

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2004 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 95

(Senator Green)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Ways and Means

Election Law - Polling Places - Access by Minors

This bill requires an election judge to allow not more than two individuals under the age of 13 accompanying a voter to have access to the voting room at a polling place provided that the child is in the care of the voter and does not disrupt or interfere with normal voting procedures. An individual over the age of 12 would not be allowed to accompany a voter into the voting booth.

The bill is effective June 1, 2004.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: A one-time expenditure of \$5,500 in FY 2005 by the State Board of Elections for printing of updated signs for approximately 1,800 polling places. No effect on revenues.

(in dollars)	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	5,500	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$5,500)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate effect

Local Effect: Minimal one-time expenditure increase to pay for updated inserts into training manuals for approximately 20,000 election judges.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Children over the age of 10 are prohibited from accompanying a voter into the voting booth. Other individuals allowed into a voting booth are: (1) election judges assisting voters upon request; (2) polling place staff; (3) a member or other representative of the State Board of Elections; (4) accredited watchers or challengers; (5) individuals assisting a physically disabled voter or a voter who is unable to read the English language; and (6) any other individual authorized by the State board or local board.

A person over the age of 10 may not accompany a voter into a voting booth, with certain exceptions for voters who require assistance.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 36 of 2003 would have allowed individuals under the age of 15 to accompany voters in the booth. HB 14 of 2003 would have allowed a child under the age of 13 to do the same. Both bills were unfavorably reported from the House Ways and Means Committee. SB 23 of 2003 would have allowed a “minor child” into the voting booth. That bill was passed by the Senate, but unfavorably reported from the House Ways and Means Committee.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Allegany County, Baltimore City, Montgomery County, Wicomico County, Maryland State Board of Elections, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 2, 2004
mll/mdr Revised - Senate Third Reader - March 30, 2004
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