



**Colorado
Legislative
Council
Staff**

SB17-138

**FINAL
FISCAL NOTE**

FISCAL IMPACT: State Local Statutory Public Entity Conditional No Fiscal Impact

Drafting Number: LLS 17-0530
Prime Sponsor(s): Sen. Tate
Rep. Foote

Date: July 25, 2017
Bill Status: Deemed Lost
Fiscal Analyst: Chris Creighton (303-866-5834)

BILL TOPIC: ELECTION WATCHERS

Fiscal Impact Summary	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019
State Revenue Cash Funds	Minimal increase.	
State Expenditures		
Appropriation Required: None.		
Future Year Impacts: Ongoing minimal revenue increase.		

Note: This bill was not enacted into law; therefore, the impacts identified in this analysis do not take effect.

Summary of Legislation

This bill authorizes each political party participating in a primary election to have at least one election watcher in each voter service and polling center (vote center). For general elections, this bill authorizes the registered agent of an issue committee to appoint one or more election watchers. For non-partisan elections, candidates and proponents and opponents of ballot issues are authorized to appoint one or more election watchers in every county. Under current law, only one election watcher is allowed in each of these circumstances. For each of these elections, the names of the election watchers must be submitted no later than the Wednesday prior to the vote centers opening.

This bill also specifies the procedure that must be followed if an election watcher sees a potential discrepancy. Additionally, county clerks are authorized to request a name-based criminal history background check of any election watcher using the Colorado Bureau of Investigation website. Lastly, this bill prohibits the sale, disclosure, or release of a photocopied or microfilmed image of a voters' signature.

Background

Election watchers monitor various aspects of the election process starting before the polls open, through the vote count and the announcement of the election results. Election watchers must be eligible voters and may be appointed by political parties, candidates, issue committees, and the registered proponents and opponents of ballot measures.

State Revenue

This bill minimally increases state cash fund revenue from fees. To cover costs, the Colorado Bureau of Investigation in the Department of Public Safety charges \$6.85 for each online name-based background check. This fee will be charged to each clerk that chooses to run an online background check. Currently, clerks run such background checks on election judges, but not election watchers. Because this background check is optional, it is unknown how many online background checks will be requested. Any increase in revenue is expected to be minimal. Fees are deposited into the Colorado Bureau of Investigation Identification Unit Cash Fund.

Local Government Impact

This bill increases costs for counties that choose to run online background checks on election watchers. The fee for each background check is \$6.85. It is unknown how many background checks will be run and by which counties.

Effective Date

The bill is deemed lost since the Senate laid the bill over until May 11, 2017, during third reading on April 26, 2017.

State and Local Government Contacts

Clerks
Public Safety

Counties
Secretary of State

Information Technology