

JOHN A. LAWRENCE
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
13TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

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Senator Pat Toomey
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Bob Casey
393 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

March 1, 2021

Dear Senators,

I write to express my concerns with HR1, which recently passed the House of Representatives and may be considered by the United States Senate in the coming weeks.

HR 1 deals broadly with both a variety of election and non-election related issues. The proposal is highly prescriptive, and inarguably wrestles a tremendous amount of authority from the individual states towards federally mandated processes.

Article 1 Section 4 of the US Constitution states:

The times, places and manner of holding elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each state by the legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by law make or alter such regulations...

Our Founders clearly intended for state legislatures to drive the process surrounding the time, places, and manner of holding elections. They also included a provision which has been used by the US Congress to correct major injustices. But to suggest that Founders intended for the US Congress to contemplate broad, sweeping, unilateral, minutia-laden legislation like HR1 ignores the clear intent that state legislatures have a primary role in this effort. If anything, our Founders were incredibly hesitant to federally concentrate this type of power, as evidenced by the 10th Amendment and numerous contemporary writings.

In addition, HR 1 is drafted to consider topics as diverse as the ethics of the Supreme Court, redistricting (including a special carve-out for Iowa,) and public funding of congressional elections. These topics are far afield from the purported primary objectives of the legislation.

With this in mind, I encourage you to vote against this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Lawrence".

John Lawrence