

**CITY COUNCIL RESEARCH DIVISION
LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY**



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Bill Type and Number: Ordinance 2024-738

Introducer/Sponsor(s): Council President at the request of the Supervisor of Elections

Date of Introduction: September 10, 2024

Committee(s) of Reference: R, F

Date of Analysis: September 12, 2024

Type of Action: Appropriation; authorization to execute grant documents; designation of oversight agency; request for emergency passage upon introduction

Bill Summary: The bill appropriates a \$148,870 grant from the U.S. Department of Defense through the Federal Voting Assistance Program to provide funding to the City for a digital ballot duplication system to implement a hardware solution to duplicate returned Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) ballots that are unreadable or on the incorrect paper stock. The Supervisor of Elections is authorized to execute a grant agreement for the funds. Emergency approval of the bill on first reading is requested. The Supervisor of Elections is designated as the oversight official for the grant.

Background Information: The grant from the Electronic Absentee Systems for Elections (EASE) Grants for States, Territories and Localities program supports the goals of lowering error rates, achieving faster duplication times, and more transparency for UOCAVA voters by leveraging a digital ballot duplication system. This funding also intends to reduce staff burden by using more efficient processes. Current manual approaches are both inefficient and raise concerns of accuracy. The COJ EASE project is designed to implement a hardware solution to duplicate returned UOCAVA ballots that are unreadable due to being damaged in the mail or were printed at home on the incorrect paper stock, while improving transparency and trust in the UOCAVA process.

While the total award agreement (#H98210-24-1-006) is for 60 months (July 14, 2024 through July 14, 2029) and a total of \$744,350, only \$148,870. (year 1 funding) has been made available for obligation at present.

Policy Impact Area: Overseas ballot tabulation

Fiscal Impact: The bill appropriates a \$148,870 federal grant with no local match required.

Analyst: Clements