

BALTIMORE COUNTY  
FISCAL YEAR 2015 RECOMMENDED BUDGET

**BOARD OF ELECTIONS (005)**

BUDGET SUMMARY				
\$ in Thousands				
PROPOSED CHANGE	GENERAL	SPECIAL	TOTAL	% Change Prior Year
FY 2014 - 2015 Change	\$ 19.1	-	\$ 19.1	0.5%
<b>Recommended Reduction</b>	<b>172.6</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>172.6</b>	
 BUDGET TRENDS				
FY 2013 Actual	\$ 3,560.9	-	\$ 3,560.9	
FY 2014 Approp.	4,207.3	-	4,207.3	18.2%
FY 2015 Request	4,226.4	-	4,226.4	0.5%
<b>Recommended</b>	<b>\$ 4,053.8</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$ 4,053.8</b>	<b>-3.6%</b>

PERSONNEL				
PROPOSED CHANGE	GENERAL		SPECIAL	
	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME
FY 2014 - 2015 Change	0	0	0	0
<b>Recommended Reduction</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
 BUDGET TRENDS				
FY 2013 Actual	26	12	0	0
FY 2014 Approp.	26	12	0	0
FY 2015 Request	26	12	0	0
<b>Recommended</b>	<b>26 <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>12 <sup>2</sup></b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

<sup>1</sup> State positions (funded by the County)

<sup>2</sup> County positions

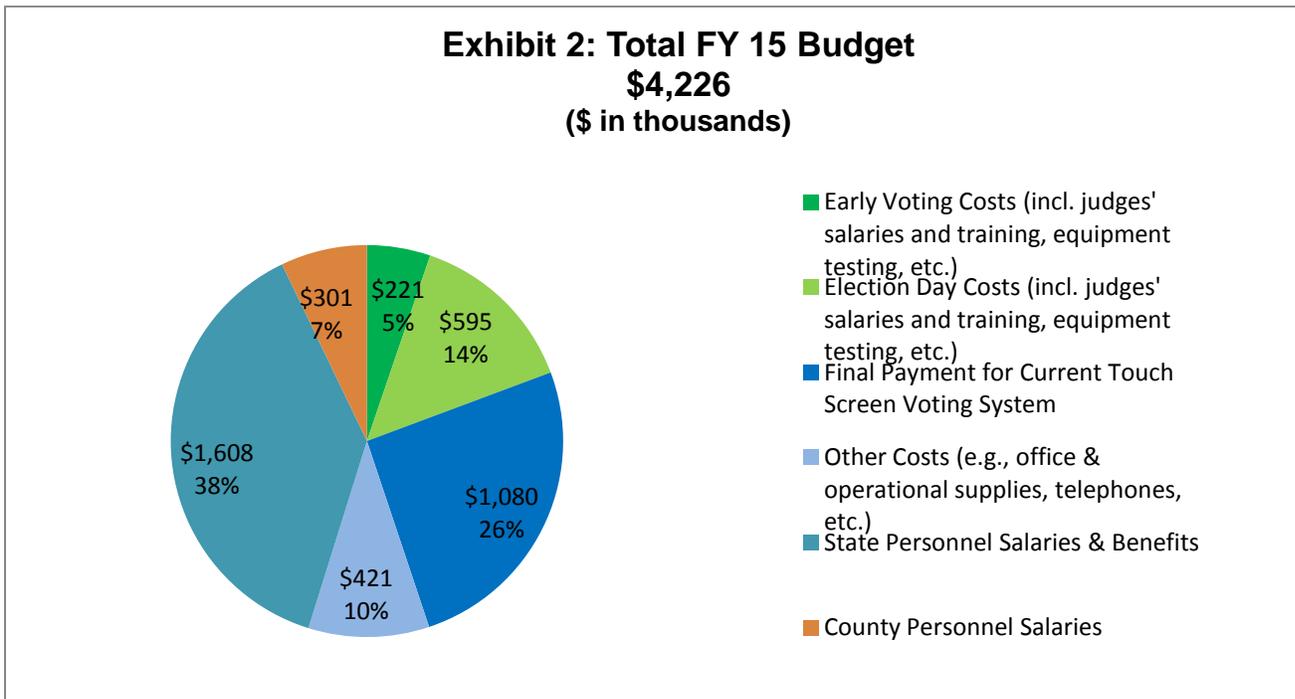
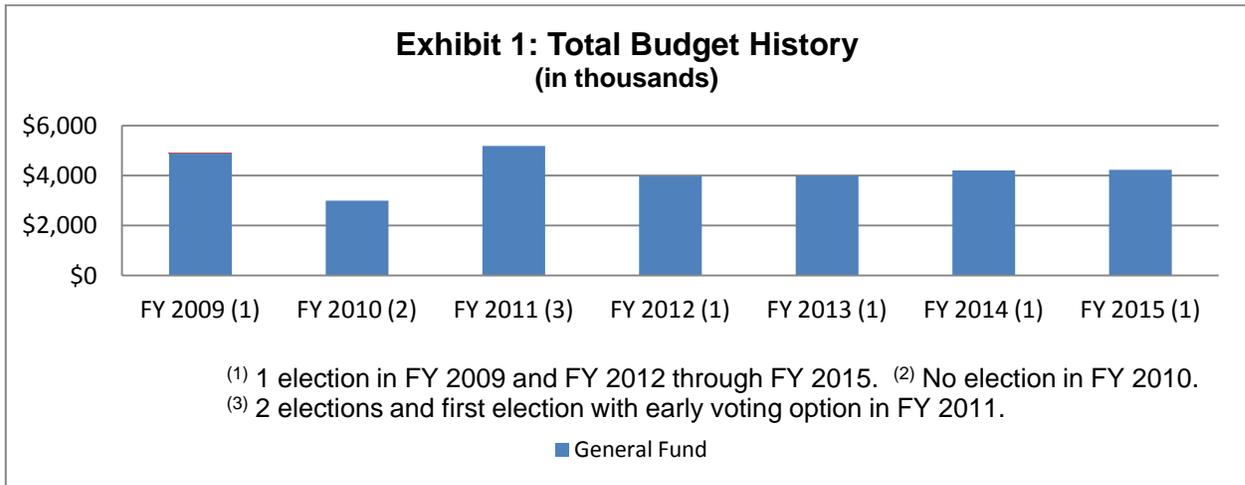
VACANCY DATA

Positions Vacant as of April 21, 2014*	3	0	0	0
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\* Provided by the Board of Elections (2 State positions) and the Office of Budget and Finance (1 County position).

## BOARD OF ELECTIONS (005)

**BUDGET SUMMARY:** The proposed FY 2015 budget for the Board of Elections totals \$4.2 million, a slight increase of \$19 thousand, or 0.5%, over the FY 2014 budget. Nearly half (45%) of the proposed budget funds State (\$1.6 million) and County (\$301 thousand) personnel costs; approximately one-fourth (26%) is for the final payment on the current voting system (\$1.1 million); and 19% of the proposed budget covers on-site costs related to the upcoming gubernatorial general election on November 4, 2014 (\$816 thousand, including on-site early voting costs). The FY 2015 budget is essentially flat compared to the FY 2014 budget because the FY 2014 and FY 2015 budgets were each designed to cover the costs of one election, with early voting, plus installment payments on the current voting system. **See Exhibits 1-3 for additional detail.**



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<b>Exhibit 3</b>			
<b>FY 2015 Proposed Budget (\$ in 000's)</b>			
<b>How Much it Grows:</b>	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Special Fund</u>	<u>Total</u>
2014 Appropriation	\$4,207	--	\$4,207
2015 Request	<u>4,226</u>	--	<u>4,226</u>
\$ Increase	\$ 19	--	\$ 19
% Increase	0.5%	--	0.5%
<b>Where it Goes:</b>			
Personnel Expenses .....			\$259
Salary Reimbursements & Benefit Payments for State Employees (incl. COLA)....	333		
3% Bonus (excludes election judges and temporary help) .....	6		
Increments and Longevities .....	6		
Other Salary Adjustments .....	(3)		
Temporary Help (Office Clerks) .....	(13)		
Salaries for 2,624 Election Judges (16 Polling sites eliminated during FY 2014 resulting in 266 net fewer judges needed, incl. 32 fewer chief judges, 138 more provisional judges, and 372 fewer assistant judges) .....	(70)		
Operating Expenses.....			(240)
Reproduction and Outside Printing (e.g., Sample ballots to all active and pending voters).....	68		
Operational Supplies .....	20		
Professional Services (e.g., Electronic poll book maintenance, canvassing assistance) .....	12		
Training Services .....	(10)		
Telephones (VOIP implementation) .....	(67)		
Postage & Shipping (Redistricting notifications mailed in FY 2014) .....	(100)		
Final Voting System Payment .....	(163)		
Total: .....			\$19

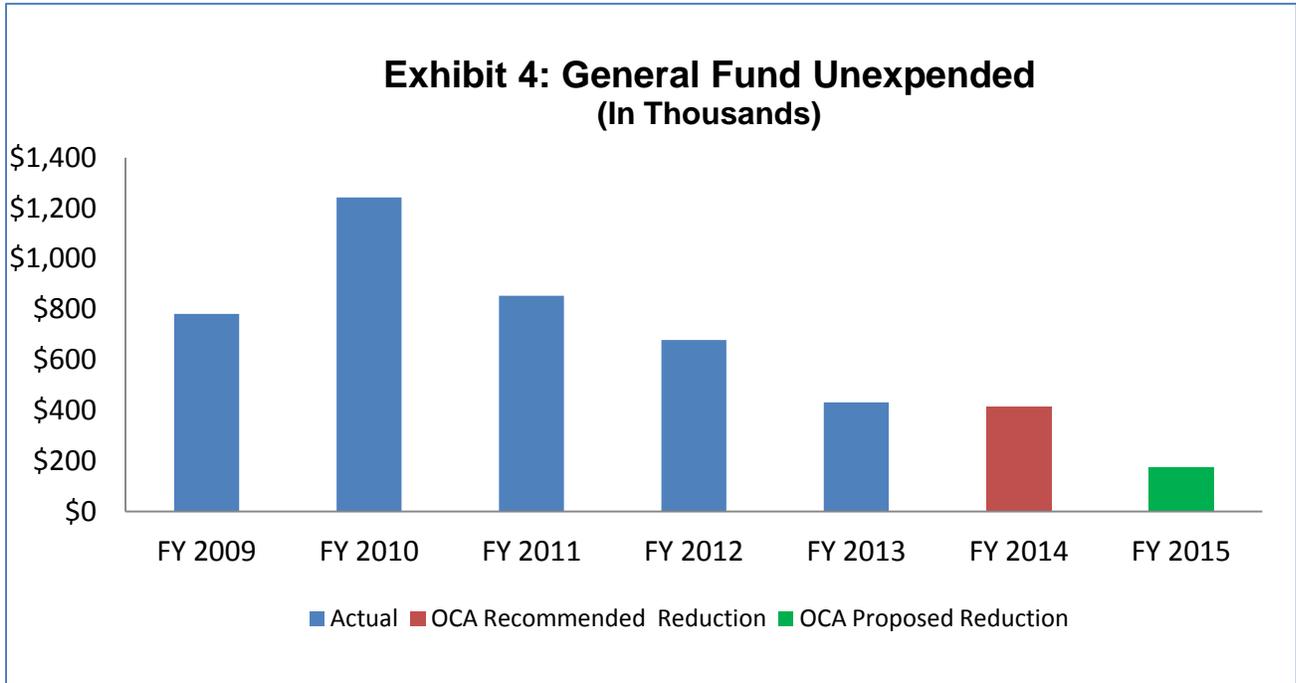
### **BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Budget Reduction \$172,611

A single reduction totaling \$172,611 is recommended, which represents 4.1% of the Board's proposed FY 2015 General Fund budget. Since FY 2009, the Board has ended the fiscal year with a minimum of \$400,000 in unexpended funds. Although the Office of Budget and Finance estimates

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no savings in FY 2014, we project a savings in line with past years, primarily due to lagging State billings for voting system payments and savings for State employee benefits. The recommended reduction represents 40.0% of the Board's FY 2013 reversion amount and represents 21.6% of the Board's average annual reversion over the FY 2009 – FY 2013 period.



### 1. Reduce Professional Services

\$172,611

The proposed FY 2015 budget includes \$1,726,113 for professional services, including costs for the employer's share of health insurance, the lease payment for the voting and voter registration system, outside legal counsel, electronic poll book maintenance, League of Women Voters election day surveys, and absentee/provisional canvassing. However, an analysis of actual spending over the past 4 years indicates that this line item has been over-budgeted each year, and actual spending over the FY 2011 – FY 2013 period was consistently less than 80%; estimated average spending as a percentage of budgeted amount over the FY 2011 – FY 2014 is 75%. This budget recommendation conservatively provides funding at 90% of the proposed budget for this historically over-budgeted line item.

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Schedule of Historical Spending - Professional Services				
		<i>Actual/Estimated/ Recommended</i>		
Fiscal Year	Budget/ Request	Amount	% of Budg/Req.	Over/(Under) Appropriation/ <b>Reduction</b>
2011 <sup>1</sup>	\$1,684,693	\$1,131,684	67.2%	(\$553,009)
2012 <sup>2</sup>	\$1,337,550	\$1,015,396	75.9%	(\$322,154)
2013 <sup>3</sup>	\$1,526,351	\$1,191,140	78.0%	(\$335,211)
2014 <sup>4</sup>	\$1,611,160	<b>\$1,267,857</b> <sup>6</sup>	<b>78.7%</b>	(\$343,303)
<b>Average</b>	\$1,539,939	\$1,151,519	75.0%	(\$388,419)
2015 <sup>5</sup>	<b>\$1,726,113</b>	<b>\$1,553,502</b> <sup>7</sup>	<b>90.0%</b>	<b>(\$172,611)</b>
Notes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><sup>1</sup> Gubernatorial primary and general elections</li> <li><sup>2</sup> Presidential primary election</li> <li><sup>3</sup> Presidential general election</li> <li><sup>4</sup> Gubernatorial primary election</li> <li><sup>5</sup> Gubernatorial general election</li> <li><sup>6</sup> Budget recommendation for FY 2014</li> <li><sup>7</sup> 90% of proposed budget</li> </ol>				

### SIGNIFICANT PROGRAM/POLICY INITIATIVES AND/OR CHANGES:

#### 2. Office Relocation

In February 2015, the Board of Elections' main office will relocate from the Bloomsbury Avenue location in Catonsville to Gilroy Road in Hunt Valley. The new location will allow the entire staff to be located on one floor and provide on-site warehouse space. However, due to space constraints, the Board will not be able to have on-site election judge training and will have to increase usage of the other three training sites, which consist of Oregon Ridge Park Lodge in Cockeysville, the Sollers Point Multi-Purpose Center in Dundalk, and the Back River Community Center in Essex (newly added).

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*The Board should be prepared to discuss:*

- *Whether the three training sites can accommodate its needs;*
- *Whether there are any plans to add training sites, particularly on the County's west side; and*
- *How the relocation will be funded.*

### OTHER ISSUES:

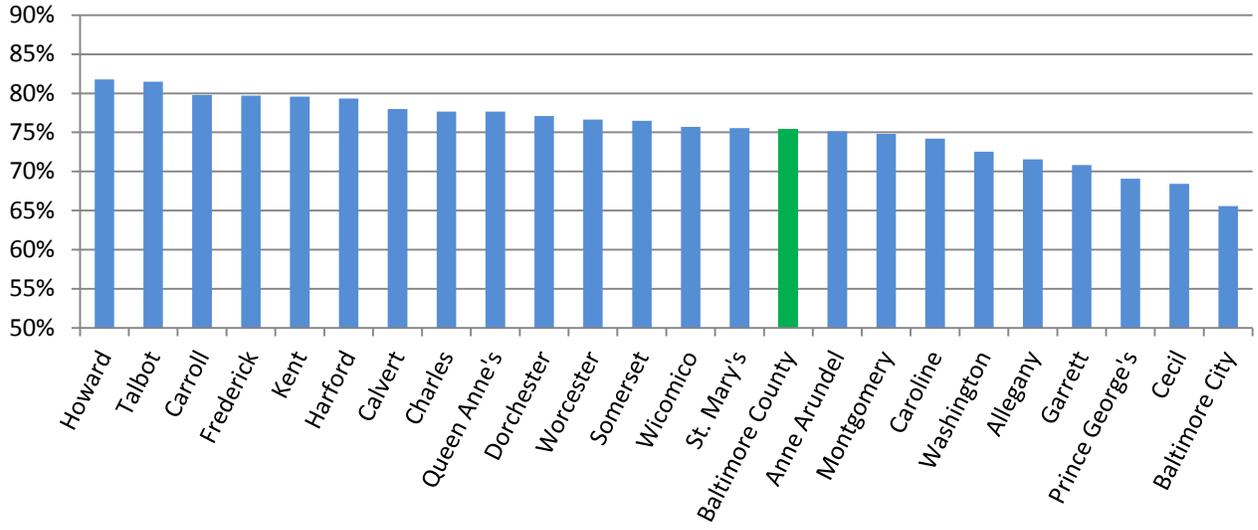
#### 3. Voter Registration and Turnout

The Board's FY 2015 Managing for Results plan includes voter outreach goals to increase the number of registered voters and to increase voter turnout. The Board reported that 80% of eligible County residents are registered to vote and that it continually strives to increase the percentage of registered voter turnout to 100%.

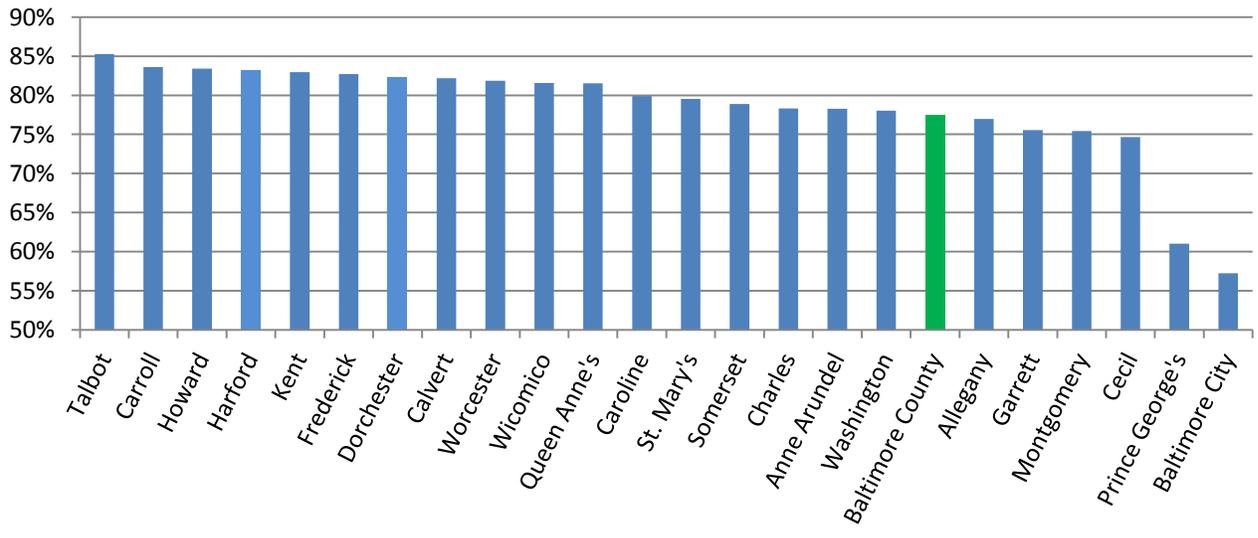
Based on data published by the State Board of Elections, the following charts (Exhibits 5-7) reflect voter turnout among the 24 Maryland jurisdictions for the 2012 presidential general election. Baltimore County ranked 15<sup>th</sup> for voter turnout (75.36%), 18<sup>th</sup> for Republican voter turnout (77.55%), and 11<sup>th</sup> for Democratic voter turnout (77.62%).

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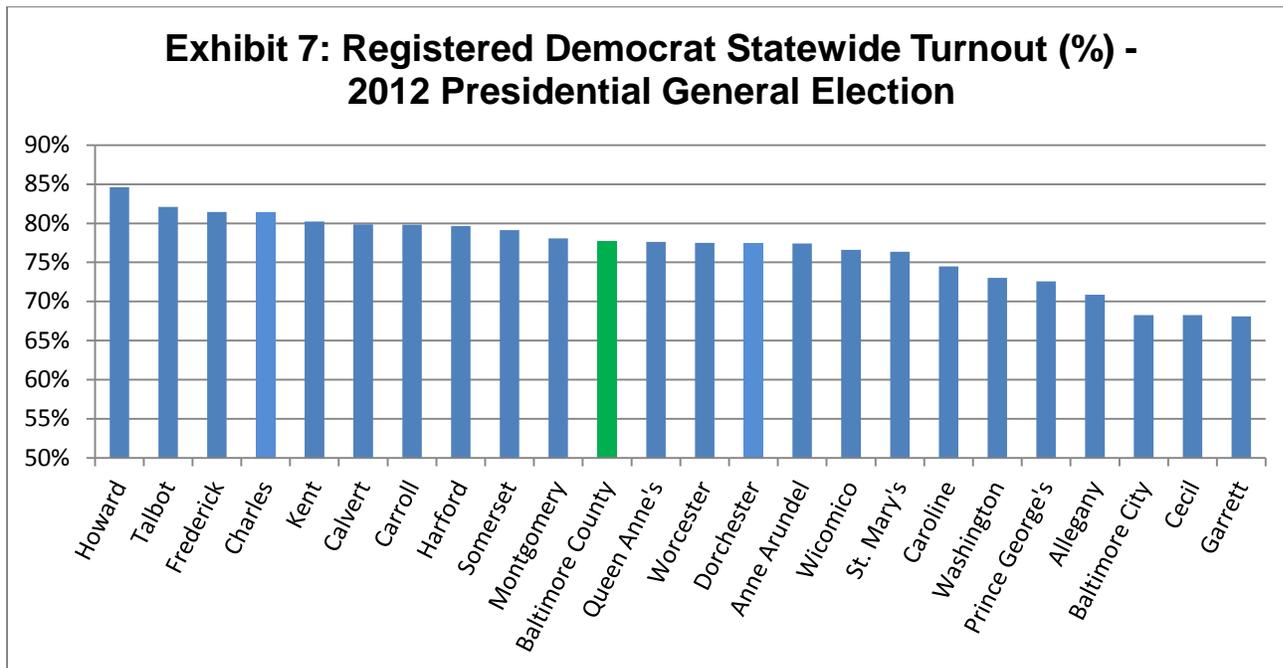
**Exhibit 5: Statewide Turnout (%) -  
2012 Presidential General Election**



**Exhibit 6: Registered Republican Statewide Turnout (%) -  
2012 Presidential General Election**

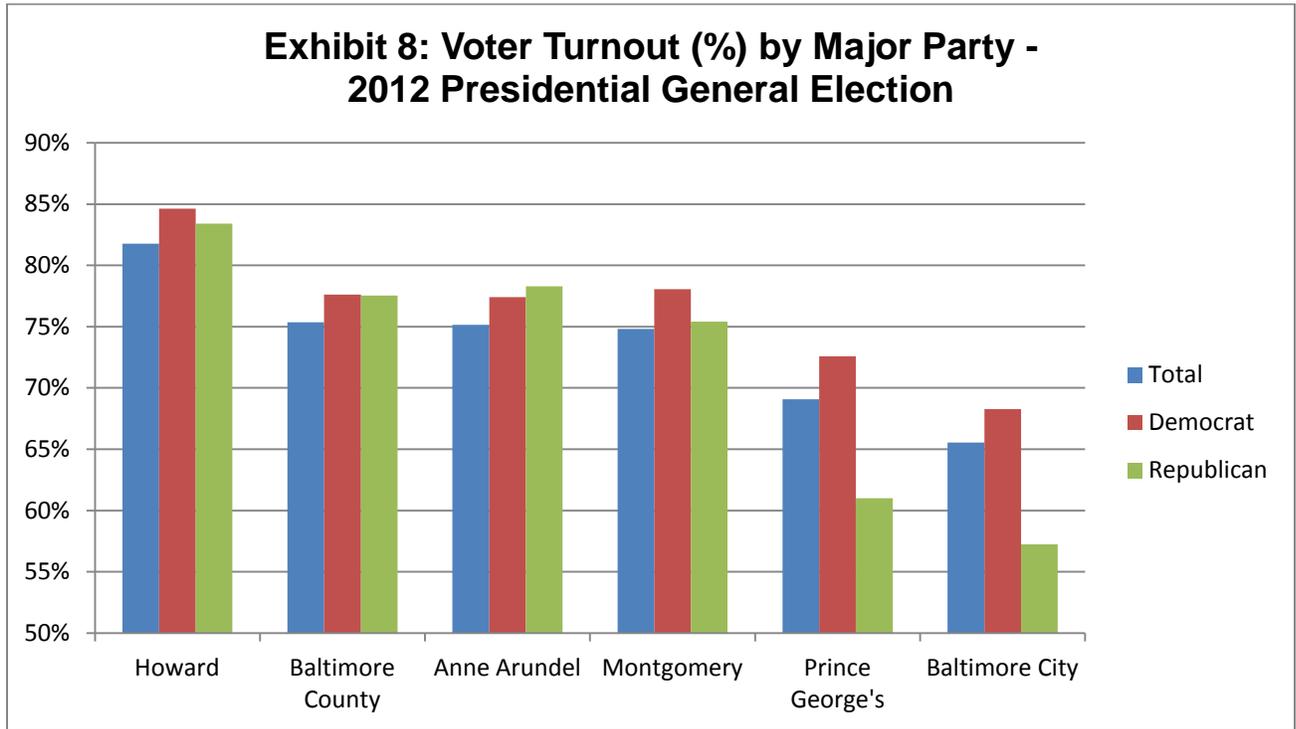


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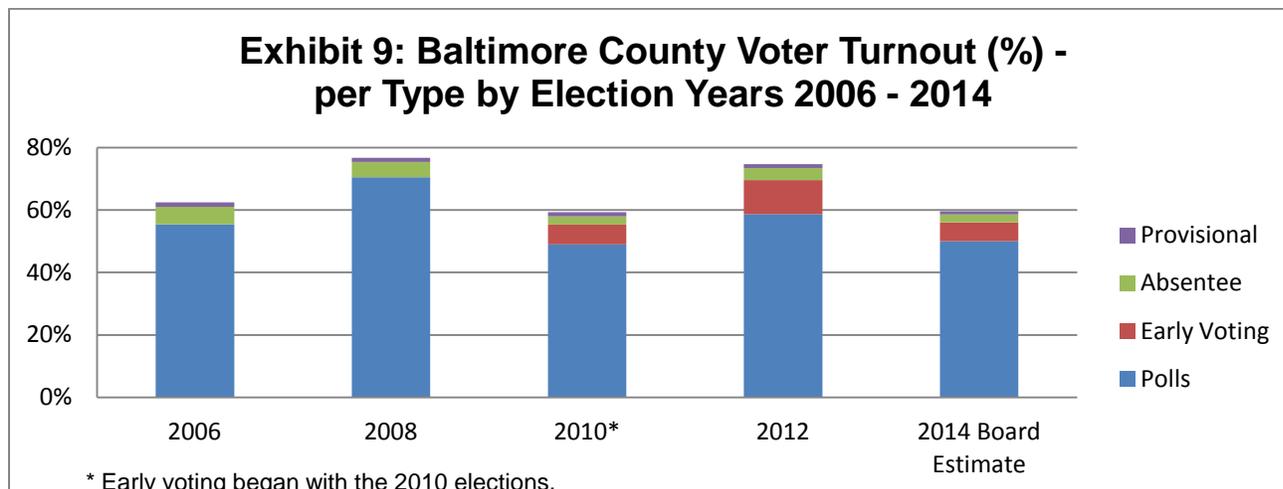
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The following chart (Exhibit 8) reflects voter turnout by major party among the six jurisdictions with the largest number of eligible voters; Baltimore County ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>.



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The Board advised that although voter turnout was 59% for the 2010 gubernatorial general election, it expects it will decline to 50% for the 2014 gubernatorial general election (November 4, 2014), as noted in the chart below (Exhibit 9).



### ***The Board should be prepared to discuss:***

- ***Reasons for expected decreased voter turnout for the 2014 gubernatorial general election; and***
- ***Anticipated initiatives to be undertaken to increase voter turnout, including strategies used by jurisdictions with higher voter turnouts.***

#### **4. Polling Places and Wait Times**

Redistricted Councilmanic boundaries are effective for the 2014 gubernatorial primary election (June 24, 2014). Redistricting is completed every 10 years in accordance with the latest decennial census figures. In conjunction with redistricting, the Board advised that it combined several small polling precincts with few voters and created dual precincts with one-room voting, enabling it to reduce the number of polling sites by 16, from 236 to 220. The Board also advised that of the 220 polling places, 53 lack air conditioning; for these polling places, the Board will provide fans.

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During the 2010 and 2012 primary and general elections, concerns were raised regarding the wait times experienced by voters throughout the State. According to the Survey of the Performance of American Elections (SPAЕ), long delays are not widespread across the country but are limited to certain states and localities, including Maryland. Nationally, the average wait time to vote in 2012 was 14 minutes, while voters in Maryland waited 29 minutes on average. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, Maryland's lines ranked third longest in 2012 (behind Florida and the District). Maryland had the sixth longest lines in 2008.

A recent study by the State Board (performed in conjunction with the University of Baltimore's Schaefer Center for Public Policy) found that voting wait times were longer for early voters and voters in larger jurisdictions.

Although the Board advised that it does not main statistics to track wait times or long lines at the polls, the Board considers a wait of 20-30 minutes to be reasonable, and a wait of 40 minutes or greater to be long. The Board noted that election judges are trained on how to control lines and each location employs a greeter judge that surveys lines in order to ensure voters are at the correct polling site.

### ***The Board should be prepared to discuss:***

- ***Whether combining polling precincts may result in longer waits for affected voters;***
- ***Any plans to mitigate long waits for the upcoming June 2014 primary and future elections; and***
- ***Any plans to secure additional polling locations with air conditioning.***

### 5. New Absentee Voting Options

Last year, the Governor signed House Bill 224 (HB 224) and Senate Bill 279 (SB 279) which seek to improve access to voting, including expanding the methods by which a voter can receive an absentee ballot and providing an on-line ballot marking tool. Accordingly, for the 2014 gubernatorial primary election (June 24, 2014), the County will provide voters with the option to receive an absentee ballot through mail, facsimile transmission, the internet, or in person. Additionally, a voter will have the option to access a blank ballot through the internet, electronically mark the ballot, and print a copy of the marked ballot for mailing to the Board. The

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Board advised that, although beneficial for the voter, ballots printed at home are not recognizable by its optical scanner and will require manual reproduction by Board staff.

***The Board should be prepared to discuss:***

- ***The extent of savings or increased costs associated with absentee voting via the new online method; and***
- ***The controls it plans to establish to ensure that unscannable self-printed absentee ballots will be accurately recorded and counted.***

### 6. Election Judge Recruitment and Retention

The proposed FY 2015 budget includes \$697,673 to hire and train election judges, including \$535,573 for 2,509 election judges for the general election (440 chief judges, 440 provisional judges, and 1,629 assistant judges) and \$162,100 for 115 election judges for early voting (16 chief judges, 16 provisional judges, and 83 assistant judges).

Baltimore County compensates election judges at the rate of \$225 per day for chief judges and \$162.50 for provisional and assistant judges. According to the Board's April 2013 comparison of rates paid by Maryland jurisdictions, Baltimore County ranked 9<sup>th</sup> highest. Baltimore County also pays judges \$40 to attend training, which is conducted by Answer Quest Technologies, Inc.

According to our April 2014 comparison of rates paid by Baltimore County and five other Maryland jurisdictions, Baltimore County ranked second highest for chief judges and third highest for other judges as follows:

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County	Chief Judge	Book/Unit Judge	Technical/ Provisional Judge	Training	Closing
Prince George's	300.00	200.00	200.00	50.00	
<b>Baltimore County</b>	<b>225.00</b>	<b>162.50</b>	<b>162.50</b>	<b>40.00</b>	
Howard	220.00	165.00	165.00	Chiefs \$45.00, Others \$30.00	
Anne Arundel	200.00	150.00	150.00	25.00	
Baltimore City	200.00	150.00	150.00	20.00	
Montgomery	200.00	150.00		Chiefs \$50.00, Others \$30.00	\$ 75.00

Due to the movement of the gubernatorial primary from September 2014 to June 2014 and the resulting likelihood of summer vacation conflicts, the Board anticipates that only up to 70% of election judges will return for the upcoming primary election (in previous years, the Board would expect 90% of judges to return). The Board continues to note that it is particularly difficult to recruit Republican judges since the majority of registered voters in the County are Democrats. The Board noted that as of mid-April 2014 approximately 600 additional judges, primarily Republican, are still needed for the June 2014 election.

During FY 2014, the Board added a training site at the Back River Community Center in Essex in order to recruit additional election judges and to mitigate election judge travel time. The Board advised that the addition of this training site has aided in attracting additional election judges due to its location and the quality of the facilities. The Board will also continue to utilize the three other training sites, including Oregon Ridge Park Lodge in Cockeysville, Sollers Point Multi-Purpose Center in Dundalk, and Bloomsbury Community Center in Catonsville for the 2014 gubernatorial general election.

***The Board should be prepared to discuss:***

- ***Strategic plans for recruiting and retaining election judges, especially Republican judges.***

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### 7. Early Voting

The proposed FY 2015 budget includes approximately \$221,025 for early voting costs, including \$162,100 for election judges' salaries and training and \$58,925 for election-related costs (e.g., testing of voting units and poll books, advertising and mailings, supplies, and equipment transportation). During the 2009 legislative session, the General Assembly enacted legislation that established early voting requirements and mandated the implementation of early voting beginning with the 2010 elections. Accordingly, the County began providing early voting for the 2010 gubernatorial election. The Board advised that early voter turnout was 3.1% and 6% for the 2010 gubernatorial and 2012 presidential elections, respectively.

During the 2013 legislative session, the General Assembly enacted legislation that improved access to voting and required the County to establish three additional early voting centers (an increase from five to eight) and to extend the number of early voting days by two, from six to eight days. Accordingly, the County secured three additional early voting sites: the Back River Community Center in Essex, the Center for Maryland Agriculture and Farm Park in Cockeysville, and the Reisterstown Senior Center – Hannah More Campus.

Early voting for the 2014 gubernatorial primary election on June 24, 2014 will be held Thursday, June 12, 2014 through Thursday, June 19, 2014 from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Early voting for the 2014 gubernatorial general election on November 4, 2014 will be held Thursday, October 23, 2014 through Thursday, October 30, 2014 from 10:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. The Board expects a voter turnout of 3% and 6% for the 2014 primary and general early voting options, respectively. The Board advised that the number of individuals participating in early voting is expected to increase over time, especially when same-day voter registration becomes effective on January 1, 2016.

#### ***The Board should be prepared to discuss:***

- ***The operational challenges associated with implementing early voting, including any specific issues with existing and additional voting sites;***
- ***The costs associated with the new requirements being implemented in FY 2014 (e.g., three additional early voting centers and extension of the number of early***

## BOARD OF ELECTIONS (005)

*voting days by two); and*

- *Future costs and challenges associated with implementing same-day voter registration during early voting.*

### 8. New Voting System

The proposed FY 2015 budget includes \$1.1 million for the final payment for the Diebold touch-screen voting and voter registration system. No funds are budgeted for a new voting system, nor have any funds been paid for a new voting system in prior fiscal years. Although the State was to have a new voting system with a voter-verifiable paper record (i.e., optical scan) in effect for all elections held after January 1, 2010, and then in time for the 2010 gubernatorial primary election, the State's fiscal years 2011 through 2013 budgets did not include funding for this purpose. The State's FY 2014 budget included \$1.2 million for the initial cost of planning the procurement of an optical scan voting system and the State's FY 2015 budget includes \$4.1 million for the continued planning, procurement, receipt, and testing of a new system. The State Board of Elections intends to have the new system in place for the 2016 presidential election cycle.

The new optical scan voting system will be completely paper-based and will no longer have touch-screen capabilities. A paper ballot will be provided to each voter and upon completion, be fed into an optical scanner.

***The Board should be prepared to discuss:***

- ***Estimated costs and/or cost savings related to the transition to a new voting system;***
- ***Any concerns regarding an optical-scan voting system; and***
- ***Plans for the old voting system units once the new system units are accepted.***

BALTIMORE COUNTY  
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**BOARD OF ELECTIONS (005)**

APPROPRIATION DETAIL
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	FY 2013 ACTUAL	FY 2014 APPROP	FY 2015 REQUEST	NET CHANGE	
				AMOUNT	%
0501 Registration of Voters and Conduct of Elections	\$3,560,920	\$4,207,305	\$ 4,226,393	\$ 19,088	0.5%

BALTIMORE COUNTY  
FISCAL YEAR 2015 RECOMMENDED BUDGET

**BOARD OF ELECTIONS (005)**

PERSONNEL DETAIL
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	FY 2013 ACTUAL		FY 2014 APPROP		FY 2015 REQUEST		NET CHANGE	
	FULL	PART	FULL	PART	FULL	PART	FULL	PART
	APPROP		RECOMM		RECOMM		CHANGE	
	Full	Part	Full	Part	Full	Part	Full	Part
0501 Registration of Voters and Conduct of Elections	<u>26</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>