

COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
OVERSIGHT DIVISION

FISCAL NOTE

L.R. No.: 0304H.02C
Bill No.: HCS for HB Nos. 126 & 367
Subject: Elections; Federal - State Relations
Type: Original
Date: March 6, 2025

Bill Summary: This proposal reinstates the Presidential Preference Primary.

FISCAL SUMMARY

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON GENERAL REVENUE FUND			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
General Revenue*	\$0	\$0	\$0 or More than (\$8,000,000)
Total Estimated Net Effect on General Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0 or More than (\$8,000,000)

*Costs of approximately \$8 million in March 2028 (FY 2028) for holding a Presidential Preference Primary Election.

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON OTHER STATE FUNDS			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Total Estimated Net Effect on <u>Other</u> State Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

Numbers within parentheses: () indicate costs or losses.

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FEDERAL FUNDS			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Total Estimated Net Effect on <u>All</u> Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Total Estimated Net Effect on FTE	0	0	0

- ☒ Estimated Net Effect (expenditures or reduced revenues) expected to exceed \$250,000 in any of the three fiscal years after implementation of the act or at full implementation of the act.
- ☐ Estimated Net Effect (savings or increased revenues) expected to exceed \$250,000 in any of the three fiscal years after implementation of the act or at full implementation of the act.

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON LOCAL FUNDS			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Local Government	\$0	\$0	(Unknown)

FISCAL ANALYSIS

ASSUMPTION

Officials from the **Office of the Secretary of State (SOS)** assume this bill would reinstate the presidential preference primary (PPP) election which was previously held in March of any presidential election year. The projected impact is estimated to be \$8 million based on the cost of the 2022 primary and general election reimbursements, to be first incurred in FY 2028. As this election is scheduled for the first Tuesday in March, it may coincide with the municipal primary elections held by charter counties (scheduled for the Tuesday following the first Monday of March); in this case, proportional cost sharing may reduce the state's obligations for this election.

Oversight notes section 115.785 states all costs of a presidential preference primary shall be paid by the state and for any county with more than five hundred polling places, the state shall assist in assuring adequate poll workers and equipment. The payment of election costs is subject to appropriation by the General Assembly. However, if they assume that the presidential preference primary were to be fully appropriated as it has been in years past, SOS anticipates a cost of \$8 million. Oversight has reflected, in this fiscal note, an \$8 million cost due to reinstating the requirement to hold a PPP. The next scheduled Presidential Preference Primary election would be in March 2028 (FY28). As this election is scheduled for the first Tuesday in March, it may coincide with the municipal primary elections held by charter counties (scheduled for the Tuesday following the first Monday of March); in this case, proportional cost sharing may reduce the state's obligations for this election. Therefore, Oversight will reflect a potential election cost for reimbursement to local political subdivisions in FY 2028.

In addition, **SOS** states this bill would require to assist in assuring adequate poll workers and equipment for counties containing more than 500 polling places. For the most recent general election held in November 2024, no county claimed to operate more than 500 polling places. However, at least two counties did claim more than 500 precincts at that election, so there may be a potential cost if these counties were forced to open additional polling places. The scope of such potential cost is unknown.

Oversight cannot determine if particular counties will be operating more than 500 polling places in FY 2028. Therefore, Oversight will also reflect a \$0 to unknown cost to the state for the potential cost of poll workers and equipment for counties containing more than 500 polling places.

The **Office of the Secretary of State (SOS)** also assumes many bills considered by the General Assembly include provisions allowing or requiring agencies to submit rules and regulations to implement the act. The SOS is provided with core funding to handle a certain amount of normal activity resulting from each year's legislative session. The fiscal impact for this fiscal note to the SOS for Administrative Rules is less than \$5,000. The SOS recognizes that this is a small

amount and does not expect that additional funding would be required to meet these costs. However, the SOS also recognizes that many such bills may be passed by the General Assembly in a given year and that collectively the costs may be in excess of what the office can sustain with the core budget. Therefore, the SOS reserves the right to request funding for the cost of supporting administrative rules requirements should the need arise based on a review of the finally approved bills signed by the governor.

Oversight assumes the SOS could absorb the costs of printing and distributing regulations related to this proposal. If multiple bills pass which require the printing and distribution of regulations at substantial costs, the SOS could require additional resources.

Officials from the **Platte County Board of Elections** state adding the Presidential Primary in March would cost about \$100,000.

Officials from the **Kansas City Election Board** assume the cost of a citywide election is roughly \$800,000.

In response to a similar proposal, HB 367 (2025), officials from the **St. Louis City Board of Elections** stated the cost of a city-wide election which this legislation would require would cost \$500,000. It is unclear what the cost of conducting no-excuse absentee voting would be beginning 6 weeks out from a scheduled election in comparison to the 2 week period available now. While initially there could be, depending on how voting was conducted, a negative impact, 6 weeks of new excuse voting, because it extends the in person absentee period, could result in a cost savings as fewer polling places would result ultimately in a cost savings.

Officials from the **St. Louis County Board of Elections** and the **Jackson County Election Board** assume the proposal will have no fiscal impact on their respective organizations.

Oversight notes section 115.785 states all costs of a presidential preference primary shall be paid by the state and for any county with more than five hundred polling places, the state shall assist in assuring adequate poll workers and equipment. Therefore the fiscal note will reflect the cost and reimbursement to local election authorities netting to zero.

Oversight only reflects the responses received from state agencies and political subdivisions; however, other local election authorities and county clerks were requested to respond to this proposed legislation but did not. A listing of political subdivisions included in the Missouri Legislative Information System (MOLIS) database is available upon request.

Subsection 115.123.2 states the presidential primary will be held on the second Tuesday after the first Monday in March, which has already occurred in 2024. Oversight will assume the primary will next occur in 2028.

<u>FISCAL IMPACT – State Government</u>	FY 2026 (10 Mo.)	FY 2027	FY 2028
GENERAL REVENUE FUND			
<u>Cost</u> - SOS §115.785 Reimbursement of local election authority election costs for PPP	\$0	\$0	\$0 or More than (\$8,000,000)
<u>Cost</u> – SOS §115.785 Additional poll workers and equipment	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	\$0 to (Unknown)
ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON GENERAL REVENUE FUND	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0 or (More than \$8,000,000)</u>

<u>FISCAL IMPACT – Local Government</u>	FY 2026 (10 Mo.)	FY 2027	FY 2028
LOCAL POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS			
<u>Reimbursement</u> - Local Election Authorities - §115.785 reimbursement of election costs	\$0	\$0	\$0 or More than \$8,000,000
<u>Cost</u> - Local Election Authorities §115.785 - holding PPP election	\$0	\$0	\$0 or (More than \$8,000,000)
<u>Cost</u> – Local Election Authorities - Election expenses not covered by State	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	(Unknown)
ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON LOCAL POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>(Unknown)</u>

FISCAL IMPACT – Small Business

No direct fiscal impact to small businesses would be expected as a result of this proposal.

FISCAL DESCRIPTION

Currently, voters can cast an absentee ballot by mail or in person at the office of the election authority if they will be unable to vote in person on election day for a number of specified reasons.

Beginning two weeks prior to the date of the election, no excuse is needed if the voter is voting an absentee ballot in person at the office of the election authority. This bill extends the no-excuse in-person absentee voting period from two weeks to six weeks prior to the date of the election.

This bill reinstates the presidential preference primary election, to be held statewide on the first Tuesday in March of each presidential election year.

A person who files to be included on the presidential primary ballot is not prohibited from filing as a party candidate for nomination to another office.

Specific deadlines for administrative actions by local election authorities and the Secretary of State that are necessary to hold the presidential preference primary are specified in the bill.

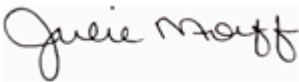
The conduct of the presidential preference primary must conform as nearly as possible to that prescribed for the primary election for State officers.

All costs of the presidential preference primary, except for proportional costs for any political subdivision or special district holding an election on the same day, will be paid by the State.

This legislation is not federally mandated, would not duplicate any other program and would not require additional capital improvements or rental space.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Office of the Secretary of State
Platte County Board of Elections
Kansas City Election Board
St. Louis City Board of Elections
St. Louis County Board of Elections
Jackson County Election Board

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Julie Morff".

Julie Morff
Director
March 6, 2025

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jessica Harris".

Jessica Harris
Assistant Director
March 6, 2025