



Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

Initiative 231

Fiscal Summary

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LCS TITLE: CONCERNING THE CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS

Fiscal Summary of Initiative 231

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. The measure is estimated to increase state expenditures in the Department of State (DOS) to implement several changes to elections processes and ballots. Specifically, the DOS must update election rules, modify election software and information technology systems, and conduct public awareness campaigns to inform voters about the changes to voting as an unaffiliated voter in Colorado. Costs may also increase in FY 2026-27 and future years related to increased reimbursement to counties for any cost increase incurred by county clerks to conduct primary elections, which under current law is equal to 45 percent of county costs under. 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 has offsetting impacts on county clerks. On one hand, the measure will reduce postage and printing costs by allowing a single ballot to be mailed to unaffiliated voters during primary elections, rather than two ballot as under current law. On the other, the single ballot for unaffiliated voters will be longer and more complex, and counties would be required to update ballot counting equipment and software to account for the combined unaffiliated ballot and to make sure that votes are properly attributed to candidates in major party primaries for different offices. Costs will also increase for county clerks to educate voters, and revise other processes for the operation of polling places and ballot counting. A portion of local costs under the measure will be reimbursed by the state under current law.

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