

AZ elections administrator calls on federal government for investment



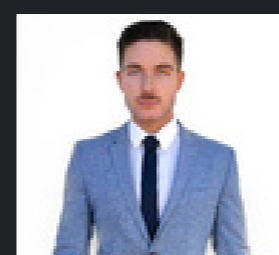
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A recent survey showed 65% of Americans will likely trust 2024 election results, compared with 54% in April last year. (John Davis/Adobe Stock)

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Congress recently cleared legislation to extend government funding into March, but one Arizona elections official would like to see federal lawmakers include funding for election administration and security.

Patty Hansen, recorder for Coconino County in Northern Arizona, has been involved with elections administration for 36 years, and said with the continuing exodus of many election recorders and directors in recent years because of increased threats and harassment, what remains is what she called a "huge institutional void."

She pointed out in rural counties such as hers, funding to improve election systems would go a long way.

"Some jurisdictions are wealthier than others and have a better tax base," Hansen observed. "I do think it is something the federal government should be looking at for providing the necessary funds across the nation because elections are the foundation of our democracy."

Seven of 10 Americans believe the federal government should be just as, if not more, responsible for [election funding](#) than local municipalities and states. Hansen contended investments are needed to ensure successful elections around the country, although she is not in favor of the federal government taking over administration of elections. She sees the current decentralized system as a way to keep elections safe and secure.

Sunwoo Oh, senior associate of policy and political affairs for Stand Up America, argued the election industry is not receiving proper investment. Oh said a bipartisan group of local and state election officials got together and estimated it would take at least \$53 billion over 10 years to repair and modernize the nation's election infrastructure.

"We've been working to try to get more consistent and predictable funding from Congress to help support local administrators to get the resources they need," Oh explained. "And help modernize the election infrastructure that is super outdated in most of the jurisdictions."

Oh contended voting machines around the country are outdated and lead to delays and snags in the voting counting process, but stressed it does not mean election integrity is not being upheld. It is one of the ways she would like to see the federal government step up and help.

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