

CITY COUNCIL RESEARCH DIVISION LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY



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Bill Type and Number: Ordinance 2021-707

Introducer/Sponsor(s): Council Member Dennis

Date of Introduction: September 28, 2021

Committee(s) of Reference: NCSPHS, TEU, F, R, LUZ

Date of Analysis: September 30, 2021

Type of Action: City Charter amendment; Ordinance Code amendment; providing for voter referendum

Bill Summary: The bill amends the City Charter in numerous articles to change the date for City elections from the spring of odd-numbered years to the fall of even-numbered years to coincide with the gubernatorial election cycle, subject to approval by the voters at a referendum. It also changes the dates for taking office to January 1 for the Mayor, City Council members, Sheriff, Supervisor of Elections, Property Appraiser and Tax Collector. The bill provides for a transition process by having the officials elected in the spring 2027 election serve terms shortened by 6 months from June 30, 2031 to December 31, 2030 and by holding a City election in the fall gubernatorial cycle of 2030 with those elected to take office on January 1, 2031. The bill sets the referendum for the February 22, 2022 special election to fill the seat vacated by the death of Council Member Hazouri, sets the ballot question language, and provides for the publication of notices and the preparation of a referendum fiscal impact statement.

Background Information: The bill's preamble states that the question of moving City elections from stand-alone status in the spring to the fall of the year to coincide with statewide general elections has been debated extensively over the years by the City Council, previous Charter Revision Commissions, and the Task Force on Consolidated Government. It states that voter turnout in spring elections is generally lower than at the fall general elections and notes that the cost of consolidated government elections is approximately \$2 million per election (first and second) or \$4 million per 4-year cycle. The preamble also states that having elected officials take office in January gives them more time to become acclimated to their office and to prepare for the budget adoption process than taking office in July.

Policy Impact Area: City election cycle

Fiscal Impact: The bill states that the cost of stand-alone City elections in the spring is approximately \$4 million that would be avoided if the election was scheduled to coincide with the existing fall general elections.

Analyst: Clements