

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2019 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

House Bill 174

(Chair, Ways and Means Committee)(By Request -
Departmental - State Board of Elections)

Ways and Means

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Election Law - Absentee Ballot Requests - Last Four Digits of Social Security
Number

This departmental bill requires an absent uniformed services or overseas voter, or a voter with a disability, to provide only the last four digits of the voter's Social Security number, rather than the voter's full Social Security number, in instances where the voter uses the online absentee ballot application to request that an absentee ballot be sent by any method or who uses any method to request to receive a blank absentee ballot through the Internet, and does not have a Maryland driver's license or Maryland identification card. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2019.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not affect State finances.

Local Effect: The bill does not affect local government finances.

Small Business Effect: The State Board of Elections (SBE) has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). The Department of Legislative Services concurs with this assessment.

Analysis

Current Law: A voter who uses the online absentee ballot application to request that an absentee ballot be sent by any method or who uses any method to request to receive a blank absentee ballot through the Internet must provide:

- a Maryland driver's license number or Maryland identification card number, the last four digits of the applicant's Social Security number, and other information identified by SBE that is not generally available to the public but is readily available to the applicant; or
- if the applicant is an absent uniformed services voter or overseas voter as defined in the federal Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act or a voter with a disability and does not have a Maryland driver's license or Maryland identification card, a Social Security number.

Background: SBE indicates that the bill conforms statute to SBE policy and regulations. SBE regulations require an absent uniformed services or overseas voter, who does not have a Maryland driver's license or Motor Vehicle Administration identification card number, to provide the last four digits of the voter's Social Security number on an online absentee ballot application. SBE also eliminated its ability to retain full Social Security numbers in the voter registration system, in January 2017, in response to an audit finding that personally identifiable information (full Social Security numbers) of some voters was being unnecessarily retained within the system. (See Office of Legislative Audits' [Audit Report, State Board of Elections \(April 2017\).](#))

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): State Board of Elections; Carroll, Cecil, Harford, Montgomery, Queen Anne's, and St. Mary's counties; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 31, 2019
sb/hlb Third Reader - February 15, 2019

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ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

TITLE OF BILL: Election Law – Absentee Ballot Applications – Last Four Digits of Social Security Number

BILL NUMBER: HB 174

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PART A. ECONOMIC IMPACT RATING

This agency estimates that the proposed bill:

WILL HAVE MINIMAL OR NO ECONOMIC IMPACT ON
MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESS

OR

WILL HAVE MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND
SMALL BUSINESSES

PART B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS