

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2007 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 542

(Delegate Ross)

Ways and Means

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Elections - Election Judges Training Pilot Program

This bill creates an Election Judges Training Pilot Program to train and employ University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) and St. Mary's College of Maryland students to work as election judges in the State for the 2008 primary and general elections. The Governor must include \$100,000 in the fiscal 2008 or 2009 budget for the State Board of Elections (SBE) to be disbursed for the pilot program. The pilot will be administered by the Center for American Politics and Citizenship (CAPC) at UMCP and the Center for the Study of Democracy (CSD) at St. Mary's College in conjunction with SBE. CAPC and CSD must issue a report on the pilot program to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 31, 2008.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2007 and terminates June 30, 2009.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures would increase by at least \$100,000 in FY 2008 to provide election judge training for the 2008 primary election. Alternatively, general fund expenditures could increase by \$100,000 in FY 2009 as allowed under the bill. To the extent the \$100,000 appropriation does not cover the costs of the program, additional general/higher education funding may be required.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: A similar pilot program does not exist under current law.

Each local board must provide at least four election judges to staff each polling place, though in a precinct with fewer than 200 registered voters the local board only must provide two election judges. An election judge generally must be a registered voter who resides in the county where they are appointed. A minor who is at least 17 years old but too young to be a registered voter may be an election judge if the minor meets all other qualifications for voter registration.

SBE is responsible for developing a training program for election judges, which the local boards conduct. Each election judge must participate in the training program unless appointed under emergency circumstances.

Background: SBE and local election boards have worked with local universities on election-related matters in a few different cases recently. SBE commissioned the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) and UMCP in 2005 to conduct studies of voter-verification technology and SBE has partnered with UMBC in establishing the National Center for the Study of Elections which provides technical assistance and research support for SBE.

The Baltimore County Board of Elections contracted with the University of Baltimore's Schaefer Center for Public Policy to train election judges prior to the 2006 primary and general elections. The Schaefer Center also reached an agreement with the Baltimore City Board of Elections prior to the general election to train the city's election judges.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Board of Elections; University of Maryland, College Park; St. Mary's College of Maryland; University of Maryland, Baltimore County, National Center for the Study of Elections; University of Baltimore, Schaefer Center for Public Policy; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 26, 2007
mll/jr Revised - House Third Reader - April 4, 2007

Analysis by: Scott D. Kennedy

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510