

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS ERIN MURPHY, ED FLYNN, BREADON, COLETTA ZAPATA, FERNANDES ANDERSON, FITZGERALD, MEJIA, PEPEN, SANTANA, WEBBER, WORRELL AND LOUIJEUNE



## CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

### ORDER FOR AN EMERGENCY HEARING TO DISCUSS THE STATE RECEIVERSHIP OF BOSTON'S ELECTIONS COMMISSION

**WHEREAS:** On Monday, February 24, 2025, Secretary of State William F. Galvin announced the appointment of a receiver to oversee the City of Boston's Elections Commission through 2026, following an investigation into significant issues during the November 2024 election, including widespread ballot shortages and communication failures; and

**WHEREAS:** The Secretary's investigation revealed systemic problems within the Elections Commission, such as inadequate ballot distribution leading to precincts running out of ballots, insufficient training of election workers, and a failure to effectively manage communications, resulting in over 1,200 unanswered calls from polling locations on Election Day; and

**WHEREAS:** The decision to place the Elections Commission under state receivership is unprecedented in recent history and raises critical questions about the autonomy of the city's electoral processes, the specific responsibilities and authority of the appointed receiver, and the immediate and long-term implications for upcoming municipal elections, including the mayoral and City Council races; and

**WHEREAS:** Due to the timing of this announcement, which occurred after the 10 a.m. filing deadline on Monday, February 24, 2025, for matters to be included in the agenda of the next City Council meeting, it was not possible to submit this hearing order through the standard process; and

**WHEREAS:** The urgency of this matter necessitates immediate attention to ensure transparency, maintain public trust in our electoral system, and to understand the changes required within the Elections Commission to comply with the state's directives; now

**THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:** That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council holds an emergency hearing to discuss the implications of the state receivership of Boston's Elections Commission. Representatives from the Secretary of State's office, the appointed receiver, members of the Boston Elections Commission, and other relevant stakeholders shall be invited to testify.

The hearing aims to address the following points:

1. **Clarification of the Receivership:** Understanding the scope, authority, and duration of the receiver's role in overseeing Boston's Elections Commission.
2. **Identified Deficiencies and Required Reforms:** A detailed review of the issues leading to the ballot shortages and communication failures, and the specific corrective actions mandated by the Secretary of State's office.

3. **Implementation Plan:** Discussion of the timeline, resources, and strategies for implementing the required reforms to ensure compliance with state election laws and to prevent future operational issues.
4. **Impact on Upcoming Elections:** Assessing how the receivership and the planned reforms will affect the administration of elections in 2025 and beyond, including measures to safeguard against similar problems.
5. **Public Communication and Transparency:** Strategies for keeping the public informed about the changes, ensuring transparency in the process, and rebuilding trust in the City's electoral system.

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