

LSC Redbook

Analysis of the Executive Budget Proposal

Ohio Elections Commission

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ATTACHMENTS:

- Catalog of Budget Line Items
- Budget Spreadsheet By Line Item

Ohio Elections Commission

- Total recommended budget of \$1.1 million over the FY 2012-FY 2013 biennium
- Approximately 60% of funding from the GRF

OVERVIEW

Agency Overview

The Ohio Elections Commission (ELC) oversees political party spending, campaign finance, and corporate political contributions to ensure compliance with the Ohio Elections Law set forth in Chapter 3517. of the Revised Code. The Commission issues advisory opinions on campaign finance questions, responds to questions about campaign activities, and acts as an enforcement body and customer service center for the policing of campaign activities. Generally, ELC handles between 800 and 1,000 cases during the course of a biennium. Any resulting fines are deposited into the Elections Commission Fund (Fund 4P20). The Commission consists of seven appointed members including three Republicans, three Democrats, and one Independent. The Commission employs a staff of three people, including an executive director and two administrative assistants.

Appropriation Overview

As Table 1 below shows, the executive recommends \$558,117 in both FY 2012 and FY 2013. This is a decrease of 6.7% when compared to estimated FY 2011 expenditures of \$598,420. Overall, approximately 60% of ELC's funding comes from the GRF. Most of that funding – about 85.0% – is for personnel costs.

Fund Group	FY 2011*	FY 2012	% change, FY 2011-FY 2012	FY 2013	% change, FY 2012-FY 2013
General Revenue	\$343,420	\$333,117	(3.0%)	\$333,117	0.0%
General Services	\$255,000	\$225,000	(11.8%)	\$225,000	0.0%
TOTAL	\$598,420	\$558,117	(6.7%)	\$558,117	0.0%

*FY 2011 figures represent estimated expenditures.

The remainder of ELC's funding comes from the Ohio Elections Commission Fund (Fund 4P20), which receives a portion of filing fees for petitions of candidacy collected by the Secretary of State, including races for statewide offices and ballot

issues, races for Ohio House and Senate seats, and penalties imposed by the Commission. The rest of the fees are deposited into the GRF. All of the fees for local candidates and issues are remitted to the county treasury. Fund 4P20 receives approximately \$300,000 in even-numbered fiscal years and \$100,000 in odd-numbered fiscal years from these filing fees, primarily because most candidate election cycles occur in even-numbered years. Table 2 below shows these fees and the portion deposited into Fund 4P20.

Table 2. Statutory Fees for Filing Petition of Candidacy		
Elective Office	Amount	Portion to Fund 4P20
Statewide Elective Offices, including Supreme Court	\$150	\$50
State Board of Education	\$55	\$35
Judge	\$80	\$30
District – State Legislators, U.S. Representatives	\$85	\$35
City	\$45	\$25
County	\$80	\$30
Township and Village	\$30	\$20
School Board and Educational Service Center	\$30	\$20
Questions and Issues		
Statewide	\$25	\$25
City	\$12.50	\$12.50
County or Multi-County District	\$15	\$15
Precinct or Sub-County District	\$10	\$10
School Board/Educational Service Center	\$10	\$10

ANALYSIS OF EXECUTIVE PROPOSAL

Governor's Recommended Funding for the Ohio Elections Commission				
Fund	ALI and Name		FY 2012	FY 2013
General Revenue Fund				
GRF	051321	Operating Expenses	\$333,117	\$333,117
General Revenue Fund Subtotal			\$333,117	\$333,117
General Services Fund Group				
4P20	051601	Ohio Elections Commission Fund	\$225,000	\$225,000
General Services Fund Group Subtotal			\$225,000	\$225,000
Total Funding: Ohio Elections Commission			\$558,117	\$558,117

Operating Expenses (051321)

This GRF line item is used to pay the personnel, maintenance, and equipment costs of ELC. The executive funds this line item at \$333,117 in both FY 2012 and FY 2013, a 3% decrease from FY 2011 estimated expenditures of \$343,420. ELC is governed by a seven-member board whose salaries are set in accordance with section 3517.152 of the Revised Code. That section fixes the salary at \$25,000 and provides for members to be reimbursed for expenses. ELC employs three administrative staff: an executive director who also serves as the staff attorney, an executive assistant, and an administrative assistant. The individual working as an administrative assistant recently retired. ELC elected to rehire this individual as a part-time employee rather than hiring a new full-time employee in order to reduce personnel costs going forward.

Ohio Elections Commission Fund (051601)

This General Services Fund line item is used to supplement funding for the Commission's operating expenses. The revenue supporting this appropriation is derived from a portion of the fees collected for petitions of candidacy for various political offices and a portion of fees collected for filing petitions for ballot questions and issues (see Table 2 in the **Overview** section). The executive funds this line item at \$225,000 for FY 2012 and FY 2013, a decrease of 11.8% from estimated FY 2011 spending of \$255,000. Note that the appropriations for this line item during the current biennium were increased to reflect additional cash available in Fund 4P20 as the result of a large fine that was collected for elections law violations. This helped offset a substantial reduction in the GRF appropriations that ELC sustained in H.B. 1, the main operating budget act for the FY 2010-FY 2011 biennium.

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Ohio Elections Commission

General Revenue Fund

GRF 051321 Operating Expenses

FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	Estimate FY 2011	Introduced FY 2012	Introduced FY 2013
\$407,212	\$406,975	\$338,325	\$343,420	\$333,117	\$333,117
	-0.1%	-16.9%	1.5%	-3.0%	0.0%

Source: General Revenue Fund

Legal Basis: Section 267.10 of Am. Sub. H.B. 1 of the 128th G.A.

Purpose: This line item is used to pay for a portion of the Election Commission's personnel, maintenance, and equipment costs. The Commission hears approximately 800 to 1,000 cases over a biennium.

General Services Fund Group

4P20 051601 Ohio Elections Commission Fund

FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	Estimate FY 2011	Introduced FY 2012	Introduced FY 2013
\$207,037	\$203,158	\$228,136	\$255,000	\$225,000	\$225,000
	-1.9%	12.3%	11.8%	-11.8%	0.0%

Source: General Services Fund Group: Filing fee revenue from declarations of candidacy and ballot question/issue; fine revenue from violators of Ohio's election laws

Legal Basis: Section 267.10 of Am. Sub. H.B. 1 of the 128th G.A. (originally established by Am. Sub. S.B. 9 of the 121st G.A.)

Purpose: Moneys appropriated to this line item are also used to pay expenses related to the operation of the Elections Commission. The increased FY 2011 appropriation is supported by income from a large fine imposed in FY 2009. This increase has been used to offset the reduction in the Commission's GRF funding for FY 2010-FY 2011.

FY 2012 - FY 2013 Introduced Appropriation Amounts

All Fund Groups

Line Item Detail by Agency			FY 2010	Estimate FY 2011	Introduced FY 2012	FY 2011 to FY 2012 % Change	Introduced FY 2013	FY 2012 to FY 2013 % Change
Report For Main Operating Appropriations Bill			Version: As Introduced					
ELC Ohio Elections Commission								
GRF	051321	Operating Expenses	\$ 338,325	\$ 343,420	\$ 333,117	-3.00%	\$ 333,117	0.00%
General Revenue Fund Total			\$ 338,325	\$ 343,420	\$ 333,117	-3.00%	\$ 333,117	0.00%
4P20	051601	Ohio Elections Commission Fund	\$ 228,136	\$ 255,000	\$ 225,000	-11.76%	\$ 225,000	0.00%
General Services Fund Group Total			\$ 228,136	\$ 255,000	\$ 225,000	-11.76%	\$ 225,000	0.00%
Ohio Elections Commission Total			\$ 566,461	\$ 598,420	\$ 558,117	-6.73%	\$ 558,117	0.00%