



Election Equipment Funding – Governor’s FY 2019-2020 Proposal Talking Points

February 2019

Counties seek maximum funding from the state and federal government for equipment replacement – any dollars counties spend that do not come from state or federal funds will be property tax dollars.

- Elections are the most fundamental government function in support of our democracy – every level of government has a stake in assuring they are secure, fair, and accurate.
- While counties have acknowledged their equipment is approaching the end of its useful life, we believe the systems have adequate security to allow counties to make replacements on their own schedule.
- The Stein settlement has replaced county discretion with an aggressive and mandatory replacement schedule, regardless of counties’ available resources.
- Gov. Wolf’s funding proposal reflects about half of the estimated cost for equipment replacement.

The proposed five-year funding schedule in the Governor’s budget should be compressed, ideally, to a single year.

- Counties must replace equipment by April 2020, but many are moving more quickly to have equipment in place by November 2019 to enable a roll-out in a municipal election rather than a Presidential primary.
- Funding should match the county timeline – if counties must achieve replacement within the 2019-2020 fiscal year, the state appropriation should be for the 2019-2020 fiscal year.
- While the funding recommended by the Administration totals \$75 million, the only appropriation under the current proposal would be \$15 million for FY 2019-2020.
- Future funding would be subject to the legislature’s budget process across each of the next four fiscal years, with no guarantee that the remaining \$60 million the Governor proposes would be approved.

Counties acknowledge that the Administration is working to partner with counties in the procurement process.

- The Governor’s proposal for funding, however structured, is appreciated.
- The Department of State (DOS) has expedited the certification of equipment that meets the paper audit trail requirements.
- DOS has sponsored vendor showcases across the state to help familiarize counties, election workers and voters with the available equipment options.
- DOS is working with vendors and the Department of General Services to have all certified equipment available for purchase on the COSTARS system.
- DOS is working with CCAP, election directors, and other stakeholders on a variety of election reform issues to help improve efficiency and reduce cost of election administration.