

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2001 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 271 (Delegate Riley, *et al.*)
Commerce and Government Matters

Election Law - Identification of Voters

The bill alters the method of determining a voter's identity at a polling place on election day. It requires a voter to present either a State voter registration card, a State driver's license, a Social Security card, an identification card issued by a governmental entity, or a photo employee identification card, as a form of identification. A voter that does not produce any identification must sign an affidavit. This bill also requires that a voter give an election judge his or her Social Security number, which will be recorded on the precinct register, and that a change of address form be completed and signed by the voter whenever applicable.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: No effect in FY 2002. Increase in general fund expenditures for voter education through newspaper advertisements by the State Board of Elections in FY 2003 preceding the gubernatorial election and in FY 2005 prior to the presidential election. Costs could range from \$20,000 to \$50,000 in both years.

Local Effect: None. The slightly longer voter identification process at the polls would not significantly affect local government finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Voter identification is currently made by an election judge who asks for the voter's birth date. The voter's response is compared to the information listed in the

precinct register. There is no requirement that a voter complete and sign a change of address form. Nor is there any requirement that a voter's Social Security number be disclosed.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: A similar bill was introduced as HB 850 in the 1998 session. It received an unfavorable report from the Commerce and Government Matters Committee.

Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader – February 6, 2001
ncs/jr

Analysis by: Michelle L. Davis

Direct Inquiries to:
John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510