



Fiscal Note

Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado’s Legislature

SB 26-119: AUTHORIZE LOCAL ELECTRONIC BALLOT RETURN

Prime Sponsors:

Sen. Mullica
Rep. Carter; Lukens

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Version: Initial Fiscal Note

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Fiscal note status: This fiscal note reflects the introduced bill.

Summary Information

Overview. The bill allows municipalities and any district that conducts elections to use electronic ballot returns.

Types of impacts. The bill is projected to affect the following areas on an ongoing basis:

- Minimal State Expenditures
- Local Government

Appropriations. No appropriation is required.

**Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts**

Type of Impact	Budget Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
State Revenue	\$0	\$0
State Expenditures	\$0	\$0
Transferred Funds	\$0	\$0
Change in TABOR Refunds	\$0	\$0
Change in State FTE	0.0 FTE	0.0 FTE

Summary of Legislation

The bill allows municipalities, and any district, authority or subdivision of the state authorized to conduct local elections, to use electronic ballot returns for local elections governed by the Colorado Municipal Election Code and the Colorado Local Government Election Code, respectively.

The bill does not impact statewide and federal elections, nor does it apply to local elections conducted as part of a coordinated election run by county clerks under the Uniform Election Code.

The Department of State (DOS) is required to publish guidelines and adopt rules for using electronic ballot return. To use an electronic ballot, the local governing body must use a transmission system meeting specified qualifications and conforming to rules adopted by the DOS.

State Expenditures

The bill minimally increases workload for the DOS to adopt rules and guidelines for the use of electronic ballot returns. In addition, the Department of Local Affairs will have a minimal workload increase to update technical assistance documents and other materials for local governments conducting elections. This workload increase does not require additional appropriations.

Local Government

The bill will both increase costs and create savings for municipalities, special districts, and other subdivisions that choose to conduct elections using electronic ballot returns. If a local governing body chooses to use electronic ballot returns, there will be additional hardware, software, and vendor costs to set up this voting method. In addition, if local governments replace all, or a portion, of mail ballots or paper ballots with electronic ballots, cost savings on ballot printing and postage will be incurred. Costs and savings will vary by jurisdiction.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed.

State and Local Government Contacts

County Clerks

Municipalities

Information Technology

Secretary of State

Local Affairs

Special District Association