



Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

Initiative 215

Fiscal Summary

Date: March 19, 2024

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LCS TITLE: CONCERNING THE CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS

Fiscal Summary of Initiative 215

This fiscal summary, prepared by the nonpartisan Director of Research of the Legislative Council, contains a preliminary assessment of the measure's fiscal impact. A full fiscal impact statement for this initiative is or will be available at leg.colorado.gov/bluebook. This fiscal summary identifies the following impact.

State expenditures and revenue. Conditional upon enactment of a separate measure to create an all-candidate primary, this measure is estimated to increase state expenditures in the Department of State (DOS) by approximately \$1.4 million in FY 2025-26 to implement several changes to elections systems and processes and to begin operating under the new procedures for the 2026 election cycle. Specifically, the DOS must update election rules, modify election software and information technology systems, and conduct public awareness campaigns. Costs will also increase in FY 2026-27 and future years from increased cost reimbursement to counties provided by the state (see local government impacts below). This increase has not been estimated. If costs are paid from the Department of State Cash Fund, state revenue from business filing fees paid to the DOS must be increased. The actual amount of new revenue and fee charges will be set administratively by DOS in order to cover any costs to implement the initiative paid from the DOS Cash Fund.

Local government impact. The measure increases costs for county clerks and other local election officials in several ways. Conducting a ranked choice voting election increases the size and complexity of printed ballots, which will require that clerks educate voters, and revise processes for the operation of polling places and ballot counting. For some counties, this will require new election system software and equipment. Other counties will have costs to modify existing voting systems. A portion of local costs under the bill will be reimbursed by the state under current law. As with state expenditures, local costs will only occur if a separate measure creating an all-candidate primary is enacted.

Economic impacts. The measure has no direct impact on the state economy. Changes to elections may result in different leadership and different policies, which could have an economic effect. However, these effects depend on voter choices and future decision making.