

Background

Under current law, citizens may initiate changes to state law by collecting petition signatures in an amount equal to 5 percent of the number of votes cast for the office of Secretary of State in the last general election. Based on the number of votes cast in the 2010 general election, the current requirement is 86,105 signatures. HCR12-1003 requires that the total include at least 8,610 signatures from each congressional district. The total number of signatures required will remain the same as under current law.

An average of 6 constitutional initiative petitions are filed for each even-year election and 3 for each odd-year election. The Secretary of State verifies petitions by first checking a random sample of signatures submitted. If the random sampling does not lead to a determination that the number of valid signatures is either sufficient or not, the secretary must verify each signature until a sufficient number of valid signatures is found, or the petition is deemed insufficient. Under current law, random sampling leads to a determination of sufficiency for about 90 percent of all initiatives submitted.

State Expenditures

Requiring that signatures be collected from each congressional district will likely increase the number of petitions requiring signature verification, rather than random sampling, and this will increase costs of the Department of State. Costs are estimated to increase by \$165,000 in FY 2012-13. Actual costs will differ depending on the number of petitions for initiated constitutional amendments submitted and the number requiring signature verification versus random sampling. This analysis assumes that 70 percent of initiative petitions will require signature verification, compared with 10 percent under current law. Based on this, it is estimated that, on average, 1 additional petition will require verification in odd-year elections, and that 3 additional petitions will require verification in even-year elections.

Historically, the Department of State receives an appropriation of \$250,000 from the Department of State Cash Fund in even-numbered years and \$150,000 in odd-numbered years for signature verification. The \$165,000 identified above is over and above the appropriation made in even-numbered years. The appropriation received in odd-numbered years is expected to cover the increased costs once the bill is implemented.

Election Expenditure Impacts (For Informational Purposes Only)

The bill refers a measure to the voters at the November 2012 general election. This measure will be published in newspapers and an analysis of the measure will be included in the Blue Book mailed to all registered voter households prior to the election. Under current law, costs for these functions are paid through a General Fund line item in the Long Appropriations Bill. Table 1 below identifies the anticipated costs for the 2012 Blue Book.

Table 1. Cost to Produce and Distribute the 2012 Blue Book to All Registered Voter Households	
Printing	\$400,000
Postage	\$450,000
Translation	\$20,000
Newspaper Publication (English & Spanish)	\$500,000
Total Cost (14 issues)	\$1,370,000
Average Cost per Issue	\$97,857

State Appropriations

For FY 2012-13, the Department of State requires an appropriation of \$165,000 from the Department of State Cash Fund.

Departments Contacted

Judicial Law Legislature State