

RULES AMENDMENT

The Rules Committee offers the following amendment to File 2021-706:

- (1) On **page 1, lines 5-31, page 2, lines 1-31, page 3, lines 1-31, page 4, lines 1-31, page 5, lines 1-31, page 6, lines 1-31, page 7, lines 1-31, page 8, lines 1-31, page 9, lines 1-31, and page 10, line 1, strike** all language in its entirety and **insert** new language to read as follows:

AN ORDINANCE TO BE KNOWN AS THE
"GOVERNMENT REDUCTION BILL,"
SETTING A PUBLIC STRAW BALLOT
REFERENDUM TO DETERMINE WHETHER
THE COUNCIL SHOULD CALL A
BINDING REFERENDUM OF THE
ELECTORS AS TO AMENDING THE
CHARTER AND REDUCING THE TOTAL
NUMBER OF COUNCIL MEMBERS FROM
19 TO 14; PROVIDING FOR A
FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT TO BE
DEVELOPED AND PLACED ON THE
BALLOT; DIRECTING THE SUPERVISOR
OF ELECTIONS TO PLACE THE
REFERENDUM QUESTION ON THE
SPECIAL ELECTION BALLOT ON
FEBRUARY 22, 2022; PROVIDING AN
EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the issue of maintaining a 19-member City Council has been debated extensively by the City Council, and has been discussed intermittently by advisory committees such as the Charter Revision Commission and the Task Force on Consolidated Government; and

WHEREAS, the salary, benefits and administrative costs of having one council member is around \$175,000 each year, with the cost of having five council members being approximately \$885,000 each year; and

WHEREAS, based on other similar county commission representation, a reduced City Council could adequately represent the residents of the City; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic instability it created for many local taxpayers, saving taxpayer dollars has become a critical concern to local taxpayers, voters and leaders; and

WHEREAS, the cost to the taxpayer for the representation of 14 council members would be less; and

WHEREAS, the Council finds that the decrease in total number of council members from 19 to 14 would save the taxpayers a substantial amount over the next several decades and arguably there would be negligible detriment to the public by reducing the

council representatives to 14 total members; and

WHEREAS, the City Council believes its citizens should be afforded an opportunity to speak out and provide guidance to the Council on the issue of reducing the number of Council Members from 19 to 14 and the question should be offered to the voters as a straw ballot; now therefore

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Jacksonville:

Section 1. Referendum.

(a) A straw ballot referendum of the qualified electors residing in Duval County, Florida is hereby called to be held on February 22, 2022, set as a Special Election, to determine whether voters support a reduction of total Council Members from 19 to 14, as set forth in this ordinance.

(b) The referendum shall be held and conducted in the manner prescribed by *Florida Statutes* and Section 18.05 of the Charter of the City of Jacksonville for holding straw ballots under a referendum provision.

(c) All qualified electors in Duval County shall be entitled and permitted to vote in the referendum. The places and times of voting shall be those polling places and times established for voting by law. The inspectors and clerks for the referendum shall be designated by the Supervisor of Elections in accordance with applicable State law.

(d) Upon approval of this ordinance, the Supervisor of Elections shall notify the Mayor, City Council President, General Counsel and Council Auditor, by hand and certified mail, of a duty to prepare, within thirty (30) days of such notice, an up to seventy-five (75) word financial impact estimate of the increase or decrease of any revenues or costs to the City of Jacksonville resulting from the implementation of the proposed charter amendment. The financial impact estimate shall be constructed, within the thirty (30) day period, by a committee composed of one representative appointed by the Mayor, one appointed by the City Council President, the General Counsel or his or her designee chosen from the General Counsel's office, the Council Auditor and one member having appropriate fiscal expertise in the subject matter of the proposed charter amendment and selected by the other members stated above. The Office of the Council Auditor and the Department of Finance and Administration shall be made available as resources. The Council Auditor shall chair the committee and ensure the timely completion of the financial impact estimate in time to be included on the referendum ballot and advertised as required for the charter amendment.

(e) The Supervisor of Elections is authorized and directed, when printing the absentee ballots and ballot strips for use in the voting machines for the

special election called in Subsection 1(a) hereinabove, to print the ballot title and referendum question set forth in sections 3 and 4 hereof on said absentee ballots and ballot strips at the appropriate place therefor. Immediately after said question shall be provided a space for the voter to indicate whether the vote is "yes" or "no" on the question.

Section 2. Notice of Referendum. The Supervisor of Elections is directed to ensure at least thirty (30) days' notice of the referendum by publishing at least twice in a daily newspaper of general circulation in Duval County, once in the fifth week and once in the third week prior to the week in which the referendum is to be held, in the manner provided in Section 18.05 of the City Charter and Section 100.342, *Florida Statutes*.

Section 3. Ballot Title. The Council hereby directs that the straw ballot title for the referendum question be in substantially the following form:

"STRAW BALLOT CALLING FOR
REDUCTION IN CITY OF
JACKSONVILLE COUNCIL
MEMBERS FROM 19 TO 14"

Section 4. Official Ballot. The Council hereby directs that the following straw ballot referendum question, in substantially the form set forth below, be placed on the ballot at the election

to be held on February 22, 2022, the Final Special Election:

"Should City of Jacksonville call for a binding referendum to approve changes to Jacksonville's Charter, Article 5 (the Council), to reduce the total number of Jacksonville City Council members from 19 to 14?"

(_____) YES.

(_____) NO.

Section 5. Referendum Results. The Supervisor of Elections for Duval County, Florida shall certify the results of the straw ballot referendum to the Florida Department of State in accordance with law.

Section 6. Exercise of County Powers. This ordinance is enacted by the Council exercising its power as the governing body of Duval County, Florida, under Section 3.01, of the Charter of the City of Jacksonville. All duly qualified electors of the county shall be entitled to vote thereon.

Section 7. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective upon signature by the Mayor or upon becoming effective without the Mayor's signature.";

- (2) On **page 1, line 1**, amend the introductory sentence to add that the bill was amended as reflected herein.

Form Approved:

/s/ Margaret M. Sidman

Office of General Counsel

Legislation Prepared By: Paige H. Johnston

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