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CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER, OFFICE OF ELECTIONS

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

ON SENATE BILL NO. 217

RELATING TO ARRANGEMENT OF CANDIDATE NAMES ON BALLOTS

January 28, 2020

Chair Rhoads and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on Senate Bill No. 217. This bill requires candidate names to be randomized on individual ballots and across precincts.

We would accomplish the purpose of this measure by randomly selecting a letter of the alphabet for each district/precinct (ballot type) to be the first letter to organize the candidate names. For example, if the letter "L" was randomly selected by lot, candidates whose last name started with an "L" would be listed first and subsequent names will follow alphabetically (e.g., "L", "M", "N"). We would also note that the randomly selected letter would only be applied to the first letter of the last name and not modify additional alphabetizing.

We use the alphabetical organization to proof the ballots ensuring all candidates are properly listed. This also corresponds to the voting position to be counted by the voting and vote counting system.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 217.