

LARIMER COUNTY | BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

P.O. Box 1190, Fort Collins, Colorado 80522-1190, 970.498.7010, Larimer.org

April 2, 2019

Chris Kennedy
200 E Colfax
RM 307
Denver, CO 80203
United States

RE: HB 1278 The Election Omnibus Bill

Dear Representative Kennedy:

The Larimer County Board of Commissioners requests you and all members of the House State, Veterans & Military Affairs Committee oppose or amend HB19-1278 The Election Omnibus Bill to address our county's budgetary concerns.

This bill has grave consequences for Larimer County, because we do not have the funds to comply with the Voter Service & Polling Center formula in this bill.

As you know, Larimer County has been a leader in making it easier for citizens to vote in our elections. A very high percentage of our voters use mail ballots. Our vote centers and polling centers are infrequently used because of the popularity of mail ballots and have very minimal or no wait times. Our County Clerk, Angela Myers, has already developed plans to address the minimal wait times experienced in Larimer County, within the confines of her current budget. She has informed us that other counties have similar plans.

The Voter Service & Polling formula in this bill is a solution in search of a non-existent problem. At best, it addresses an issue seen in a few counties with a one-size-fits-all statewide approach.

County Clerk Myers has determined it would cost Larimer County, as a Tier 1 County, an estimated to be \$819,411 initially and \$2,307,451 over five years. As a Tier 0 County, which we will be very soon if that definition remains at 250,000 voters, the impact on Larimer will be \$2,204,775 the first year and \$5,797,233 over five years. We do not have the funds to cover these additional costs in our budget. Election costs have gone up every year for us, and with the Gallagher Amendment's effect on the residential assessment rate lowering our property tax revenue, we have no way to raise such revenue.





We urge you to defeat this bill or amend out the Voter Service & Polling Center formula in this bill. Without such action, the bill will eliminate county reserves. However, if the legislature feels this is essential or cannot be accomplished in committee, we ask that you send this bill to the Appropriations Committee for an appropriation clause sufficient to fully fund the initial election and all future election costs associated with these provisions.

We believe that the correct solutions for Larimer County are unique to Larimer County. Thank you for your attention to what could be a significantly negative impact on Larimer and other Colorado counties.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "L. DeG.", written over a faint, illegible printed name.

The Larimer County Board of Commissioners

Cc: State, Veterans, & Military Affairs House Committee members.