



Senate Fiscal Agency
P. O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7536

BILL ANALYSIS

Telephone: (517) 373-5383
Fax: (517) 373-1986

House Bill 4904 (as reported without amendment)
Sponsor: Representative Edward McBroom
House Committee: Elections
Senate Committee: Elections and Government Reform

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Michigan Election Law to include the date of a statewide presidential primary election as a regular election date. (The Law requires a statewide presidential primary election to be conducted on the second Tuesday in March in each presidential election year.)

The bill also specifies that a section of the Law governing local ballot deadlines would apply to and control the filing deadlines for candidates for local offices to be elected at the general November election and for local ballot questions at any regular election, primary election, or special election.

The bill includes a statement that it "is curative and intended to correct any misinterpretation of legislative intent by the Michigan court of appeals...", and expresses legislative intent that the section governing local ballots supersedes any conflicting provisions of law or charter prescribing filing deadlines for local candidates and ballot questions.

MCL 168.641 & 168.646a

Legislative Analyst: Suzanne Lowe

FISCAL IMPACT

Adding the presidential primary election date to the list of "regular election dates" would not result in new costs to the State, because the State incurs costs in years in which a presidential primary is held, regardless of whether it is considered a special, primary, or regular election, and the Law already requires a presidential primary to be held. The estimated cost for an election is approximately \$2,000 per precinct. With 5,200 precincts across the State, the estimated total cost is \$10.4 million. For FY 2015-16, \$10.0 million is appropriated to the Treasury Department for the 2016 presidential primary; however, the appropriation could fall short by approximately \$400,000 based on the costs of the May 2015 election for Proposal 1.

The bill could result in cost savings for local units of government as a presidential primary election would be considered a regular election date, which would allow a local unit to add any questions to that election. If the Legislature continued to appropriate funds for the primary election as has been done in the past, and for the upcoming 2016 primary election, local units could potentially realize savings of an estimated \$2,000 per precinct. There also could be a cost to local units for printing a third ballot (for local issues added to the election, in addition to the ballots for Republican presidential primary candidates and for Democratic presidential primary candidates; however, those costs would be negated by the savings.

The other amendments in the bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Date Completed: 10-23-15

Fiscal Analyst: Joe Carrasco

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.