



Ohio Legislative Service Commission

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Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

Bill: [H.B. 159 of the 129th G.A.](#) **Date:** March 23, 2011
Status: As Reported by House State Government & Elections **Sponsor:** Reps. Mecklenborg and Blessing

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

Contents: Requires voters to provide official photo identification

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.
- The current Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) cost to furnish a state identification card is \$1.14 per card. The cost of producing these identification cards is paid from the State Bureau of Motor Vehicles Fund (Fund 4W40).
- The overall cost of the bill will depend on the number of people who are registered voters, lack the proper photo identification, and are indigent.
- As of March 2011, there were approximately 8.6 million registered voters statewide. According to data from the end of calendar year 2010, there are 8.7 million people in Ohio, age 18 or older, that have either a driver's license or a state identification card. Thus, it seems likely that the number of registered voters who lack the required identification and are indigent is small.

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). As a result of the bill, the BMV could incur some new expense for providing these free state identification cards. These costs would be paid from the State Bureau of Motor Vehicles Fund (Fund 4W40). The source of revenue for the fund is driver's license fees and various other related charges. Overall, since relatively few people are likely to require these free cards, the Bureau is unlikely to incur any substantial new costs as a result of the bill.

To estimate the number of people who potentially qualify for a free identification card under the bill, LSC compared the number of currently registered voters to the number of people possessing either a driver's license or official state identification card. As of March 2011, there are approximately 8.6 million registered voters in the state of Ohio. BMV data from the end of calendar year 2010 indicate that there are approximately 8.7 million people in Ohio, age 18 or older, that have either a driver's license, or a state identification card. That is, there are more people in Ohio who are 18 or older who have the state identification required under the bill than there are registered voters in the state. As a result, LSC assumes that there is only a small number of people who (1) currently lack the required photo identification, (2) are registered voters, and (3) are indigent. According to the BMV, the cost to produce a state identification card is \$1.14 per card. The table below illustrates some projected costs, assuming various percentages among registered voters who would be eligible for the free identification cards.

| Potential BMV Identification Card Production Costs (Based on 8.6 million Registered Voters) | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Number of Registered Voters Qualifying for Free Card | Percent of Registered Voters | Potential BMV Cost |
| 860,000 | 10% | \$980,400 |
| 688,000 | 8% | \$784,320 |
| 430,000 | 5% | \$490,200 |
| 86,000 | 1% | \$98,040 |