

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2006 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1212
 Ways and Means

(Delegate Dwyer, *et al.*)

Election Law - Voter Registration - Proof of Citizenship

This bill requires an individual to submit proof of U.S. citizenship with a voter registration application. An applicant for voter registration must submit: (1) an original or certified copy of a birth certificate issued by the U.S. or territory of the U.S.; (2) a current or expired passport issued by the U.S. or a territory of the U.S.; or (3) a copy of the document issued by the U.S. government identifying the applicant as a naturalized citizen of the U.S.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Transportation Trust Fund expenditures would increase by \$58,200 in FY 2007 due to increased personnel needs and a one-time computer system update. Out-years reflect annualization and inflation.

(in dollars)	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
SF Expenditure	58,200	53,800	56,200	58,800	61,500
Net Effect	(\$58,200)	(\$53,800)	(\$56,200)	(\$58,800)	(\$61,500)

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

Local Effect: Local boards could experience increased expenditures associated with the processing and storage (or possibly scanning into the voter registration database) of proof of citizenship documents.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law:

Voter Registration Eligibility

An individual may become registered to vote if the individual is: (1) a citizen of the U.S.; (2) at least 18 years old or will be 18 years old on or before the day of the next succeeding general or special election; (3) a resident of the county as of the day the individual seeks to register; and (4) registers pursuant to the requirements of State law.

Application Methods

An individual may apply to become a registered voter:

- at a local board or State board office;
- a registration site administered by a local board;
- by mail;
- when applying to the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) for issuance, renewal, or modification of a driver's license or identification card;
- when applying for services at a voter registration agency; or
- with the assistance of a volunteer authorized by the State or local board.

Content of Application

The statewide voter registration application must:

- require the signature of an applicant, subject to penalties of perjury, verifying that the information in the application is true and that the applicant is eligible to become a registered voter;
- state the penalties for submitting a false application; and
- provide a voter with the opportunity to cancel a current registration.

The application may not require notarization or other formal authentication, or any additional information not necessary to determine the eligibility of the applicant and to administer voter registration and other parts of the election process.

State Fiscal Effect: The bill's changes would require modification of training and applicable procedures for individuals accepting and processing voter registrations (local board/State board personnel, MVA personnel, volunteers, social services personnel). For

the most part, this impact could be handled with existing resources, however, the MVA would experience an increase in expenditures. The MVA handles roughly half of all voter registrations in Maryland and could require two additional contractual positions due to the increased customer service time needed in accepting and copying proof of citizenship documents. The MVA would also need to modify its computer system to account for the changes. Accordingly, general fund expenditures could increase by \$58,243 in fiscal 2007. The estimate includes salaries, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs and ongoing operating expenses.

Salaries and Fringe Benefits	\$41,263
Computer System Update	16,875
Operating Expenses	<u>105</u>
Total FY 2007 State Expenditures	\$58,243

Future year expenditures reflect: (1) full salaries with 4.6% annual increases and 6.8% employee turnover; and (2) 1% annual increases in ongoing operating expenses.

Local Fiscal Effect: Local boards could experience increased expenditures associated with the processing and storage (or possibly scanning into the voter registration database) of copies of proof of citizenship documents. Costs would vary among counties and due to uncertainty regarding how the documents would need to be handled and stored, costs cannot be reliably estimated at this time.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 1166 of 2005 and HB 56 of 2004, similar bills, both received an unfavorable report by Ways and Means.

Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 16, 2006
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