

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 646 (Prince George's County Delegation)
Commerce and Government Matters

Prince George's County - Elections - Absentee Ballots - Removal of Eligibility
Requirements PG 406-02

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: Potentially significant increase in Prince George's County expenditures. No effect on revenues.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: A registered voter may vote by absentee ballot if he or she may be absent on election day, or cannot go to the polling place due to illness, illness of an immediate family member, confinement, employment at the State or local board of election on election day, academic requirements at an institution of higher education, or if authorized under a federal law.

Local Fiscal Effect: There are approximately 409,200 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

9,000 to 10,000 absentee voters. Under the bill, 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, but it is estimated that any significant increase in the number of absentee voters could result in increased expenditures between \$30,000 and \$60,000 per election year.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 336 (1999 session) was unfavorably reported from the Commerce and Government Matters Committee. No Senate action was taken.

Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 18, 2002
ncs/jr

Analysis by: Michelle L. Harrison-Davis

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