

Local Fiscal Highlights

LOCAL GOVERNMENT	FY 2008	FY 2009	FUTURE YEARS
County Boards of Elections			
Revenues	-0-	-0-	-0-
Expenditures	Potential increase for precinct assignments and counting additional absent voter ballots	Potential increase for precinct assignments and counting additional absent voter ballots	Potential increase for precinct assignments and counting additional absent voter ballots
	Potential minimal decrease in costs for specialized absent voter ballot envelopes	Potential minimal decrease in costs for specialized absent voter ballot envelopes	Potential minimal decrease in costs for specialized absent voter ballot envelopes

Note: For most local governments, the fiscal year is the calendar year. The school district fiscal year is July 1 through June 30.

- The bill allows boards of elections to assign voters to different precincts under certain conditions. Should they do so, there could be increased costs for relocating voters to different precincts, the expense of which could be offset by savings from not having to open certain precincts during special elections.
- The bill permits military absent voter ballots to be counted for up to ten days after the election, provided the ballot was postmarked on or before the day of the election. The bill also prohibits absent voter's and armed services absent voter ballots from being counted if they are received after the close of the polls on election day and marked using a postage evidencing system. While there may be some cost increases associated with counting additional late absent voter ballots and verifying postmarks, the additional expense on boards of elections would be minimal.
- The bill removes the individual size requirement for envelopes used to mail military absent voter ballots and removes the requirement that they be printed in red ink, resulting in a minimal decrease in costs for producing these ballots.

Detailed Fiscal Analysis

Secretary of State directives

The bill alters the type of directives that the Secretary of State can issue within certain time frames surrounding a general election. First, the bill permits the Secretary of State to issue permanent or temporary directives, as can be done under current law, but also requires a process for allowing public review and comment of proposed permanent directives. It appears as though this requirement could result in an increase in administrative costs to the Secretary of State's Office for holding public meetings and making modifications to directives, depending on the scope of the proposed permanent directives.

The bill prohibits the Secretary of State from issuing a permanent directive during the period beginning 90 days prior to the day of an election and ending on the 40th day following the day of that election. The bill also permits the Secretary of State to issue a temporary directive only during the period beginning 90 days prior to the day of an election and ending on the 40th day following the day of that election, and that temporary directive will not be subject to public review or public comment. There is no fiscal effect from this provision.

Board of Voting Machine Examiners

The bill adds a fourth member to the Board of Voting Machine Examiners and specifies how the members are to be appointed. There would be a small increase in board member compensation and reimbursement as a result. These expenses are paid from the Board of Voting Machine Examiners Fund (Fund 4S80), which is funded by fees paid by vendors seeking certification of their voting equipment. Under current law, members of the Board receive \$300 per day for each combination of marking device, tabulating equipment, and voting machine examined and reported, but cannot receive more than \$600 to examine and report on any one marking device, item of tabulating equipment, or voting machine.

Voting machine certification

The bill requires that all voting machines purchased after the effective date of the bill be in compliance with the most current voting system standards and that any machines already purchased must meet, at minimum, the 2002 standards adopted by the Federal Elections Commission. Presumably, all future purchases of voting machines would meet the required standards, and all currently used systems are compliant with federal law. Therefore, this provision does not appear to have any direct fiscal effect.

Local fiscal effects

Assigning voters to other precincts

The bill specifies certain conditions under which boards of elections can assign voters to other precincts in special elections. In such cases, up to 200 voters could be assigned to vote in a precinct in another county. If counties agree to do so, there could be increased administrative costs associated with relocating those voters to a different precinct. However, it is possible that some savings could result. If all registered voters in a precinct were relocated under this authority, a county board of elections would reduce its costs by not having to open a precinct for a special election. Presumably, cross-county voting of this nature would only occur in instances where voters at precincts in each county were operating with identical ballots. This would be the case, for example, for a special election to fill a vacant Congressional seat.

Absent voter ballot provisions

The bill makes several changes to absent voter ballot counting and mailing procedures. First, the bill permits military absentee ballots to be counted for up to ten days after the election, provided the ballot was postmarked on or before the day of the election. The bill also prohibits absent voter's and armed services absent voter ballots from being counted if they are received after the close of the polls on election day and marked using a postage evidencing system. While boards of elections might incur cost increases for counting additional late absent voter ballots and verifying postmarks, these costs are likely to be minimal. Removing the size and color requirements that currently apply to military ballots would reduce printing costs that boards of elections incur under current law.

Student service at elections precincts

The bill modifies current law permitting high school seniors to serve as precinct officers at elections. Under the bill, up to two students who are under 18 years of age and participating in the program may serve as precinct officers in a precinct if the precinct has six or more precinct officers. If a precinct has fewer than six precinct officers not more than one of those officers may be under 18 years of age. These changes do not appear to have any fiscal effect on political subdivisions.

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