

LSC Greenbook

Analysis of the Enacted Budget

Ohio Elections Commission

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July 2013

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ATTACHMENT:

Budget Spreadsheet By Line Item

Ohio Elections Commission

- Total appropriations 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. 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 budget appropriates \$558,117 in both FY 2014 and FY 2015, an increase of 1.9% from FY 2013 spending of \$547,670 for board operations. Under the budget, \$666,234 (59.7%) of ELC's funding over the biennium comes from the GRF, while the remaining \$450,000 (40.3%) comes from various campaign filing fees and penalties deposited into the Ohio Elections Commission Fund (Fund 4P20).

Fund Group	FY 2013*	FY 2014	% change, FY 2013-FY 2014	FY 2015	% change, FY 2014-FY 2015
General Revenue	\$333,270	\$333,117	-0.1%	\$333,117	0.0%
General Services	\$214,400	\$225,000	4.9%	\$225,000	0.0%
TOTAL	\$547,670	\$558,117	1.9%	\$558,117	0.0%

*FY 2013 figures represent actual expenditures.

Filing fees deposited into Fund 4P20 include those for petitions of candidacy collected by the Secretary of State 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 ENACTED BUDGET

Appropriations 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 budget funds this line item at \$333,117 in both FY 2014 and FY 2015, a negligible decrease compared to FY 2013 spending of \$333,270 for these purposes. 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)

Fund 4P20 appropriation item 051601, Ohio Elections Commission Fund, is used to supplement funding for the Commission's operating expenses. H.B. 59 funds this line item at \$225,000 in both fiscal years of the FY 2014-FY 2015 biennium, an increase of 4.9% over FY 2013 spending of \$214,400. 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 and the portions remitted to Fund 4P20 can be found in Table 2 of the "**Overview**" section. Fund 4P20 historically collects approximately \$400,000 per biennium, the majority of that amount received during election cycles in the even-numbered calendar years.

FY 2014 - FY 2015 Final Appropriation Amounts

All Fund Groups

Line Item Detail by Agency

			FY 2012	FY 2013	Appropriation FY 2014	FY 2013 to FY 2014 % Change	Appropriation FY 2015	FY 2014 to FY 2015 % Change
Report For Main Operating Appropriations Bill			Version: Enacted					
ELC Ohio Elections Commission								
GRF	051321	Operating Expenses	\$ 335,461	\$ 333,270	\$ 333,117	-0.05%	\$ 333,117	0.00%
General Revenue Fund Total			\$ 335,461	\$ 333,270	\$ 333,117	-0.05%	\$ 333,117	0.00%
4P20	051601	Ohio Elections Commission Fund	\$ 218,620	\$ 214,400	\$ 225,000	4.94%	\$ 225,000	0.00%
General Services Fund Group Total			\$ 218,620	\$ 214,400	\$ 225,000	4.94%	\$ 225,000	0.00%
Ohio Elections Commission Total			\$ 554,081	\$ 547,670	\$ 558,117	1.91%	\$ 558,117	0.00%