

# Legislative Analysis



## DEADLINE FOR REVIEW OF INITIATIVE PETITION

Phone: (517) 373-8080  
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

**House Bill 4200 (proposed substitute H-1)**  
**Sponsor: Rep. Bradley Slagh**  
**Committee: Elections and Ethics**  
**Complete to 4-13-21**

Analysis available at  
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

## SUMMARY:

House Bill 4200 would institute a timeline for the review of initiative petitions under the Michigan Election Law.

Currently under the law, the Board of State Canvassers (“the Board”) must make a declaration of the sufficiency or insufficiency of an initiative petition at least 100 days before the election at which the proposal is to be submitted.

Under the bill, generally, the Bureau of Elections (BOE) would have to review initiative petition signatures and the Board would have to complete the canvass of the initiative petition within 90 days of its filing with the secretary of state. If the initiative petition were filed with the secretary of state 45 days or less before a general November election, the BOE would have to review the signatures and the Board would have to complete the canvass within 120 days of its filing with the secretary of state.

MCL 168.477

## FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bill 4200 may result in increased FTE costs for the Department of State (DOS) if, under certain circumstances, it is not able to complete its ongoing election administration responsibilities and comply with the bill’s canvassing time requirements with its existing election bureau staff and would need to hire additional temporary or ongoing staff members. Data from the department indicates that additional staff members would likely be needed for petitions submitted to the department near the November general election date.

DOS reported two estimates last year for how much time is required on average for the canvassing process to be completed from the date of the petition’s submission to the department, with one estimating up to 60 days<sup>1</sup> and the other over 100 days on average.<sup>2</sup>

Data from the department on all petitions submitted between 2012 and 2018 shows that petitions submitted to the department outside of the months of November and December took an average of 54.2 days to canvass, while petitions reviewed during the months of

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.clearinghouse.net/detailDocument.php?id=108020>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.michigan.gov/documents/sos/Submitting\\_Petition\\_Signatures\\_Guidance\\_703168\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/sos/Submitting_Petition_Signatures_Guidance_703168_7.pdf)

November and December took a much longer average of 162.7 days to canvass for a total average of 71.3 days. Any additional FTE costs then would be related to the bill's 120-day time limit for petitions submitted 45 days or less before a general November election.

Legislative Analyst: Jenny McInerney  
Fiscal Analyst: Michael Cnossen

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.