

City of Detroit
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

Janice M. Winfrey
City Clerk

Andre P. Gilbert II
Deputy City Clerk

May 13, 2024

The Honorable Penelope Tsernoglou
Chair, House Elections Committee
House Office Building
Lansing, MI

Attn: Edward Sleeper, Committee Clerk

Dear Chair Tsernoglou:

Thank you for bringing Senate Bills 603 and 604 before the House Committee on Elections for a hearing and consideration.

I support this legislation because it will strengthen citizen confidence in the accuracy and security of Michigan elections.

This important legislation is the first comprehensive review of Michigan's recount laws in many decades. The bills will remedy a glaring failure in current law to provide reasonable transparency when precincts are minimally out of balance. To my knowledge, no state in the country denies a recount for these minor issues.

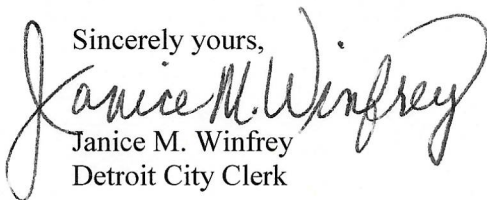
Section 871 of Michigan Election Law is amended by the SB 603 to permit the recounting of a precinct that is certified as out of balance at the county canvass and remains out of balance by an identical or fewer number of ballots at the recount and that has been properly secured. This standard maintains the integrity of the results and provides the necessary transparency. This will assist many communities in Michigan that have out of balance precincts.

Section 874(2) is amended to delete provisions that impair the ability of recount teams to accurately and methodically determine whether a precinct is balanced. By artificially limiting the number of attempts to count the number of ballots in the precinct, the current law forces election officials to consider some precincts not recountable when an extra effort to count the number of ballots an additional time would have determined the precinct as balance and recountable.

There are several other positive changes advanced in these bills. I have highlighted two amendments that will create the necessary transparency and bring our recount law in line with those in other states.

Thank you for addressing these necessary public policy issues.

Sincerely yours,


Janice M. Winfrey
Detroit City Clerk