

## Rothman Applauds Passage of Bipartisan Election Reform in House

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Congressman is Cosponsor of Far-reaching Measure  
to Help Prevent Election 2000 Problems

Washington, DC -- Calling the right to vote the "cornerstone of our democracy," Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) applauded yesterday's passage of bipartisan election reform legislation in the House. The Help America Vote Act, which Rothman cosponsored is designed to overhaul the nation's voting system in an effort to improve the integrity of the United States' election process, improve voter participation, and restore public confidence in our system.

"The evil terrorists who struck this nation on September 11 sought to destroy our core principles of freedom and democracy, whose very foundation is based upon the right of free citizens to choose their elected leaders," Rothman said. "At this moment in our history, it is very clear that we must take all of the necessary steps to ensure that each registered voter has the Constitutionally guaranteed right to vote."

The Help America Vote Act authorizes \$2.65 billion for federal election reform, including \$400 million to buyout unreliable punch card voting systems, and \$2.25 billion to improve equipment, recruit and train poll workers, improve access for disabled voters, and educate voters about their rights.

"With less than a year until Election Day 2002, when all the seats in the House and one third of the Senate will be voted on, it is imperative that we now take the steps to ensure that the voting process is fair and that all votes are counted," Rothman said. "The measure that we passed today in the House will help put in place a uniform system to ensure that we don't replicate last year's election when the votes of an estimated 2 million Americans went uncounted. As we work to ensure that countries around the world have a democratic system set up that allows their citizens to choose their own leaders, we must ensure that same right, here at home."

Additionally, the Help America Vote Act requires states to adopt minimum election standards, including a statewide voter registration system, in precinct provisional voting, assurances that voters who make errors will be able to correct them, and means for disabled voters to cast secret ballots on new voting equipment.

Following the House's approval, Rothman and other House members called on the Senate to address the election reform measure in the coming days before Congress adjourns for the winter holiday recess.

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[Go back](#)