May 21, 2020

The Honorable Ron DeSantis  
Office of Governor Ron DeSantis  
State of Florida  
The Capitol  
400 S. Monroe St.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Laurel Lee  
Secretary of State  
Department of State, Division of Elections  
Room 316, R. A. Gray Building  
500 South Bronough Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250

Dear Governor DeSantis and Secretary Lee,

We write in support of the several requests by our Supervisors of Elections (SOE) to safeguard Florida’s 2020 Primary and General Elections.

We thank you for requesting Florida’s share of elections funding under the CARES Act. We believe it is critical that the state adopt a distribution formula to award these funds as grants to our county supervisors prior to the primary and general elections. This will ensure each supervisor has sufficient resources to meet the increased costs of holding these elections during the COVID-19 Pandemic. We will continue to do our part on the federal level by adequately funding the United States Postal Service to handle the increased demand to vote by mail.

On April 7, 2020, the Florida SOEs requested guidance regarding the flexibility of voting locations, an increase of early voting days, and other key recommendations to protect voter access and safety for our elections. Time is of the essence to respond to these requests as soon as possible so there is enough time for them to be implemented for the 2020 primary election, and to be consistent for the 2020 general election.

It’s also essential that we have safe polling places. We urge you to assist each Supervisor to procure personal protection equipment for their poll workers. Given the likely lack of poll workers due to the COVID-19 pandemic concerns, we strongly encourage you to call upon the Florida National Guard to conduct poll worker duties to fill the gap where necessary. To avoid any unintended voter intimidation, we believe our Florida National Guard would need to be plain-clothed. We also welcome alternative ideas to sufficiently staff our polling places.

Thank you for your continued work with the Florida Congressional Delegation and for your full and fair consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,

Darren Soto  
Member of Congress

Alcee Hastings  
Member of Congress
Charlie Crist
Member of Congress

Lois Frankel
Member of Congress

Debbie Mucarsel-Powell
Member of Congress

Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress