

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 46 (Senator Trotter)
Economic and Environmental Affairs

Local Boards of Elections - Polling Places - Reading Glasses

This bill requires local elections boards to provide generic reading glasses to all polling places for voters who need visual assistance in reading the ballot. Elections judges must provide these glasses to voters upon request.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Minimal increase in county expenditures. **The bill imposes a mandate on a unit of local government.** No effect on revenues.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal effect on small businesses as discussed below.

Fiscal Analysis

Local Expenditures: County expenditures would increase by an indeterminate amount depending upon the number of glasses purchased for use at polling places and their cost. There are approximately 1,700 polling places in Maryland that would need glasses. Although the costs would vary by jurisdiction, it would be minimal.

Caroline County expects to spend \$80 on reading glasses for its polling places, while Baltimore City expects to spend approximately \$7,440 based on the purchase of a pair of glasses (\$20 per pair) for each of the city's polling places. Similarly, Howard County estimates it would cost approximately \$11,300 based on the purchase of eight different glasses (\$17 per pair) for each polling place. Prince George's County advises that the requirement could cost \$1,970 based on the purchase of a pair of glasses (\$10 per pair) that magnify words for each polling place.

Small Business Effect: Under the bill, local elections boards would be required to provide

generic reading glasses for use at polling places. As a result, small businesses that sell reading glasses could experience an increase in revenues. However, the increase would be minimal.

Information Source(s): State Administrative Board of Election Laws; Baltimore City; Caroline, Howard, and Prince George's counties; Department of Fiscal Services

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