to provide funds for towns to purchase new ballot counting devices and equipment is a step in the right direction. It relieves local taxpayers of a burden they should not be shouldering alone, and it ensures that the latest technology is available to ensure accurate and efficient vote counting.

Some may argue that this is an unnecessary expenditure, that the old ways of counting ballots are good enough. But in the age of technology, there is no excuse for inefficiency and inaccuracy. Every vote counts, and it is the duty of the government to ensure that every vote is counted fairly and accurately.

Furthermore, the cost of this equipment should not be a concern when the stakes are so high. The price of a democracy is eternal vigilance, and that includes the cost of ensuring that every vote is counted. This bill is a sound solution that benefits not only the voters, but the government as well.

In conclusion, I urge the legislature to support HB447. It is a common-sense solution that is long overdue. The people of New Hampshire deserve free and fair elections, and this bill is a step in the right direction to ensure just that.

Jan Nedelka

State support for efficient and cost-effective elections makes a clear statement about how New Hampshire values our democratic processes, and how both state and local communities wish to ensure free and fair elections. Given our status and desire to be the First-in-the-Nation primary host, it's our responsibility to ensure that every town can honor this commitment as readily as possible,

Pamela Sinotte

I strongly support and urge you to vote in favor of HB447, as I feel it's important to have the best and most up-to-date voting equipment available.

Betsy Ferguson

This is a no brainer. In our own town, we were reduced to one ballot reader last election, because two of the three machines were so old that they did not work efficiently. OF COURSE we should invest in getting the vote counted correctly! This should be a bi-partisan win, if all is right in the world.

Laurie Moreno

I support Bill HB244 and would like you to vote YES.

Mary Raven

It's time to update our voting technology!

Ronald Brown

This bill provides needed technology upgrades for upcoming elections without burdening municipal budgets. These expenditures will help maintain trust in our electoral systems.

Karen Campbell

Local election officials help form the bedrock of our democracy and deserve more support.
New Hampshire's local election officials need support to be able to continue to run our elections smoothly and securely
Towns and cities who use a ballot counting device will need a new ballot counting device for the 2025 election. The current machines cannot be guaranteed to work during or after the 2024 elections
In an NHPR Article published on December 19th said "starting in 2024, state officials said the manufacturer of those machines will no longer produce parts for that older model"
The machines consistently need parts and servicing. If the manufacturer is no longer producing parts many machines would no longer work on election day.
The Secretary of State's office has $12.8 million in Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funds that can be used to purchase these machines.
This bill creates a grant system administered by the Secretary of State's Office to distribute these funds to towns that need them.
These funds can also be used for electronic poll books and to purchase secure laptops for Supervisors of the Checklist to use only to work on ElectioNet.
This fund will improve the election night experience for Election Officials and voters alike and will ease local community budgets who will be forced to purchase new machines.
A recommendation of the Committee of Voter Confidence was to spend state and federal dollars on election equipment for election officials.
Towns and Cities may not be able to budget for these machines in time. Allowing HAVA funds to be used removes that barrier from cities and towns accessing these machines

Norman Turcotte

I urge the Committee to SUPPORT this bill!

Charlotte Cody

- HB447 would create a grant system of Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funds that towns can access to purchase election equipment, including ballot counting devices and electronic poll books, rather than having to include these funds in town budgets. HAVA funds were made available to states precisely to spend to help voters vote.
- The NH Secretary of State's office has over $12 million in funds that could be allocated. The grant system created by this bill would be administered by the Secretary of State's Office to distribute these funds to towns that need them.
- Towns and cities who use ballot counting devices will need to purchase new devices for the 2025 election, as the current devices cannot be guaranteed to work during or after the 2024 elections. Our electoral equipment will expire in 2024, according to the manufacturer. We need new equipment to make our elections more secure and efficient.
- A similar bill already passed in the Senate Election Committee.
- Towns and Cities may not be able to budget for these machines in time. Allowing HAVA funds to be used removes that barrier from cities and towns accessing these machines
- Also, towns/cities should not be paying for upgrades to election equipment themselves, when there is so much available HAVA funding that could be used for this purpose.
- These funds can also be used for electronic poll books and to purchase secure laptops for Supervisors of the Checklist to use only to work on ElectioNet.
- This fund will improve the election night experience for Election Officials and voters alike and will ease local community budgets who will be forced to purchase new machines.
- A recommendation of the Committee of Voter Confidence was to spend state and federal dollars on election equipment for election officials.

Raye Ellen Douville

With all the discussion about election safety, this should be one thing everyone agrees is essential. No point of view is credible if that person opposes updating our ballot machines.

John Zavgren

Please, please, please... accept the federal money to upgrade our election equipment.

Karen Contos

HB447 would create a grant system of Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funds that towns can access to purchase election equipment, including ballot counting devices and electronic poll books, rather than having to include these funds in town budgets. HAVA funds were made available to states precisely to spend to help voters vote.
A similar bill has already passed in the Senate Election Committee.

Thank you for your consideration.

Donna Reardon

Please support HB 447. NH’s voting machines are old and this would bill would help us update our voting machines. In the interest of accurate and quick election results, we need up to date voting machines before they break in the middle of an election.?. Who wouldn’t want to accept this money ASAP?

Bob Perry

HB 447 – relative to the purchase of election equipment.
Tuesday, February 28, 2023 at 11:30 A.M.
Rm. 206 - 208 Legislative Office Building
Time: 2:45

Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee:

I speak in support of HB 447.

We know the George W. Bush era Help America Vote Act of 2002 has been of major benefit to the states for improving a variety of election-related programs, including, but not limited to, enhancing election technology, and making election security improvements. The hanging chad is a distant memory. However, New Hampshire's current law requires that the "state shall not expend any monies in the election fund unless the balance in the fund following such expenditures shall be at least 12 times the estimated annual cost of maintaining the programs established to comply with the [act]." The federal HAVA law imposes no similar restriction, so our statute amounts to a self-imposed limit of long standing hindering the amount of help the Help America Vote Act can provide the voters of New Hampshire. Voter education is critical to assure the public understands ever-changing voting laws, and worker training is critical to the proper administration of elections. It seems, however, that our current law seriously restricts those essential needs. And with the AccuVote 2000 tabulator projected not to be serviceable after the 2024 election, our current statute prevents the fund from being used for the purchase of new equipment. HB 447 repeals the 12 to 1 requirement and establishes a grant system for municipalities to access monies from the fund for use in improving election security, technology, voter education and a myriad of other election enhancements.

Because a vendor of the new equipment has not been selected, nor is it known how many municipalities would wish to increase their number of voting machines, and other factors, there remains uncertainty related to the actual drawdown of the HAVA fund. But if those federal dollars are not released for equipment upgrades, it is certain those expenses will be levied upon local taxpayers. Replacing existing tabulators is not an option; it's a necessity. According to the fiscal note to this bill, estimated costs to local communities could exceed $8500.

Rather than maintaining a 12 to 1 ratio, the committee might consider lowering the ratio through amendment, to allow the use of those federal dollars to cover the costs clearly authorized by the act, while maintaining an adequate level of reserve in the fund.

Bob Perry
Strafford

Laurence Disenhof

As an election day volunteer in Salem I actively see what equipment we're working with and a hesitancy of the town to spend money. I support this bill as it will give the town an increased ability to obtain new equipment when needed. Thank you.

Pam Mueller

We need to do all we can to keep our election apparatus up to date. Please vote to accept the federal funding.

Amy Conley

We need to use these funds to protect our democracy.

Patricia Bass

Sounds like a good way to fund needed election equipment.

Susan Taylor

Towns shouldn't have to finance the purchasing of election equipment which causes unequal election experiences for people living in different towns. The 14th Ammendment guarantees equal protection under the law.

Judith Ackerson

In 2022, HAVA (the Help America Vote Act) was passed by Congress. Significant amounts of money were sent to the Secretary of State's Office. Twelve million dollars were received during COVID to help alleviate election expenses, and none of it having been distributed to cities and towns.

We often hear of the need to upgrade voting machines because the existing ones will no longer be serviceable after 2024. The cost to purchase new machines for every municipality in the State of New Hampshire is approximately $500,000. If we pretend that amount actually doubles, one million dollars would be a drop in the bucket. As of now, local communities are expected budget for these.

Another expense that the individual supervisors of the checklist personally take on are the use of their personal computers to link to the state system prior to and during elections. Some computers, my relatively new one included, cannot connect to the state data base. This must be accessible during an election. I am dependent upon my fellow supervisor's computer for this link. Should he be ill or for some reason unable to perform his duties, my ward will be unable to link to the state.

Historically, the State of NH has downloaded many of the costs associated with elections to local cities and towns. It is time for the Secretary of State's office to release monies needed for new voting machines and technology and "Help America Vote". Please contact your elected representatives and ask that they support HB 424 which will come before them on Tuesday, February 28th.

Kenneth Ackerson

I expect the Secretary of State's office to use HAVA funds for the purpose they were intended. It is wrong to sit on this money when their our legitimate uses for it. Money that comes back to us from Washington is money the citizens of NH have sent there.

Megan Hughes

Because of the sunset provision on parts for election equipment, funding needs to be made available for upgrades and replacements. Please support HB447.

Thomas Burgess

Support this bill! It helps town buy equipment to make voting, which helps our towns run elections smoothly.

Elizabeth Nelson

The NH Secretary of State's office has over $12 million in funds that could be allocated. Our electoral equipment will expire in 2024, according to the manufacturer. We need new equipment to make our elections more secure and efficient. Everyone wants safe and clean elections.

Felice Fullam

I support this bill & realize the positive impact it will have on voting. F. Fullam

Alecia Magnifico

I support funding critical elections infrastructure throughout our state to help ensure that our elections remain transparent and reliable.

HB 447-FN - AS INTRODUCED

2023 SESSION

23-0382
08/10

HOUSE BILL ***447-FN***

AN ACT relative to the purchase of election equipment.

SPONSORS: Rep. Telerski, Hills. 11; Rep. Elberger, Hills. 5; Rep. Lane, Merr. 16; Sen. Soucy, Dist 18

COMMITTEE: Election Law

ANALYSIS

This bill allows grants to be given to cities and towns for the purchase of election equipment.

- -

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics.***
Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struckthrough.~~]
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

23-0382
08/10

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Three

AN ACT relative to the purchase of election equipment.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 Election Fund; Grants for Cities and Towns. Amend RSA 5:6-d, III to read as follows:

III. The secretary of state is authorized to accept, budget, and, subject to the limitations of this paragraph, expend monies in the election fund received from any party for the purposes of conducting elections, voter and election official education, the purchase or lease of equipment that complies with the Help America Vote Act of 2002, Public Law 107-252, or with RSA 659:13, V, reimbursing the department of safety for the actual cost of voter identification cards, election law enforcement, enhancing election technology, making election security improvements, and improvements to related information technology, including acquisition and operation of an automated election management system. [~~With the exception of federal and state portions of funds associated with the 2018 Election Reform Program, the secretary of state shall not expend any monies in the election fund unless the balance in the fund following such expenditures shall be at least 12 times the estimated annual cost of maintaining the programs established to comply with the Help America Vote Act of 2002, Public Law 107-252.~~] ***The secretary of state shall establish a grant system for cities and towns to access monies from Help America Vote Act of 2002, Public Law 107-252 grants for the use of improving election security and technology. The grants shall be used for technology including ballot counting devices, electronic poll books, and secure laptops to be used to access ElectioNet.***

2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

LBA
23-0382
Revised 1/25/23

HB 447-FN- FISCAL NOTE
AS INTRODUCED

AN ACT relative to the purchase of election equipment.

FISCAL IMPACT: [X] State [ ] County [ ] Local [ ] None

	Estimated Increase / (Decrease)			
STATE:	**FY 2023**	**FY 2024**	**FY 2025**	**FY 2026**
Appropriation	$0	$0	$0	$0
Revenue	$0	$0	$0	$0
Expenditures	$0	Indeterminable Increase	Indeterminable Increase	Indeterminable Increase
Funding Source:	[X] General Election Fund	[ ] Education	[ ] Highway	[X] Other -

METHODOLOGY:

This bill requires the Secretary of State (SOS) to establish a grant system for cities and towns to access monies from the Help America Vote Act of 2022, Public Law 107-252 (HAVA) grants for the use of improving election security and technology. The grants shall be used for technology including ballot counting devices, electronic poll books, and secure laptops to be used to access ElectioNet. This bill also removes the requirement for the SOS to maintain a balance in the election fund equal to at least 12 times the estimated annual cost of maintaining the programs established to comply with HAVA.

The Department of State indicates to create and administer the grant program they would need a Program Specialist III, labor grade 23, step 1, costing $79,669 in FY 2024, $83,657 in FY 2025 and $86,363 in FY 2026 within the election division. The Department notes when the HAVA funds are exhausted this position would no longer be needed. The Department also states the additional position is the minimum needed and depending on the volume of grant applications the Department may need an additional position to ensure the compliance with the HAVA funds, including city and town compliance reporting and follow-up and Federal HAVA reporting requirements.

The Department also calculated cost by category for new election equipment. These costs will vary by city or town based on needs.

	Poll Pad	Ballot Counting Device	Secure Laptops
One- Time	$3,325	$6,000 to $8,500	$800
Annual Software	$300	$1,000	N/A
Programming Fee	Indeterminable Increase	Indeterminable Increase	N/A

The Department indicates there were 308 polling locations in the last NH state election and some of the locations may use multiple ballot counting devices and poll pads while other locations may choose to hand count ballots and may or may not participate in the grant program. The Department states the number of pieces of equipment, the number of locations participating, as well as the potential cost is indeterminable but significant. Lastly, the current balance in the election fund is approximately $12.9m. When the election fund is exhausted, approximately $1m in State General Funds per a year would be needed to run the HAVA office.

This bill does not establish or provide an appropriation for new positions and it is assumed any fiscal impact would occur after FY 2023.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Department of State