

**CITY COUNCIL RESEARCH DIVISION
LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY**



JEFFREY R. CLEMENTS
Chief of Research
(904) 255-5137

117 West Duval Street
City Hall, Suite 425
Jacksonville, FL 32202
FAX (904) 255-5229

Bill Type and Number: Ordinance 2021-706

Introducer/Sponsor(s): Council Member Dennis

Date of Introduction: September 28, 2021

Committee(s) of Reference: NSCPHS, F, R

Date of Analysis: September 30, 2021

Type of Action: City Charter amendment; revising elected official terms of office; providing for voter referendum

Bill Summary: The bill amends the City Charter in Article 5 – The Council – to reduce the size of the City Council to 14 members by the elimination of the 5 at-large council members, subject to referendum approval by the voters. It provides for the holding of the referendum and the publication of required notices. It sets the ballot question wording and provides that the elimination of the 5 at-large seats, if approved by the referendum, would take effect for the City government elections held in 2030 or thereafter.

The bill also amends the title of Charter Section 5.06 to delete the words “temporary appointments” since the section no longer contains any language relating to temporary appointments to fill vacancies on the Council.

Background Information: The bill is entitled the “Government Reduction Bill” and cites a cost savings of nearly \$900,000 per year from the elimination of the at-large seats. The preamble of the bill states that the at-large council members have a less defined role in the Charter than the district members, and that the 14 district members could adequately represent the residents of the city at a lower cost. The referendum date is set for the special election scheduled for February 22, 2022 to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Council Member Hazouri.

Charter Sec. 5.06, currently titled Vacancies, Temporary Appointments, previously contained language providing for the appointment by the City Council of a person to fill a vacancy on the Council occurring less than two years before the next city government election. That language was removed many years ago, but the title of the section was never changed accordingly. This amendment would remove that outdated title reference.

Policy Impact Area: Size of City Council

Fiscal Impact: The bill states an estimated cost savings of \$885,000 per year in salary, benefits and administrative costs from elimination of the at-large members.

Analyst: Clements