

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 2014-FY 2015 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. Hearings before the Commission typically entail complaints brought against individual candidates, campaign committees, political action committees, or corporations that are required to file financial reports. The Commission also handles a number of cases dealing with false campaign statements and various nondisclosure issues. Generally, ELC handles between 800 and 1,000 cases annually. 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, an executive assistant, and an administrative assistant.

Appropriation Overview

As Table 1 below shows, the executive recommends \$558,117 in both FY 2014 and FY 2015, matching estimated FY 2013 expenditures. Under the executive budget, 59.7% of ELC's funding comes from the GRF. Overall, most of the total proposed funding – about 80.8% – is for personnel costs.

Fund Group	FY 2013*	FY 2014	% change, FY 2013-FY 2014	FY 2015	% change, FY 2014-FY 2015
General Revenue	\$333,117	\$333,117	0.0%	\$333,117	0.0%
General Services	\$255,000	\$225,000	0.0%	\$225,000	0.0%
TOTAL	\$558,117	\$558,117	0.0%	\$558,117	0.0%

*FY 2013 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. 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 Elections Filings		
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 2014	FY 2015
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 the Commission. The executive funds this line item at \$333,117 in both FY 2014 and FY 2015, matching FY 2013 estimated expenditures. 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 for appointed Commission members at \$25,000 and provides for members to be reimbursed for expenses. ELC employs three administrative staff: (1) an executive director who also serves as the staff attorney, (2) an executive assistant, and (3) an administrative assistant. The administrative assistant works on a part-time basis.

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. The applicable fees can be found in Table 2 in the "Overview" portion of this document. The executive funds this line item at \$225,000 for FY 2014 and FY 2015, matching estimated FY 2013 spending levels. The cash balance in the fund as of January 2013 was \$124,941. Fund 4P20 historically collects approximately \$400,000 per biennium, the majority of that amount received during election cycles in the even-numbered calendar years.

Ohio Elections Commission

General Revenue Fund

GRF 051321 Operating Expenses

FY 2010 Actual	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Estimate	FY 2014 Introduced	FY 2015 Introduced
\$338,325	\$325,114	\$335,461	\$333,117	\$333,117	\$333,117
	-3.9%	3.2%	-0.7%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: General Revenue Fund

Legal Basis: ORC 3517.152; Section 269.10 of Am. Sub. H.B. 153 of the 129th 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 annually.

General Services Fund Group

4P20 051601 Ohio Elections Commission Fund

FY 2010 Actual	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Estimate	FY 2014 Introduced	FY 2015 Introduced
\$228,136	\$200,541	\$218,620	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000
	-12.1%	9.0%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: General Services Fund Group: Filing fee revenue from declarations of candidacy, as well as ballot questions and issues; fine revenue derived from violations of Ohio's election laws

Legal Basis: ORC 3517.152; Section 269.10 of Am. Sub. H.B. 153 of the 129th G.A.

Purpose: This line item is used to supplement GRF funding for the operation of the Elections Commission.

FY 2014 - FY 2015 Introduced Appropriation Amounts

All Fund Groups

Line Item Detail by Agency			FY 2012	Estimate FY 2013	Introduced FY 2014	FY 2013 to FY 2014 % Change	Introduced FY 2015	FY 2014 to FY 2015 % Change
Report For Main Operating Appropriations Bill			Version: As Introduced					
ELC Ohio Elections Commission								
GRF	051321	Operating Expenses	\$ 335,461	\$ 333,117	\$ 333,117	0.00%	\$ 333,117	0.00%
General Revenue Fund Total			\$ 335,461	\$ 333,117	\$ 333,117	0.00%	\$ 333,117	0.00%
4P20	051601	Ohio Elections Commission Fund	\$ 218,620	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000	0.00%	\$ 225,000	0.00%
General Services Fund Group Total			\$ 218,620	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000	0.00%	\$ 225,000	0.00%
Ohio Elections Commission Total			\$ 554,081	\$ 558,117	\$ 558,117	0.00%	\$ 558,117	0.00%