



STATE OF ARIZONA

Joint Legislative Budget Committee

STATE
SENATE

1716 WEST ADAMS
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING

JOINT LEGISLATIVE BUDGET COMMITTEE

March 5, 2026

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m., Thursday, March 5, 2026, in Senate Hearing Room 109. The following were present:

Members:	Senator Farnsworth, Chairman Senator Alston Senator Angius (Temporary member in place of Senator Werner) Senator Fernandez Senator Finchem Senator Kavanagh Senator Kuby	Representative Livingston, Vice-Chairman Representative Austin Representative N. Carter (Temporary member in place of Representative Gress) Representative Olson Representative Stahl Hamilton Representative Volk (Temporary member in place of Representative Blattman)
Absent:	Senator Mesnard	Representative Blattman Representative Carbone Representative Gress Representative Way
Excused:	Senator Werner	

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Representative Livingston moved that the Committee approve the minutes of January 29, 2026. The motion carried by voice vote.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. SECRETARY OF STATE (SOS) – Review of FY 2026 Special Election Expenses Line Item Transfer of \$2,490,000 to the Operating Budget.

Ms. Micaela Andrews, JLBC Staff, stated an FY 2026 General Appropriations Act footnote requires the Secretary of State to submit an expenditure plan to the Committee for review before transferring monies in or out of the Special Election Expenses line item. SOS requested review of the transfer of

\$2,850,000 from the Special Election Expenses line item to the FY 2026 Operating Budget, of which the Committee reviewed the transfer of \$2,490,000. The review did not include \$200,000 associated with voter registration database replacement planning and \$160,000 for retroactive reimbursement of physical security costs. The JLBC Staff provided options.

Representative Livingston discussed adding 3 potential provisions.

Mr. Rex Bartlett, Senior Associate, Policy and Government Affairs, Molera Alvarez, representing the Secretary of State, responded to member questions.

Representative Livingston moved that the Committee give a favorable review of SOS's transfer of \$2,490,000 from the Special Election Expenses line item to the FY 2026 Operating Budget for the 10 items detailed in Table 1 with the 3 proposed provisions:

1. Starting on April 15th, 2026 and the 15th of every month thereafter through December 2026, the Secretary of State shall submit a report to the JLBC Staff on the previous month's expenditures and year-to-date expenditures of the monies transferred from the Special Election Expenses line item.
2. Any monies transferred from the Special Election Expenses line item may not be used by the Secretary of State for contracts with individuals or entities for lobbying services.
3. Any monies transferred from the Special Election Expenses line item may not be used for providing assistance to groups or individuals for conducting voter registration drives or by the Secretary of State to conduct voter registration drives.

Secretary of State –March 2026 Transfer Expenditure Plan	
<u>2026 Election - State Expenses for Primary/General Election</u>	
1. Election Management System/Election Night Reporting System Programming	\$ 300,000
2. Ballot Measure Signature Validation (Initiatives Due July 2, 2026)	100,000
3. Primary Election Logic and Accuracy Testing (Begins on June 17, 2026)	50,000
4. Candidate Petition Signature Verification (Due April 6, 2026)	<u>50,000</u>
Subtotal	\$ 500,000
<u>SOS Expenses</u>	
5. Physical Security for the Secretary of State (March '26 – June '26 Services)	\$ 240,000
<u>SOS Initiatives for Counties</u>	
6. Fund County Share of FY 2026 Voter Registration Database Payments	\$ 1,000,000
7. Rural County Ballot Tracking and Verification	250,000
8. Additional County Election Workers	250,000
9. Security Exercises for Counties for Potential Scenarios	150,000
10. County Assistance Fund for IT and Operational Issues	<u>100,000</u>
Subtotal	\$ 1,750,000
Total	\$ 2,490,000

The motion carried by voice vote.

Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Kristy Paddack

Kristy Paddack, Secretary

Richard Stavneak

Richard Stavneak, Director

David C Farnsworth

Senator David Farnsworth, Chairman

NOTE: A full audio recording of this meeting is available at the JLBC Staff Office, 1716 W. Adams. A full video recording of this meeting is available at <https://www.azjlbc.gov/jlbc-meetings/>.