

Original and Final Initiative 2023-2024 #136: Timely Reporting of Elections

Be it Enacted by the People of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Declaration of the People of Colorado

IT IS IN THE INTEREST OF THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF COLORADO THAT THERE IS TIMELY PROCESSING OF BALLOTS, CULMINATING WITH THE TIMELY REPORTING OF ELECTION RESULTS ON ELECTION DAY AFTER THE POLLS CLOSE, BECAUSE IT CONTRIBUTES TO THE PUBLIC'S FAITH AND CONFIDENCE IN THE ELECTION PROCESS.

IN FURTHERANCE OF THIS GOAL, IT IS THE INTENT OF THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF COLORADO THAT: (A) STATE AND LOCAL ELECTIONS OFFICIALS ORGANIZE THEIR OFFICES AND OPERATIONS TO PROCESS AND REPORT ELECTION RESULTS IN A TIMELY MANNER, PRIORITIZING THE TIMELY COUNTING OF BALLOTS AS THE VITAL PUBLIC INTEREST THAT IT IS; AND (B) THE STATE OF COLORADO AND ITS SUBDIVISIONS SHOULD SUFFICIENT FUNDING TO STATE AND LOCAL ELECTION OFFICES AND OPERATIONS SO THAT THEY HAVE THE RESOURCES AND STAFFING TO BOTH COUNT BALLOTS RECEIVED BEFORE ELECTION DAY AND, TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT PRACTICABLE, COMPLETE ALL PROCESSING, COUNTING, AND REPORTING OF BALLOTS ON ELECTION DAY.

SECTION 2. In constitution of the state of Colorado, **add** section 13 to article VII as follows:

SECTION 13. TIMELY REPORTING OF ELECTION RESULTS. (1) IT IS THE INTENT OF THE PEOPLE OF COLORADO THAT ALL VOTES LAWFULLY CAST ARE COUNTED BEFORE 11:59 P.M. ON ELECTION DAY, AND WHEN NOT REASONABLY POSSIBLE, AS SOON AS IS PRACTICABLE.

(2) (a) IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE TIMELY PROCESSING AND REPORTING OF ELECTION RESULTS, INCLUDING RESULTS FROM GENERAL ELECTIONS CONDUCTED USING INSTANT RUNOFF VOTING, COUNTING OF MAIL BALLOTS SHALL BEGIN UPON RECEIPT, AND EVERY BALLOT RECEIVED BEFORE ELECTION DAY SHALL BE COUNTED BY ELECTION DAY.

(b) ELECTION OFFICIALS SHALL USE ALL REASONABLE EFFORTS, INCLUDING REQUESTING SUFFICIENT STAFF AND RESOURCES, TO FOSTER THE TIMELY REPORTING OF ELECTION RESULTS BEGINNING AT 7 P.M. ON ELECTION DAY.

(3) NO INFORMATION CONCERNING THE COUNT SHALL BE RELEASED BY THE ELECTION OFFICIALS OR WATCHERS UNTIL AFTER 7 P.M. ON ELECTION DAY.

(4) FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS CONDUCTED USING INSTANT RUNOFF VOTING, RESULTS OF ALL TABULATIONS OF THE INSTANT RUNOFF SHALL BE REPORTED ON A COUNTY BY COUNTY, DISTRICT BY DISTRICT, AND STATEWIDE BASIS, WHICHEVER IS APPLICABLE.

(5) THE SECRETARY OF STATE SHALL ESTABLISH RULES TO ENSURE THE TIMELY TABULATION OF VOTES.

(6) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHALL PROVIDE THE NECESSARY FUNDING SO THAT COUNTIES HAVE ADEQUATE STAFFING, SYSTEMS, AND TECHNOLOGY TO TIMELY COMPLETE THE COUNTING AND REPORTING OF ELECTION RESULTS.

(7) NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SHALL IMPACT A VOTER'S ABILITY TO CURE A SIGNATURE DEFICIENCY OR INCONSISTENCY, OR THE PROCESSING OF VOTES BY A UNIFORM-SERVICE VOTER, AN OVERSEAS VOTER, AND DEPENDENTS OF EITHER GROUP.

SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

THIS INITIATIVE TAKES EFFECT AT 12:01 AM ON JANUARY 1, 2026.