



## Legislation Text

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Resolution to Amend the Fiscal Year 2021 Approved Budget to Accept the Local Allocation of Funds to be Received through the Coronavirus, Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020 for the Hampton Voter Registrar's Office and to appropriate those Funds to the Grants Fund

### **PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:**

See discussion.

### **Discussion:**

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security ("CARES") Act, passed by Congress and signed into law by the President on March 27, 2020, established the \$150 billion Coronavirus Relief Fund ("CRF"). The Act includes \$400 million in new Help America Vote Act (HAVA) emergency funds, made available to states "to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, domestically or internationally, for the 2020 Federal election cycle." This supplemental appropriation funding, distributed by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC), will provide states with additional resources to protect the 2020 elections from the effects of the coronavirus.

On June 9, 2020, the Virginia Department of Elections announced the distribution of \$9 million of CRF for the Commonwealth. On June 16, 2020, the Hampton Registrar received notification that they are eligible to receive \$95,881 of CARES Act funds to cover expenses related to COVID-19 for the November 2020 federal elections only. The funds may be used toward any expenditures related to the protection and health and safety of poll workers, staff, and voters during the federal election, as well as those resulting from anticipated increased demand for absentee ballots by mail costs (printing ballots, envelopes, postage, etc.), equipment and temporary staff. Local voter registration offices may also utilize the funding for voter outreach to include mailings, public service announcements, etc. Funds may not be utilized for items that would be needed regardless of the COVID-19 pandemic. Funds must be encumbered by November 30, 2020 and paid out by December 31, 2020. Any funding from CARES Act that is not an eligible expense must be paid back to the Virginia Department of Elections with interest.

### **Impact:**

CRF funds that the Hampton Electoral Board will receive will help assist in mitigating the impact of COVID-19 for the November 2020 federal elections only.

### **Recommendation:**

Approve the Resolution.

**WHEREAS**, Congress passed and the President signed into law on March 27, 2020, the Coronavirus, Aid, Relief, and Economic Security ("CARES") Act of 2020 to address the COVID-19 pandemic;

**WHEREAS**, the CARES Act provided \$400 million in emergency funds, distributed through the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC), to states "to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, domestically or internationally, for the 2020 federal election cycle;"

**WHEREAS**, the Virginia Department of Elections announced the distribution of \$9 million;

**WHEREAS**, the Hampton Registrar will receive \$95,881 of CARES Act funds to cover expenses related to COVID-19 for the November 2020 federal elections only;

**WHEREAS**, the funds may be used toward any expenditures related to the protection and health and safety of poll workers, staff, and voters during the federal election, as well as those resulting from anticipated increased demand for absentee ballots by mail (printing ballots, envelopes, postage, etc.), equipment and temporary staff. Local voter registration offices may also utilize the funding for voter outreach to include mailings, public service announcements, etc. Funds may be not be utilized for items that would be needed regardless of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, funds must be encumbered by November 30, 2020 and paid out by December 31, 2020. Any funding from CARES Act that is not an eligible expense must be paid back to the Virginia Department of Elections with interest.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of Hampton, Virginia that it hereby accepts \$95,881 in CRF funds, amends the Fiscal Year 2021 Council Approved Budget to include those funds, and appropriates those funds and any related supplemental funding associated with this grant to the Grants Fund, to be spent in accordance with the CARES Act.