Ingham County Clerk Barb Byrum Receives Grant for High Speed Tabulator, Trims Budget

MASON – Ingham County Clerk Barb Byrum (D-Onondaga) announced today that her Office received a grant from the Michigan Department of State to be used for the purchase of a high-speed tabulator ahead of the November General Election.

“With the number of Absent Voter Ballots being issued this year during the COVID-19 outbreak, it is more important than ever that we are able to train our local clerks and election inspectors on how to use the most up-to-date technology,” Byrum stated. “In addition, under state law, County Clerks are now able to assist local clerks from smaller municipalities with the processing of absent voter ballots if they do not have an absent voter counting board. In the event that those requests are made, my office is ready to ensure that every ballot is counted on Election Night.”

Byrum indicated that the Ingham County Board of Commissioners had passed a resolution authorizing the purchase in May of this year, but that she had waited to place the order because the Michigan Department of State had announced that grant opportunities may be coming.

“The County is tightening its belt from a budgetary standpoint and I did not want to hastily spend money when there were ways to defray the costs to Ingham taxpayers,” said Byrum. “I am pleased that we have been selected to receive the Michigan Department of State grant, which is valued at $30,000, to reduce the cost of this critical purchase.”

In addition to the diminished cost of the high-speed tabulator, Clerk Byrum also had planned to mail each voter in Ingham County to encourage them to sign up for an Absent Ballot for the August and November Elections. When Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson announced that the State would be mailing all qualified registered voter, Clerk Byrum halted her mailing.

“It is critically important that voters know how to exercise their right to vote safely and securely,” she said. “Fortunately, we were able to join forces with the Secretary of State so that Ingham County did not have to bear the cost of the informational mailing.”

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