NEWS RELEASE

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ACM US Technology Policy Committee Enlists Internet and Cybersecurity Luminaries in Multi-Group Call on Governors, State Election Officials to Wholly Avoid Internet Voting

New York, NY, April 9, 2020 – Today, the Association for Computing Machinery's US Technology Policy Committee (ACM USTPC) joined many of the nation's leading experts in cybersecurity, computing, and science—including two recipients of ACM's A.M. Turing Award—in calling on all Governors and State Election Directors to refrain from using any form of internet voting or voting app system in the 2020 elections.

In a joint open letter organized by ACM USTPC, eight national organizations wholly endorsed a detailed analysis also in joint letter form prepared by the Center for Scientific Evidence in Public Issues of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). Both letters highlight "two decades of rigorous, science-based analysis which clearly demonstrates that internet voting is not a secure solution for voting in the US, nor will it be in the foreseeable future."

"Just as we all fervently wish that COVID-19 could be vanquished with a medical silver bullet, it's natural to hope that internet voting might be a technical silver bullet for the problem of how to hold secure elections in the midst of the pandemic," said James Hendler, Chair, ACM USTPC. "Sadly, the clinical science about internet voting—and there is a lot of it—proves that it will open our electoral processes to potentially fatal cyber-infection. If we value the health of our democracy, we must not yet vote over the internet."

The ACM-coordinated letter and AAAS analysis cite four critical reasons to refrain from using internet voting based on research conducted by, among many others, the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine; US Department of Defense; and National Institute of Standards and Technology. Those reasons are:

1. All internet voting systems and technologies are currently inherently insecure.
2. No technical evidence exists that any internet voting technology is safe or can be made so in the foreseeable future; rather, all research performed to date demonstrates the opposite.
3. No blockchain technology can mitigate the profound dangers inherent in internet voting.
4. No mobile voting app is sufficiently secure to permit its use.

Among the renowned experts endorsing the USTPC and AAAS joint letters, and the scientific findings they cite, are ACM AM Turing Award Laureates Vinton Cerf and Ronald Rivest and several ACM Fellows.

Expert organizations joining ACM USTPC and AAAS in endorsing the AAAS analysis were the: Brennan Center for Justice, Common Cause, Computing Research Association, Free Speech for People, R Street Institute, and Verified Voting.

Read the full joint letter, which includes a summary of the scientific evidence, here.

About the ACM US Technology Policy Committee
ACM's US Technology Policy Committee (USTPC) serves as the focal point for ACM's interaction with all branches of the US government, the computing community, and the public on policy matters related to information technology. The Committee regularly educates and informs Congress, the Administration, and the courts about significant developments in the computing field and how those developments affect public policy in the United States.

About ACM
ACM, the Association for Computing Machinery, is the world's largest educational and scientific computing society, uniting computing educators, researchers and professionals to inspire dialogue, share resources and address the field's challenges. ACM strengthens the computing profession's collective voice through strong leadership, promotion of the highest standards, and recognition of technical excellence. ACM supports the professional growth of its members by providing opportunities for life-long learning, career development, and professional networking.

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