

Executive Summary of Testimony of Gineen M. Bresso
Nominee for Commissioner for the U.S. Election Assistance Commission
Senate Committee on Rules and Administration
June 29, 2011

Good morning Chairman Schumer, Ranking Member Alexander and members of the Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration. It has been an honor to serve as a Commissioner on the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) for the past two and a half years. My background, working in elections first in Maryland and then at the Committee on House Administration, has served me well in my time at the EAC. As a Commissioner I have worked with my fellow Commissioners and staff to fulfill our mandates under the Help America Vote Act (2002) and provide assistance to State and local election officials. I look forward to working with my fellow Commissioner Donetta Davidson, Mr. Hicks, Ms. Perez, EAC staff and all of our stakeholders.

Thank you and I look forward to any questions you may have.

Statement by Gineen M. Bresso
Nominee for Commissioner for the U.S. Election Assistance Commission
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Chairman Schumer, Ranking Member Alexander and members of the Committee

Thank you for holding this hearing to consider my nomination to serve a second term on the U.S Election Assistance Commission (EAC). It has been an honor to serve on the Commission for the past two and a half years. I want to thank President Obama for re-nominating me as an EAC Commissioner. I also thank Speaker Boehner for his support and recommendation to the President that I serve a second term on the Commission. Many of you may already know me, because of my position as a sitting Commissioner, or my previous position as staff to the House Administration Committee. For those who may not, I would like briefly to review my background for the Committee.

My interest and experience in the area of elections began with my work in Maryland. As a policy advisor to the Governor, I was responsible for providing advice and guidance on federal and state election law issues, including the newly-enacted Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002. I extended my study and expertise of election law when serving as elections counsel for Ranking Member Vern Ehlers on the Committee on House Administration.

EAC is an independent, bipartisan commission charged with adopting voluntary voting system guidelines, developing guidance to meet HAVA requirements, accrediting voting system test laboratories and certifying voting equipment, and serving as a national clearinghouse of information on election administration to assist states in meeting HAVA's requirements.

One of EAC's most important responsibilities is the operation of its voluntary federal voting system testing and certification program. When I became Chair of the EAC, the agency had yet to certify any voting systems. During my tenure as Chair of EAC, I made it a priority to work with my fellow Commissioners and staff to ensure our testing and certification division had the resources necessary to move voting systems through the process. Because of this effort, voting systems were certified and ready for use by states and localities during the 2010 federal election cycle. EAC successfully certified four voting systems during my time as Chair, and an additional two systems and two modifications have been certified since then.

Our clearinghouse is an area where the Commission provides a conduit for the exchange of information regarding the administration of elections. As a Commissioner, I worked with my colleagues to improve our clearinghouse by collecting best practices in the industry and share them with our stakeholders. Topics covered in the clearinghouse include voting system reports, contingency plans and information about community partnerships.

In the decade since HAVA was enacted, I have found it rewarding to work on election law and policy at the state and federal level. I look forward to working with my fellow Commissioner Donetta Davidson, Ms. Perez, Mr. Hicks, EAC staff and all of our stakeholders.

Again thank you and I look forward to any questions you may have.

Gineen M. Bresso Biography

Ms. Gineen Bresso was nominated by President George W. Bush and confirmed by the United States Senate on October 2, 2008 to serve on the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC). Ms. Bresso served as Chair of the EAC in 2009. Her term of service extends through December 12, 2009.

Prior to her appointment with EAC, Commissioner Bresso was the minority elections counsel for the Committee on House Administration. She previously served as a policy advisor to former Maryland Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. where her primary area of focus was on election law. She also served as an attorney-advisor for the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, where she reviewed and prosecuted applications for federal trademark registration. Ms. Bresso began her legal career by serving as a judicial law clerk for the Honorable Arrie W. Davis, in the Maryland Court of Special Appeals.

Ms. Bresso received her Juris Doctor from Western New England College School of Law (1999) where she was a member of the Law Review. In 1995, she received a Bachelor of Arts in political science from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.