



Registrar of Voters

Elections – Special Vacancy Elections - (State)

Issue: The State does not pay for Special Elections to fill vacancies in the offices of United States Representative, State Senator, or Member of the State Assembly.

Action: Pursue state legislation to amend the California Elections Code to require the State to reimburse counties for the cost of conducting special elections to fill vacancies in the offices of United States Representative, State Senator, or Member of the State Assembly or allow the vacancies to be filled by appointment rather than election. Also, have the option of conducting special vacancy elections by mail ballot rather than polling place elections.

Background: In 2014 Riverside County was required to conduct a special election to fill a vacancy in State Senate District 23. The cost of the election was approximately \$340,000. In 2013 Riverside County was required to conduct a special election to fill a vacancy in State Senate District 40. The cost of the election was approximately \$200,000. Both of these elections were paid for from the general fund. The California Elections Code needs to be amended to either have the State reimburse counties for the cost of conducting special vacancy elections or allow the vacancies to be filled by appointment rather than election or allow all mail ballot elections for special vacancies.

Elections – Vote Counting - (Federal)

Issue: Expedite vote counting for future elections which is necessary due to state decertification of electronic voting system.

Action: Pursue state and federal funding to purchase a certified voting system.

Background: Riverside County was the pioneer and gained national recognition when it transitioned to a fast and accurate electronic voting system that was federally and state certified. The California Secretary of State's August 3, 2007 decision to decertify electronic voting forced Riverside County to transition to a cumbersome paper ballot system that was never intended to be used as a principal voting system at polling places. Currently, only five voting systems are certified for use in California, and most of those systems have not been upgraded since the 2007 decertification order by the state. Options for expediting election night ballot counting will continue to be a challenge for Riverside County until a new voting system is approved by the Secretary of State and funds are secured for the purchase of a new voting system.