

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE
Revised

House Bill 147 (The Speaker)(Administration)
Commerce & Government Matters Referred to Economic & Environmental Affairs

Election Law - 7th Congressional District - Special Election

This emergency bill combines the special primary election to fill the vacancy which exists in the 7th Congressional District with the regular primary election.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Baltimore City would experience a cost savings between \$100,000 and \$300,000 in FY 1996, while Baltimore County would experience a cost savings of \$89,100 in FY 1996. Revenues would not be affected.

Small Business Effect: A small business impact statement was not provided by SABEL in time for inclusion in this fiscal note. A revised fiscal note will be issued when SABEL's assessment becomes available.

Fiscal Analysis

Bill Summary: An individual who has filed a certificate of candidacy for the regular election is deemed to have filed a certificate of candidacy for the special primary election. Any other person may file a certificate of candidacy for the special primary and regular primary provided the certificate is filed by 9:00 p.m. on January 22. The bill also allows a nominee for the special election to decline the nomination by notifying the State Administrative Board of Election Laws (SABEL) not later than 5:00 p.m. on March 6. The appropriate political party must designate a substitute nominee by 5:00 p.m. on March 7. A petition for a recount and recanvass of the special primary must be filed by 5:00 p.m. on March 6.

SABEL must certify the ballots for the special election as soon as practical. The ballot must

be posted for one day and any challenge must be filed by 5:00 p.m. on the day of the posting.

In addition, the Board of Canvassers must convene immediately after the vote totals in the 7th Congressional District are available. Further, SABEL may reduce the amount of time required or allowed for any election-related action pertaining to the special primary or special election. SABEL, however, may not change any time requirement relating to voting or polling place procedures on election day.

The bill also allows SABEL, at the request of a local elections board, to authorize the use of any voting system, including paper ballots, in the “special general election”.

The bill is void after December 31, 1996.

Local Expenditures: Baltimore City would experience a cost savings due to the merger of the special and regular primary elections. On average it costs between \$100,000 and \$300,000 to conduct an election in the 7th Congressional District depending upon the type of voting system and the voter turnout. For instance, a mail-in election costs \$100,000, while a voting machine election costs up to \$300,000. Since Baltimore City would not have to hold a separate special election, it would experience a cost savings between \$100,000 and \$300,000 in fiscal 1996.

Since part of the 7th Congressional District is contained within Baltimore County, the county would also experience a cost savings. Baltimore County has approximately 181 polling places. On average, it costs approximately \$504,000 to conduct an election. In the 7th Congressional District there are 32 polling places. As a result, the county could experience a cost savings of \$89,100 in fiscal 1996 based on the average cost per polling place.

Any additional costs associated with conducting the special election with the regular primary elections could be handled with the local elections boards’ existing budgeted resources.

Information Source(s): State Administrative Board of Election Laws, Baltimore County, Baltimore City, Department of Fiscal Services

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