



Initiative 278

Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

Fiscal Impact Statement

Date: May 9, 2024

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LCS TITLE: PRIMARY ELECTIONS FOR MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES

Fiscal Impact Summary		FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
Revenue		-	up to \$2.1 million
Expenditures	Cash Fund	\$3,654	\$2.1 million

Disclaimer. This initial fiscal impact statement has been prepared for an initiative approved for petition circulation by the Secretary of State. If the initiative is placed on the ballot, Legislative Council Staff may revise this estimate for the ballot information booklet (Blue Book) if new information becomes available.

Summary of Measure

The measure establishes that only individuals affiliated with a major political party may vote in that party's primary election. Unaffiliated voters are prohibited from voting in a major political party's primary.

State Revenue

To cover the costs described below, state revenue from fees may need to be raised to cover all or some of the measure's costs. The fees affected and the actual amounts will be set administratively by the Department of State (DOS) based on cash fund balance and total program costs.

State Expenditures

The measure will increase state expenditures in the Department of State by about \$3,700 in FY 2024-25 and about \$2.1 million in FY 2025-26. State expenditures are displayed in Table 2

Table 2
Expenditures Under Initiative 278

	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
Department of State		
Computer Programming	-	\$63,840
Voter Registration Forms	\$3,654	-
Voter Outreach Campaign	-	\$2,000,000
Total Cost	\$3,654	\$2,063,840

Computer programming. DOS will need to update their statewide voter registration system to remove the ability of unaffiliated voters to receive ballots for primary elections. This cost is estimated at about \$64,000 in FY 2025-26.

Voter registration forms. DOS will have a one-time expense in FY 2024-25 of about \$3,700 to create and print new voter registration forms.

Outreach campaign. The DOS will engage in a public voter education campaign from to inform voters about election changes. This cost is estimated to be about \$2.0 million, based on previous campaigns. This expense is expected to occur in FY 2025-26 in advance of the 2026 primary election.

Local Government

County clerks and other local election officials will need to update their voting rules and procedures to require only affiliated party electors to vote in that party's primary. Costs for local elections may also decrease as fewer ballots for unaffiliated voters will need to be printed and processed. Any cost savings may also lower the state's election reimbursement to counties.

Effective Date

If approved by voters at the 2024 general election, this measure takes effect upon proclamation of the Governor, no later than 30 days after the official canvass of the vote is completed.

State and Local Government Contacts

Counties

County Clerks

Secretary of State