

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
1999 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 336 (Prince George's County Delegation)

Commerce and Government Matters

Prince George's County - Elections - Absentee Ballots - Removal of Eligibility
Requirements
PG 401-99

This bill allows any registered voter in Prince George's County to vote by absentee ballot regardless of the reason, if the voter completes the necessary application.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Indeterminate, but potentially significant effect on Prince George's County expenditures. No effect on revenues.

Small Business Effect: None.

Fiscal Analysis

Local Expenditures: There are approximately 370,000 registered voters in Prince George's County. Generally, the county has a voter turnout of approximately 50%. For the 1998 general election, there were approximately 5,000 absentee voters in the county. During a general election for presidential and congressional candidates, there are usually between 9,000 and 10,000 absentee voters. Under the proposed legislation, any registered voter may vote by absentee ballot upon completion of the necessary application. To the extent that this leads to an increase in absentee ballots, expenditures could increase due to additional postage, printing, and temporary personnel costs. At this time, the actual expenditure increase cannot be determined.

On the other hand, if absentee voters increase significantly, it is assumed that at some point

the county would have to alter its existing precinct system to compensate for the increase. As a result, any additional costs associated with an increase in absentee ballots could be partially offset by a savings due to a reduction in the scope of precinct elections.

Information Source(s): Prince George's County, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 9, 1999

lnc/jr

Analysis by: Thomas P. Hickey

Direct Inquiries to:

John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst

(410) 946-5510

(301) 970-5510