

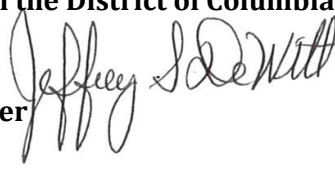
Government of the District of Columbia
Office of the Chief Financial Officer



Jeffrey S. DeWitt
Chief Financial Officer

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Phil Mendelson
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

FROM: Jeffrey S. DeWitt
Chief Financial Officer 

DATE: July 28, 2020

SUBJECT: Fiscal Impact Statement – General Election Preparations Emergency Amendment Act of 2020

REFERENCE: Draft Bill as Circulated on July 27, 2020

Conclusion

Funds are sufficient in the fiscal year 2020 budget and the fiscal year 2021 through fiscal year 2024 budget and financial plan to implement the bill.

Background

The Board of Elections (BOE) manages all aspects of primary, general, and special elections in the District. One of BOE's important functions for each election is the operation of polling places. BOE recently approved its plan for the November 3, 2020 general election to include the mailing of a ballot to every registered voter, the placement of ballot drop-boxes across the District, and the operation of 40 voting centers for early and day-of voting.¹

The bill requires BOE to operate no less than 80 polling places for the November 3, 2020 general election, including one located at the Department of Corrections Central Detention Facility to accommodate incarcerated electors. The bill requires BOE to mail an absentee ballot to every registered elector for the 2020 general election. BOE must also inform all residents and voters about elections including, for the 2020 general election, mailing a paper voter guide and emailing an electronic version of the voter guide to any electors for whom BOE has that contact information.

¹ As decided at the Board of Elections special meeting held on Friday, July 17, 2020 (<https://dcist.com/story/20/07/18/d-c-elections-board-signs-off-on-plan-to-mail-ballots-to-every-registered-voter-for-november-election/>).

The bill amends the requirements for a candidate for President or Vice President for the 2020 general election, whose party does not automatically qualify for the ballot, to obtain signatures of 250 registered qualified electors as opposed to one percent of registered qualified electors.²

Currently, if an elector has a challenged or special ballot and BOE determines the ballot should not be counted, they are entitled to a BOE hearing no later than two days after the election.³ The bill changes the hearing window to no earlier than eight days and no later than ten days following the election.

Financial Plan Impact

Funds are sufficient in the fiscal year 2020 budget and the fiscal year 2021 through fiscal year 2024 budget and financial plan to implement the bill. Voting centers and polling places, unlike traditional precinct voting locations, are designed to accommodate more voters per location and allow any registered voter to vote, regardless of the voter's assigned precinct. BOE has already identified and will operate 40 voting centers for the November 3, 2020 general election. BOE will work with the Mayor's office to identify 40 additional polling places and can absorb any rental, security, and cleaning costs, when applicable, within its existing budgeted local and federal resources.

BOE can also implement the bill's other changes with its existing budgeted resources.

² District of Columbia Election Code of 1955, approved August 12, 1955 (69 Stat. 699; D.C. Official Code § 1-1001.08(f)).

³ D.C. Official Code § 1-1001.09(e).