



Ohio Legislative Service Commission

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Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

Bill: [Am. H.B. 159 of the 129th G.A.](#)

Date: June 15, 2011

Status: As Passed by the House

Sponsor: Reps. Mecklenborg and Blessing

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

Contents: Requires electors to provide official photo identification when voting

State Fiscal Highlights

- The bill generally requires a person who appears to vote on the day of an election or to vote an absent voter's ballot in person to provide photo identification. The bill also requires the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, or a Deputy Registrar, to provide a state identification card free of charge to those who cannot afford the required photo identification.
- According to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV), the cost to produce a state identification card is \$1.14 per card, paid from the State Bureau of Motor Vehicles Fund (Fund 4W40).
- Current BMV and 2010 decennial census data suggest that there may be approximately 200,000 individuals without either form of state identification required to vote under the bill. Some number of these individuals will be eligible for the free card under the bill, as will additional individuals be as they turn 18 years of age.

Local Fiscal Highlights

- No direct fiscal effect on political subdivisions.

Detailed Fiscal Analysis

The bill requires people who wish to vote a regular ballot on the day of an election or to vote an absent voter's ballot in person to provide official photo identification when voting. Additionally, the bill requires the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, or a Deputy Registrar, to provide a state identification card free of charge to those who cannot afford the required photo identification, according to guidelines established by the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV). The BMV will incur some new expense for providing these state identification cards free of charge, although that cost is difficult to quantify. The operating fund that BMV uses to pay for these expenses is the State Bureau of Motor Vehicles Fund (Fund 4W40).

To develop an estimate of how many people might qualify to receive the free identification cards under the bill and compute the cost that the state would incur for producing them, LSC obtained data from three sources. This included BMV records, pertinent 2010 decennial census data, and June 2011 voter registration records. BMV data from the end of calendar year 2010 indicate that there are approximately 8.6 million people in Ohio, age 18 or older, that have either a driver's license or state identification card. According to 2010 decennial census data, there are slightly more than 8.8 million individuals that are 18 or older in Ohio. Comparing these two figures suggests that there could be about 200,000 individuals currently over the age of 18 in Ohio without photo identification. Depending on their financial status, some percentage of these individuals will qualify for the free identification required to vote under the bill. Overall, there are 8.0 million registered voters according to June 2011 statewide voter registration data.

According to the BMV, the cost the agency incurs for producing a state identification card is \$1.14 per card. The BMV makes up for this cost and the expense of processing related documents through application fees and other charges upon issuance to the applicant. These charges would not apply under the bill.¹ If we assume that 100,000 (50%) of the 200,000 individuals qualify and apply for the free identification cards under the bill, then the BMV could incur costs of \$114,000 to supply those cards to the eligible recipients. If 50,000 (25%) individuals currently qualify for the free card under the bill, then the cost decreases to \$57,000. In addition to this initial expense, BMV will incur ongoing costs as additional eligible persons turn 18 years of age and apply for their free state identification cards.

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¹ Deputy registrars, who issue state identification cards on behalf of the state, will not be able to collect deputy registrar fees from the eligible recipient for furnishing free identification cards under the bill.