

SHIELD Our Elections Act best

President Trump has made no secret of his intent to interfere with elections this November, threatening to “take over the voting” in key states, suing states to purge voter rolls, and weaponizing the use of federal law enforcement – even the military. Make no mistake – these actions are illegal, but unfortunately, we can no longer rely on DOJ to defend voting rights.

In response, Senate Rules Committee Ranking Member Padilla is advancing the *Stop Harassment and Intimidations in Elections through Legal Defenses (SHIELD) Our Elections Act* to provide new teeth to existing voter protection laws.

What the Bill Would Do:

- **Creates a private right of action** for State Attorneys General and private parties to enforce federal laws against interference at polling locations, specifically crimes committed under 18 U.S.C. 592 – 594;
- **Extends the statute of limitations from standard 5 years to 9 years** for election interference crimes (misuse of armed forces, intimidation of voters, and similar abuses of power protected by the *Voting Rights Act* and the *National Voter Registration Act*) so that future administrations can hold bad actors accountable; and,
- **Protects ballots from seizure by law enforcement** and ensures that any seizures of election records or equipment necessary to prevent their destruction would be **required to remain in joint custody of a trusted election official**.

The bill provides states, voters and future administrations with more tools to fight election interference. It follows the FBI’s seizure of 2020 ballots in Fulton County, threats of ICE and troops at the polls, new threats from Trump and DHS Secretary Mullin to pressure states to purge voters, and the seizure of over 700,000 ballots by a CA county sheriff (and statewide candidate) premised on baseless claims of widespread voter fraud.

Joining Ranking Member Padilla as original cosponsors: Sens. Baldwin, Blumenthal, Hickenlooper, Hirono, King, Klobuchar, & Slotkin.