

May 11, 2022

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
Chair Committee on House Administration
1401 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney Davis
Ranking Member, Committee on House Administration
2079 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Lofgren and Ranking Member Davis:

On behalf of the nationwide network of Protection and Advocacy (P&A) agencies we represent, The National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) writes today to strongly urge that the full House swiftly pass S. 3969, the Protection and Advocacy for Voting Access (PAVA) Inclusion Act which passed the Senate unanimously on March 30.

P&A systems are federally mandated, and pursue legal, administrative, and other appropriate remedies under all applicable federal and state laws to protect and advocate for the rights of people with disabilities. There are 57 P&As operating in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Territories (American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands). There is also a P&A affiliated with the American Indian Consortium serving Native Americans with disabilities in the Four Corners region of the Southwest.

In 2002, Congress passed HAVA acknowledging the unique obstacles people with disabilities face at the polls, and authorized funding for the PAVA program. The PAVA program allows P&As to advocate on behalf of voters with disabilities to ensure that they have access to all aspects of the American voting process. PAVA program funds allow P&As to conduct disability training to poll workers, distribute resources on how to conduct an

accessible campaign, maintain voting hotlines, examine polling places for accessibility, and much more throughout the year.

PAVA program funding is currently awarded to “eligible” P&As across the country. Unfortunately, because HAVA included specific language about “states” only 55 out of the 57 P&As are currently eligible for PAVA funding. The Northern Mariana Islands and the American Indian Consortium P&As do not receive PAVA funding since they are not considered states and therefore have been ineligible for PAVA funding since HAVA passed.

NDRN has expressed the crucial need for the enactment of the PAVA Inclusion Act on multiple occasions, including in written and spoken testimony before House committees. Additionally, all 57 P&As signed a 2020 [letter of support](#) for this legislation to both you and Ranking Member Davis. Most recently, a [Report of the Interagency Steering Group on Native American Voting](#) published by the White House called on policymakers to “consider revisiting that limitation, to ensure that these entities can also equitably access HAVA funds to serve voters with disabilities in their areas”.

It was always the intent for all 57 P&As to participate in the PAVA program. Thus, we support the House passing S. 3969, which would provide a long overdue technical fix to explicitly authorize the distribution of grant funds to the Northern Mariana Islands and American Indian Consortium P&As.

Thank you for all your work on protecting the rights of people with disabilities to vote privately and independently. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Stephanie Flynt, Public Policy Analyst, at Stephanie.Flynt@NDRN.org or at 202-567-3534.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Curt Decker".

Curt Decker, J.D.
Executive Director