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EXECUTIVE ORDER

Activating the Colorado National Guard to Assist with Election Cybersecurity Defense Efforts

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Governor of the State of Colorado and, in particular, pursuant to Article IV, Section 5 of the Colorado Constitution and C.R.S. § 28-3-104, *et seq.*, I, Jared Polis, Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order activating six (6) members of the Colorado National Guard Defensive Cyber Operations Element to assist with election cybersecurity defense efforts during the 2020 presidential primary election.

I.   Background and Purpose

Like many states, Colorado uses online voter registration systems that allow eligible citizens to access and update their voter registration information. These systems are protected by various security features that maintain confidentiality and prevent data tampering or interference with data.

Even with such security features, online voter registration systems could provide an avenue for cyber actors to gain unlawful access to voter registration databases. Outside of Colorado, voter registration databases have been compromised by cyber actors hacking into various systems. While cyber actors are unable to modify voter records, breaches could result in the release of voters' personally identifiable information. The exposure of voters' personally identifiable information does not threaten the integrity of our State elections, but could undermine public confidence in the system and suppress voter registration. The Colorado National Guard Defensive Cyber Operations Element has unique cyber capabilities to assist in protecting critical election infrastructure.

The Colorado Secretary of State has requested that the Colorado National Guard Defensive Cyber Operations Element provide election cybersecurity support during the 2020 presidential primary election. By activating six (6) members of the National Guard Defensive Cyber Operations Element, the National Guard will support the Secretary of State with election defense efforts up to and including the 2020 presidential primary election, which is on March 3, 2020.

II.   Declarations and Directives

On February 18, 2020, the Colorado Secretary of State requested support from the Colorado National Guard Defensive Cyber Operations Element for the 2020 presidential primary election. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 28-3-104, the Governor may employ the National Guard for the defense of the State. I hereby activate six (6) members of the Colorado National Guard Defensive Cyber Operations Element to assist with election cybersecurity defense efforts during the 2020 presidential primary election.

III.   Duration

This Executive Order shall expire thirty (30) days from February 26, 2020, unless extended further by Executive Order.

GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Colorado, this twenty-sixth day of February, 2020.

Jared Polis
Governor