

Issue Insight

Washington DC

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A WNY (Independent) Voter Asks A Question To Candidates Seeking To Represent The 26th District (NY) In The United States House Of Representatives.

Dickson, The Republican, Answers Within Hours. Kennedy, The Democrat, Refuses (Again) To Respond.

“I absolutely support the mandatory use of those funds to cover the cost of the special election that was caused by his early departure.” Gary Dickson, Supervisor- Town of West Seneca; Republican Party nominee for 26th District.

No Response. Timothy Kennedy, Member- New York State Senate; Candidate for Democratic Party nomination for 26th District. NOTE: Mr. Kennedy did not previously respond to the question when posed on 16 November 2023.

Question sent to Messrs. Dickson and Kennedy on Monday, 15 April 2024:

“Good morning:

You are seeking to replace Brian Higgins (D- 26th District, NY).

My Question: A special election could cost western New York taxpayers near US\$1 million. Personnel costs would be US\$677,000.00 and facility costs would be US\$135,000.00. Former Representative Higgins has US\$994,955.00 in his campaign account. Do you support the use of those campaign funds to pay for the special election which would eliminate the expense for taxpayers in Western New York?

From New York State Board of Elections: *“The 26th Congressional District includes parts of both Erie and Niagara Counties. Based on budgets submitted from both counties for last year’s General Election, we can provide a very rough estimate of \$1.0-\$1.5 million for a Special Election in that district. Please note that this budget submission is from the counties to operate an election for the entire county, whereby the 26th Congressional District only contains parts of both, and not the entirety of either.”*

The 26th District in New York State includes portions of Erie County and Niagara County. There are **588** election districts within Erie County within the 26th District. There are **87** election districts within Niagara County within the 26th District.

Erie County Board of Elections and Niagara County Board of Elections shared their respective costs, real and estimate, for a special election. Each of the 675 (588 + 87) total election districts requires four (4) election inspectors at each polling station who are paid US\$250.00 each per day. That means US\$1,000.00 per election district multiplied by **675** election districts equals **US\$677,000.00** in personnel costs. Each polling station receives approximately US\$200.00 per day to host the special election.

One polling station may host more than one election district. The personnel costs remain the same regardless of the number of election districts hosted in one location. The hosting costs would be **US\$135,000.00**.

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New York State permits nine (9) days of early voting- which could increase costs substantially to taxpayers.”

LINK To Previous Analysis

11/21/23- [Why Applaud Rep. Brian Higgins \(D- 26th, NY\) For Violating Terms Of His Two-Year Contract? If He Wants Out, Then Pay Western New York Taxpayers To Get Out. Pay US\\$1 Million Cost Of Special Election.](#)