

House State, Civic, Military, & Veterans Affairs

03/03/2025 01:30 PM

HB25-1191 Elections to Fill County Commissioner Vacancies

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Steve Schleiker Against El Paso County Clerk and Recorder	March 3, 2025 Colorado General Assembly Attn.: State, Civic, Military, & Veterans Affairs C/O Representative Jenny Willford, Chair C/O Representative Chad Clifford, Vice Chair 200 E. Colfax Ave. Denver, CO 80203 Subj: HB25-1191 (Elections to Fill County Commissioner Vacancies) Prime Sponsor(s): Representative Chris Richardson Committee: House State, Civic, Military, & Veterans Affairs Committee Date: 03/03/2025 Position: Oppose Dear Madam Chair and Members of the State, Veterans & Military Affairs Committee, I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 25-1191, which proposes to replace the current vacancy committee process for filling county commissioner vacancies with a vacancy election. While the bill's intent may be to increase transparency and voter participation, the operational and financial burdens it would place on the Clerk and Recorder's Office are substantial and untenable. From an operational standpoint, HB25-1191 introduces an unnecessary administrative burden on local election officials. Conducting a special vacancy election within 30 to 60 days of a vacancy occurring would strain existing resources, as it requires rapid mobilization of personnel, ballot preparation, and voter outreach. County Clerks are already responsible for overseeing multiple election cycles, and an

	<p>additional unexpected election could significantly disrupt election planning, voter registration processes, and essential election security measures.</p> <p>Financially, the costs associated with a vacancy election are concerning. County budgets do not typically allocate funds for unscheduled elections. The costs of ballot printing, mailing, election worker wages, polling place set up, and security measures would impose a significant financial strain on county governments. Moreover, the requirement for the Clerk and Recorder’s Office to conduct such elections on short notice, while maintaining standard election procedures, would likely necessitate additional staffing or overtime pay, further increasing financial burdens.</p> <p>Additionally, the proposed candidate filing fee of \$500 does not sufficiently offset these costs. The reality is that the cost of administering a countywide or commissioner district election far exceeds candidate filing fees. The bill fails to consider the significant investment required to ensure proper voter education and election integrity under these compressed timelines.</p> <p>The current vacancy committee process is a long-standing, cost-effective method that allows for the swift appointment of a qualified candidate while maintaining political party representation. The shift to a vacancy election process would create logistical difficulties and force counties to reallocate funds from essential services to accommodate this requirement.</p> <p>I urge the committee to consider these substantial operational and financial impacts and vote against HB25-1191. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you require any further information.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Steve Schleiker, Clerk and Recorder El Paso County</p>
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