



Colorado Legislative Council Staff Fiscal Note
**LOCAL
 FISCAL IMPACT**

Drafting Number: LLS 10-0201	Date: January 19, 2010
Prime Sponsor(s): Rep. Court; Murray Sen. White	Bill Status: House SVMA
	Fiscal Analyst: Bill Zepernick (303-866-4777)

TITLE: CONCERNING THE FORM OF A STATEWIDE BALLOT TITLE.

Fiscal Impact Summary	FY 2010-2011	FY 2011-2012
State Revenue		
State Expenditures		
FTE Position Change		
Effective Date: Upon signature of the Governor, or upon becoming law without his signature, except sections 3 and 5, which shall take effect May 1, 2010.		
Appropriation Summary for FY 2010-2011: None required.		
Local Government Impact: See Local Government Impact Section.		

Summary of Legislation

The bill establishes a uniform style for statewide ballot titles for initiated and referred measures beginning in the 2011 election. These changes include:

- presenting key points of the ballot issue as a bulleted list rather than in paragraph form;
- expanding the "Yes" or "No" response to a ballot issue to "Yes, for the amendment/proposition" or "No, against the amendment/proposition"; and
- replacing the phrase "and, in connection therewith" with the word "that" before the bulleted section of the ballot title.

The bill also removes the requirement that the rules of the General Assembly concerning the single-subject requirement for legislation be followed when setting ballot titles.

Local Government Impact

The format changes to ballot titles required by the bill would increase costs to counties in two main areas: 1) printing and postage from increased ballot length; and 2) voting machine programming.

Printing and postage costs. Including bulleted lists in ballot titles and expanding the "Yes/No" voting description would make ballots longer, which would increase the printing and postage costs to counties. The exact length of ballots varies by election year and location, so it is difficult to predict what impact the format change would have in any given election in a county. In general election years with a large number of ballot measures, the format required by the bill could increase ballot length significantly.

A large, Front Range county reported that the format changes under the bill would have increased their 2008 general election ballot from 2 pages to 3 pages, and that such an increase would have resulted in additional printing costs of \$400,000. Mailing costs would also increase, depending on the additional weight of the ballot and the number of voters requesting mail ballots. Counties with smaller populations would also incur increased costs in these areas in proportion to their size. The increased printing and postage costs for counties would be lower in election years with fewer ballot measures.

Programming costs. Counties are required to maintain electronic voting machines for the purpose of complying with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). The formatting changes to ballot titles would require a one-time programming change to ensure that voting machines properly display ballot measures. Counties that have in-house programmers can likely absorb the extra staff time required to make the changes; counties that contract with outside programmers would likely incur increased costs to pay their contractors to make these changes to their electronic voting systems.

Departments Contacted

Legislature

State