

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2000 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 1360 (Delegate Malone)

Commerce and Government Matters

Elections Boards - Electronic Data and Media - Access and Use

This bill requires the State Board of Elections to provide copies of tapes, discs, or other compilations of electronic data to registered political action committees. It also requires local boards of elections to provide local political committees with the same types of electronic data. The State Board of Elections and local boards of elections must provide the electronic data at a cost of not more than 15% of the cost for duplicating or otherwise furnishing the data. A political action committee or local political committee may only use the data for political purposes and may not use the data for commercial solicitation or other business purposes. A person who misuses data provided by the State or a local board of elections is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, is subject to imprisonment for one to ten years. By November 1, 2000, the State Board of Elections must adopt regulations to carry out the provisions of the bill.

The bill is effective July 1, 2000.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Decrease in State Board of Elections revenues from the sales of tapes, discs, or other compilations of electronic data. Increase in expenditures of approximately \$2,000 in FY 2001 for the board to write regulations.

Local Effect: Decrease in revenues for local boards of elections due to decreased fees for tapes, discs, or other compilations of electronic data.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The State Board of Elections and the local boards of elections maintain public records according to State law.

State Revenues: The State Board of Elections currently charges fees for the production and duplication of electronic data at 100% of its costs. Under the bill, the board would lose less than \$10,000 in revenues even in a busy year. However, the State Board of Elections advises that the amount of voter registration data will be expanding significantly in the next year or so, raising the costs associated with downloading data onto a tape or disc. In addition, new means of supplying the data (e.g., compact discs) will soon be utilized more than the data tapes that are used now, and this may also change the cost of supplying electronic data.

State Expenditures: The State Board of Elections would hire an attorney for approximately one week to write the regulations. The estimated cost for this service is \$2,000.

Local Revenues: Local revenues from fees charged for the production and duplication of electronic data would decrease, depending on the fees currently charged for those items.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): State Board of Elections, Garrett County, Prince George's County, Department of Legislative Services

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