

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2007 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 31 (Senator Raskin, *et al.*)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Elections - Voter Registration and Voting - Age

This bill allows an individual who is at least 16 years old to register to vote, provided the individual meets other voter registration requirements. The bill also specifies that an individual is not qualified to vote until the individual is 18 years old.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill would not directly affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: To qualify to register to vote, an individual must be a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years old (or will be on or before the next general or special election), and a resident of the State.

An individual is entitled to vote under the Maryland Constitution if the individual is a U.S. citizen, of the age of 18 years or older, and a resident of the State at the time of the close of registration prior to an election.

Background: Under current law and current voter registration practice, a 16 year old may register to vote provided they will be 18 years old by the time of the next general or special election.

According to estimates from the November 2004 Current Population Survey, a joint effort of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Census Bureau, in November 2004 there were 371,000 U.S. citizens in Maryland between the ages of 18 and 24, 55.8% of whom were registered to vote, and 50.1% of whom voted in the November 2004 presidential election. Nationwide, the percentage of 18 to 24 year old citizens who were registered to vote was 57.6%, and the percentage that voted was 46.7%.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Montgomery County, Caroline County, Calvert County, Howard County, Baltimore City, U.S. Census Bureau, State Board of Elections, Department of Legislative Services

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bfl/jr

Analysis by: Scott D. Kennedy

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510