



**Legislative Council Staff**  
*Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature*

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# Fiscal Note

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**Drafting Number:** LLS 21-0671  
**Prime Sponsors:** Sen. Woodward

**Date:** February 16, 2021  
**Bill Status:** Senate SVMA  
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**Bill Topic:** **COLORADO BALLOT SIGNATURE VERIFICATION ACT**

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**Summary of Fiscal Impact:**

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| <input type="checkbox"/> State Revenue                | <input type="checkbox"/> TABOR Refund                |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Expenditure | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State Transfer               | <input type="checkbox"/> Statutory Public Entity     |

This bill changes the requirements for the verification of mail ballots received from voters who are unable to sign the return envelope. The bill creates one-time costs for the state and ongoing costs for counties.

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**Appropriation Summary:** For FY 2021-22, the bill requires an appropriation of \$39,100 to the Secretary of State's Office.

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**Fiscal Note Status:** This fiscal note reflects the introduced bill.

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**Table 1**  
**State Fiscal Impacts Under SB 21-010**

		<b>Budget Year FY 2021-22</b>	<b>Out Year FY 2022-23</b>
<b>Revenue</b>		-	-
<b>Expenditures</b>	Cash Fund	\$39,100	-
<b>Transfers</b>		-	-
<b>TABOR Refund</b>		-	-

## **Summary of Legislation**

Under current law, if an eligible voter is unable to sign a mail ballot, they may self-affirm with a mark, which must be witnessed by another registered voter. This bill requires that the witness be a registered voter residing in the same county as the unsigned voter and that the witness include their voter identification number on the ballot envelop. County clerks must conduct signature verification of the witness signature. If the signature is rejected, a cure letter must be sent to the witness. Any mail ballot that does not satisfy these requirements is treated as a provisional ballot.

## **State Expenditures**

For FY 2021-22 only, this bill increases costs in the Secretary of State's Office by 39,100, paid from the Department of State Cash Fund. To implement the bill, the Secretary of State's Office must make changes to the statewide voter registration database (SCORE). These system changes will require 340 hours of programming time at a rate of \$115/hour, resulting in a total one-time cost of \$39,100.

## **Local Government**

This bill increases costs and workload for counties to verify witness signature, check that the witness is a registered voter in the same county as the voter, and send out cure letters. Some counties will be required to modify and replace preprinted envelopes, at a cost ranging from \$2,000-\$20,000.

## **Effective Date**

The bill takes effect 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed. It applies to elections conducted after this effective date.

## **State Appropriations**

For FY 2021-22, this bill requires an appropriation of \$39,100 from the Department of State Cash Fund to the Secretary of State's Office.

## **State and Local Government Contacts**

Counties	County Clerks	Information Technology
Municipalities	Secretary of State	