

COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH  
OVERSIGHT DIVISION

**FISCAL NOTE**

L.R. No.: 4968H.02C  
Bill No.: HCS for HB 2605  
Subject: Elections; Newspapers and Publications  
Type: Original  
Date: March 18, 2026

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Bill Summary: This proposal modifies provisions relating to the publication of election notices.

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

**ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON GENERAL REVENUE FUND**

FUND AFFECTED	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
General Revenue*	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
<b>Total Estimated Net Effect on General Revenue</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>Unknown</b>

\*Oversight does not anticipate the cost savings to exceed \$250,000.

**ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON OTHER STATE FUNDS**

FUND AFFECTED	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
<b>Total Estimated Net Effect on <u>Other</u> State Funds</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

Numbers within parentheses: () indicate costs or losses.

**ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FEDERAL FUNDS**

FUND AFFECTED	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
<b>Total Estimated Net Effect on <u>All</u> Federal Funds</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)**

FUND AFFECTED	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
<b>Total Estimated Net Effect on FTE</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

- 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 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
<b>Local Government</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>Unknown</b>

## FISCAL ANALYSIS

### ASSUMPTION

#### §§108.240 and 115.127 - Elections

Officials from the **Office of the Secretary of State** assume the proposal will have no fiscal impact on their organization.

In response to a previous version, officials from the **Office of the Secretary of State (SOS)** stated in regard to §115.127 this bill alters the requirements for the publication of election notices. Currently each county election authority must publish notice in two newspapers of opposing political faiths if such newspapers are available. The bill would permit election authorities to satisfy the statutory requirements by publishing in only one newspaper that either publishes in the county or otherwise serves the area. Since the Secretary of State shares proportional costs of primary and general elections, including publication costs, this would result in reduced costs to the state in counties where multiple newspapers are published. Due to the volatility of advertising rates and of the newspaper industry as a whole, the potential savings to the state in odd-numbered fiscal years is unknown.

**Oversight** notes §115.127.4 states “In lieu of causing legal notice to be published twice in accordance with any of the provisions of this chapter, the election authority may cause legal notice to be mailed within six weeks prior to the election to each registered voter at the voter's voting address and published once in one or more newspapers in the county. An election authority may exclude from this mailing any voter that is designated as an inactive voter pursuant to section 115.193.” Therefore, Oversight assumes this would result in reduced costs to the states proportional share of publication costs. Therefore, Oversight will reflect an unknown savings to SOS in the fiscal note. Oversight does not expect the fiscal impact to exceed the \$250,000 threshold.

Officials from the **Polk County Clerk** state this proposal will allow local election authorities the ability to still provide notice but in a more cost savings way. In Polk County there is 1 (one) newspaper available. Surrounding newspapers are struggling with the one in the county and do not truly provide the appropriate coverage for Polk County. Having a notice printed in a newspaper outside of the county jurisdiction does not ensure proper notice has been given. It only means that more tax dollars have been spent to have a legal notice published that the voters will not see.

While newspapers have historically been the best source of public information that simply isn't the case today. There are many different types of media outlets that are utilized by the public and a single source could now be considered disenfranchising voters. The ability for a local election authority to publish a legal notice one time and within the absentee voting window allows for earlier and better notification. Polk County would see a cost savings in legal publications of at least \$2,200 for 2027 & 2029 and \$4,300 for 2028.

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

In response to a previous version, officials from the **St. Louis City Board of Elections** assumed this proposal would have no fiscal impact on their organization.

**Oversight** notes the bill would permit election authorities to satisfy the statutory requirements by publishing in only one newspaper that either publishes in the county or otherwise serves the area. Therefore, Oversight will reflect an unknown savings to local election authorities in the fiscal note.

<u>FISCAL IMPACT – State Government</u>	FY 2027 (10 Mo.)	FY 2028	FY 2029
<b>GENERAL REVENUE</b>			
<u>Savings</u> – SOS (§115.127) Reduced proportional costs to LEAs for newspaper election notices p.3	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Unknown</u>
<b>ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON GENERAL REVENUE</b>	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Unknown</u>

<u>FISCAL IMPACT – Local Government</u>	FY 2027 (10 Mo.)	FY 2028	FY 2029
<b>LOCAL POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS</b>			
<u>Savings</u> – Local Election Authorities (§115.127) Reduced publication costs for newspaper election notices p.3	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Unknown</u>
<b>ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON LOCAL POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS</b>	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Unknown</u>

FISCAL IMPACT – Small Business

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

FISCAL DESCRIPTION

This bill provides that, in the case of a bond election, if an election contest is not filed within 30 days after the official announcement of the election result, all conditions of state election law shall be deemed to have been complied with in the issuance of the bond.

This bill modifies provisions relating to the publication of election notices.

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  
St. Louis County Board of Elections  
St. Louis City Board of Elections  
Polk County Clerk



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March 18, 2026



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