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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To direct State and local election officials to provide a minimum number of polling places within a State for voters to cast a ballot in an election for Federal office and to ensure that such polling places are not concentrated in a specific area, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To direct State and local election officials to provide a minimum number of polling places within a State for voters to cast a ballot in an election for Federal office and to ensure that such polling places are not concentrated in a specific area, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Polling Place Stand-
5 ards Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. MINIMUM REQUIRED POLLING STATIONS.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title III of the Help America
3 Vote Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–252; 52 U.S.C. 21081
4 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following
5 new subtitle:

6 **“Subtitle C—Additional Polling**
7 **Place Standards**

8 **“SEC. 321. POLLING PLACE REQUIREMENTS.**

9 “(a) MINIMUM NUMBER OF POLLING PLACES IN A
10 STATE.—Not later than 30 days prior to the day the vot-
11 ing period begins for any election for Federal office, the
12 appropriate State or local election official shall begin prep-
13 arations to ensure that during such voting period within
14 each State there is not less than 1 covered polling place
15 or vote center for every 2,000 voters registered to vote
16 in such State.

17 “(b) LOCATION REQUIREMENTS.—The appropriate
18 State or local election official shall ensure that, within a
19 State, the covered polling places and vote centers available
20 for a voter to cast a ballot in an election for Federal office
21 are—

22 “(1) not concentrated in a specific area of such
23 State; and—

24 “(2) located in geographically diverse areas.

25 “(c) EXCEPTION.—The requirements in subsection
26 (a) and subsection (b) shall not apply with respect to a

1 State if such State allows each voter in such State to, or
2 permits a jurisdiction of such State to allow each voter
3 in such jurisdiction to, cast a ballot in an election for Fed-
4 eral office by—

5 “(1) depositing such ballot in a drop box; or

6 “(2) mailing such ballot to the appropriate
7 State or local election official.

8 “(d) STAFFING.—

9 “(1) REQUIREMENT.—The appropriate State or
10 local election official shall ensure that each covered
11 polling place and vote center required by this section
12 is adequately staffed to ensure—

13 “(A) that ballots cast in an election for
14 Federal office are processed in a timely manner
15 as required by any applicable Federal or State
16 law;

17 “(B) all equipment and ballots are handled
18 in a method that ensures the general safety and
19 secure storage of such equipment and ballots;
20 and

21 “(C) compliance with any relevant
22 accessibility related Federal, State, or local
23 law.

24 “(2) FACTORS.—In determining whether a cov-
25 ered polling place or vote center is adequately

1 staffed pursuant to paragraph (1), the appropriate
2 State or local election official shall consider—

3 “(A) the number of—

4 “(i) registered voters in the relevant
5 precinct;

6 “(ii) check-in stations, including sta-
7 tions for the purposes of collecting ballots
8 and verifying the identity of a voter, at
9 such covered polling place or vote center;

10 “(iii) machines where a voter can fill
11 out or submit a ballot electronically, if
12 available, at such covered polling place or
13 vote center; and

14 “(iv) ballot scanning machines at such
15 covered polling place or vote center;

16 “(B) the accessibility needs of the voters
17 in such precinct; and

18 “(C) whether the wait time for a voter to
19 cast a ballot in an election for Federal office at
20 such covered polling place or vote center is 30
21 minutes or less.

22 **“SEC. 322. DEFINITIONS.**

23 “In this subtitle:

1 “(1) The term ‘covered polling place’ means a
2 polling place that accepts ballots cast for a Federal
3 election only from voters in a particular precinct.

4 “(2) The term ‘vote center’ means a polling
5 place that accepts a ballot cast for a Federal Elec-
6 tion from any voter regardless of the precinct of
7 such voter.”.

8 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents
9 of such Act is amended by inserting after the item relating
10 to section 312 the following:

“Subtitle C—Additional Polling Place Standards

“Sec. 321. Polling place requirements.

“Sec. 322. Definitions.”.

11 **SEC. 3. GRANT PROGRAM FOR POLLING PLACE STAND-**
12 **ARDS.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle D of title II of the Help
14 America Vote Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–252; 52
15 U.S.C. 21001 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end
16 the following new part:

17 **“PART 7—GRANT PROGRAM FOR POLLING PLACE**
18 **STANDARDS**

19 **“SEC. 298. GRANT PROGRAM FOR POLLING PLACE STAND-**
20 **ARDS.**

21 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall award
22 grants to States to carry out the requirements of section
23 321.

1 “(b) STAFFING.—The Commission may hire employ-
2 ees as necessary to facilitate the grant program required
3 in subsection (a).”.

4 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents
5 of such Act is amended by inserting after the item relating
6 to section 296 the following:

 “PART 7—GRANT PROGRAM FOR POLLING PLACE STANDARDS

 “Sec. 298. Grant program for polling place standards.”.

7 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

8 There is authorized to be appropriated such sums as
9 may be necessary to carry out this Act.