

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2003 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 328

(Senator Stone)

(Chairman, Ethics and Election Law Subcommittee)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Ways and Means

Election Law - Facilities of Local Boards

This bill requires a local board of election to locate all employees and operations in one contiguous office space and maintain a storage facility consistent with guidelines established by the Department of General Services and the Department of Budget and Management in the Facility Program Manual.

The bill is effective January 1, 2004.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill is technical in nature and would not directly affect State governmental operations or finances.

Local Effect: Minimal. With the exception of one jurisdiction, the costs of the bill could be handled within the existing resources of local governments. **The bill imposes a mandate on a unit of local government.**

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Each local board, in accordance with the Election Law Article and regulations adopted by the State board shall:

- oversee the conduct of all elections held in its county and ensure that the elections process is conducted in an open, convenient, and impartial manner;
- pursuant to the State Personnel and Pensions Article, or its county merit system, whichever is applicable, appoint an election director to manage the operations and supervise staff of the local board; and
- maintain an office and be open for business and provide the supplies and equipment necessary for the proper and efficient conduct of voter registration and election, including: (1) supplies and equipment required by the State board; and (2) office and polling place equipment expenses.

Local Effect: The provisions of the bill that require a local board to maintain contiguous office space would substantially increase local expenditures for St. Mary's County, which has an election board with two offices separated by approximately 20 feet. The county estimates that this requirement could cost \$60,000 - \$70,000 in fiscal 2004 for construction, remodeling, and relocation of office space. No other counties are affected by this requirement.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): St. Mary's County, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Garrett County, Maryland State Board of Elections, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 25, 2003
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