



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: ASSESSOR-COUNTY CLERK-
RECORDER-ELECTIONS
File #: 19-1073

Board Meeting Date: 11/12/2019

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
From: Mark Church, Chief Elections Officer & Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder
Subject: Study Session - Voter's Choice Act Draft Election Administration Plan & Voter Education and Outreach Plan Funding for FY 2019-20

RECOMMENDATION:

Accept the informational report regarding the preliminary draft of the Voter's Choice Act Election Administration Plan & funding for the Voter Education and Outreach Plan for FY 2019-20.

BACKGROUND:

I am pleased to submit to you San Mateo County's Election Administration Plan (EAP) & Voter Education and Outreach Plan for the administration of elections under the California Voter's Choice Act (VCA) for the period of January 2020 through January 2024.

In accordance with the requirements of the VCA, San Mateo County is commencing the public review process to amend its current EAP and establish the FY 2019-20 budget for the Voter Education and Outreach Plan.

The current EAP & Voter Education and Outreach Plan were originally adopted on March 30, 2018. The law requires that all VCA Counties amend their respective EAPs & Voter Education and Outreach Plans within two years after the initial adoption and every four years thereafter. Upon completion of the public review process, our amended EAP & Voter Education and Outreach Plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State in January 2020 for formal approval.

DISCUSSION:

A key element of San Mateo County's draft EAP is the comprehensive Voter Education and Outreach Plan. The Voter Education and Outreach Plan outlines the activities the Elections Division will undertake to increase accessibility to the electoral process for all voters, particularly voters with disabilities and language minorities. This draft EAP was built upon broad community input and the guidance from members of the County's Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC), Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC), and Voter Education and Outreach Advisory Committee (VEOAC). The Voter Education and Outreach Plan is a vital component of the Registration &

Elections Division's roadmap for the successful implementation of the VCA.

Based on input from our citizen advisory groups, this year's program will emphasize a greater use of community-based organizations to target the outreach of voters in selected low voter turnout precincts. Our office has identified those cities and areas with the 20% lowest voter turnout in the November 6, 2018 Election. These precincts are the ones that will be targeted with these funds. Our office will be working with the City Clerks of those municipalities whose precincts fell within the 20% lowest voter turnout, to identify community-based organizations and develop programs to target Voter Education and Outreach activities within their jurisdictions. Attached to this report you will find a list of cities and precincts with the 20% lowest voter turnout, during the November 6, 2018 Election.

Presently, we have two proposals from established agencies that could assist in this targeted outreach effort to selected communities. One of the proposals was submitted by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, who has significant experience in conducting similar programs targeting specific underrepresented groups using community-based organizations. We also received a proposal from Thrive Alliance to conduct similar outreach activities patterned after their Census Outreach and Information Program.

FISCAL IMPACT:

During FY 2019-21 Recommended Budget discussions with the County Manager's Office, we proposed a budget of \$500,000 for the FY 19-2020 Voter Education and Outreach Plan. This request was based on our actual expenditures for the 2018 Gubernatorial Primary and General VCA Elections and the projected increase in registered voters in the 2020 Presidential Primary Election to be held in March. The June 2018 and November 2018 Elections incurred between \$400,000 and \$450,000, in voter education and outreach costs. Both elections were smaller in size and scope than the upcoming Presidential Primary Election, which we are projecting to have a minimum of 420,000 registered voters participating.

The County Manager's Office has recommended \$400,000 for this year's Voter Education and Outreach Plan. We have agreed with the County Manager's Office to do the very best we can with the recommended \$400,000 appropriation to administer this year's Voter Education and Outreach Plan. The program will be scaled back accordingly due to the size of the election. Advertising using traditional forms of media will be one of the areas significantly reduced.

We anticipate approximately \$27,000 carryover from the November 2019 Election Voter Education and Outreach Program. The November 2019 Election was appropriated \$200,000 in FY 2019-20 for Voter Education and Outreach, of which we have spent \$172,727 to date on these activities. These expenditures leave \$427,273 for Voter Education and Outreach activities for the upcoming Presidential Primary Election. The attached Voter Education and Outreach Plan budget reflects those adjustments and incorporates many of the recommendations proposed by our citizen advisory committees.

There will be a Net County Cost increase of \$400,000.