



March 5, 2023

SUMMARY OF BILL: Authorizes municipal elections to be conducted on a partisan basis.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Increase Local Expenditures –

Up to \$3,217,900/FY23-24 and Every Four Years Thereafter/Permissive
Up to \$2,366,500/FY24-25 and Every Four Years Thereafter/Permissive
Up to \$789,100/FY25-26 and Every Four Years Thereafter/Permissive
Up to \$3,688,300/FY26-27 and Every Four Years Thereafter/Permissive

Assumptions:

- According to the Municipal Technical Advisory Service, there are 345 municipalities that currently conduct elections in this state.
- This analysis assumes that each municipality will perform a partisan primary, beginning in August 2023.
- In a 2019 study, *Timing of Municipal Elections in Tennessee: Continue to Authorize, Not Require, Election Consolidation*, the Tennessee Advisory Committee on Intergovernmental Relations found that in even-numbered years, 59 municipalities have elections that coincide with regular August elections and 221 municipalities have elections that coincide with regular November elections.
- Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 2-13-203(e)(3), primaries for nominating candidates for any office which will appear on the regular August election ballot must be held on the first Tuesday in May before the August election, or the same day as a presidential preference primary.
- The 59 municipalities whose elections coincide with regular August elections can hold their partisan primaries during the regular county primary in May, or the same day as a presidential preference primary, at no additional cost.
- In the event that a county does not otherwise need to hold a May primary in a year without a presidential election, local expenditures would likely increase for whichever of the 59 cities would still need to perform a primary election for municipal offices.
- The 221 municipalities whose elections coincide with regular November elections can hold their partisan primaries during regular August elections at no additional cost.
- Knoxville currently conducts primary elections for municipal offices.

- An additional 64 municipal primaries will need to be funded (345 total elections - 280 no cost elections - 1 election already with a primary).
- This analysis assumes all primary elections will occur at least two months before the general election.
- Therefore, eight municipalities whose elections take place in August 2023 will not have primaries in FY23-24.
- Nashville has a four-year election cycle and will not hold a primary until FY26-27.
- Memphis will have a primary in FY23-24 and is on a four-year election cycle.
- Chattanooga will have a primary in FY24-25 and is on a four-year election cycle.
- Six municipalities hold their elections in May or June in even-numbered years, and could perform their primaries alongside the March presidential preference primary every four years.
- Approximately 2/3 of all Tennesseans are registered to vote.
- The breakdown of new primary elections is estimated as follows:

Fiscal Year	Elections	Total Population	Registered Voters
FY23-24	18	804,483	536,322
FY24-25	39	591,633	394,422
FY25-26	23	197,272	131,515
FY26-27	39	922,080	614,720

- Based on reported election costs this analysis assumes an average cost of \$6 per registered voter per election.
- There is an estimated permissive increase in local expenditures up to \$3,217,932 (536,322 registered voters x \$6) in FY23-24 and every four years.
- There is an estimated permissive increase in local expenditures up to \$2,366,532 (394,422 registered voters x \$6) in FY24-25 and every four years.
- There is an estimated permissive increase in local expenditures up to \$789,088 (131,515 registered voters x \$6) in FY25-26 and every four years.
- There is an estimated permissive increase in local expenditures up to \$3,688,320 (614,720 registered voters x \$6) in FY26-27 and every four years.
- If more municipalities choose to move their election days to coincide with general or county elections then expenditures would likely decrease.
- In the event that a municipality has no contested primaries for a general election, or political parties choose to nominate candidates by means other than primary election, expenditures would also likely decrease.

CERTIFICATION:

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Krista Lee Carsner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Krista Lee Carsner, Executive Director

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