

Trump Has Systematically Dismantled Election Security Efforts. Here's How.

Since his return to the White House, the lead federal partner for states on election security has lost around a third of its work force.



President Trump has directed prosecutors to scrutinize a top cybersecurity aide during his first term, Christopher Krebs, who fell from his favor by validating the integrity of the 2020 election. Credit...Pool photo by Jim Lo Scalzo

-Dustin Voltz, The New York Times

Despite his stated concern about U.S. election security, President Trump during his second term has overseen significant cuts to the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, including to its election work.

Mr. Trump made no acknowledgment of those cuts in his speech on Thursday. “We will be working closely to mitigate any harm and taking swift action to ensure that sensitive voter data is better protected,” he said, “so it can never be bought or hacked and we can never watch it get stolen again.”

That agency, which was created during his first term, had been a lead federal partner for states on election security efforts since the 2016 election, [sharing cybersecurity best practices and intelligence](#) about foreign intentions around elections.

But later in his first term, Mr. Trump developed disdain for the agency, and the government's election security work generally. Its director at the time, Christopher Krebs, validated the integrity of the 2020 election, which prompted the president to [fire Mr. Krebs](#).

Since Mr. Trump's return to the White House, CISA has lost around a third of its work force, which stood at 3,400 in January 2025. In February last year, the administration [put more than a dozen CISA election security workers](#) on leave as [part of an investigation into its election work](#), a move that had a chilling effect on the 100 or so people in the division. The agency has not had a Senate-confirmed leader during Mr. Trump's second presidency.

Other federal agencies have also downsized their election security work, including the F.B.I. and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, which under Tulsi Gabbard gutted the Foreign Malign Influence Center that monitors foreign election threats.

And this month Mr. Trump [forced out](#) the three remaining members of the Election Assistance Commission, an independent, bipartisan commission that supports states in administering their elections. In recent years, much of the small commission's work also focused on cybersecurity support to states.