

March 13, 2013

Testimony – Senate Ethics, Elections and Local Government Committee

SB 211 - Elections; municipalities; primary and general elections; date change; partisan

Thank you Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

SB 211 is very similar to **HB 2126** which I introduced several years ago.

To summarize, although our economy is improving, we still face budget challenges that we must address. Therefore, it is crucial that we look at everything we do as a state government to make sure we are streamlining all actions between state, county and local governments.

One area in which to find cost savings is to have any election process scheduled in either August or November to coincide with our state and federal elections.

There are several benefits to the proposed changes in **SB 211**:

- State and local governments could save money by not requiring polls to be open as often or on as many dates during the year.
- Voter turnout would be increased for these elections; many of these critical elections are often decided by only a few voters and an extremely small percentage of the electorate participate in the election process.

I believe that the Secretary of State's office has additional reasons to support moving spring elections to the fall which they will share with the committee. I believe it's important to continue to work with the Secretary of State's office to have a bill that meets the goal of moving the elections but allows the implementation to be as soon as possible.

In conclusion, **SB 211** should save money and increase participation as we work together to improve our great state.

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